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Assessment Management Minute: 0017/2023

To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors (Head Office and district offices), Deputy Directors, Chief Education Specialists, Heads: Curriculum Support, Heads: Management and Governance, Circuit Managers, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Assessment and Examination Coordinators and Heads of public and independent schools/institutions that prepare learners for the National Senior Certificate and Senior Certificate examinations

Subject: Procedures to prevent irregularities and clarification of process to be followed when reporting irregularities, complaints and incidents during the conduct of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) and Senior Certificate (SC) examinations

1. The aim of this minute is to create awareness about the procedures to be implemented to prevent irregularities and to clarify the process to be followed when reporting irregularities, complaints and incidents.
2. This minute must be read in conjunction with the following circulars/minutes to emphasise the seriousness of implementing proper procedures to prevent irregularities during the NSC and SC examinations:

| Circular/minute | Title | Summary of content |
|---|--|--|
| Circular: 0011/2015, dated 12 March 2015 | National examinations: procedures regarding cellphones and electronic devices. | Prohibition of cellphones or any electronic devices that may be of assistance to candidates whilst writing examinations. |
| Assessment Management Minute: 0013/2017, dated 24 August 2017 | Ways to minimise assessment irregularities during national examinations. | Guidelines to curb irregularities and possible sanctions regarding irregularities. |

| Circular/minute | Title | Summary of content |
|---|---|---|
| Assessment Management Minute: 0010/2021, dated 30 July 2021 | Prevention of irregularities during the conduct of the NSC and SC examinations. | Provides information on the action required when an irregularity takes place, consequences/sanctions for the candidate and guidelines on how to prevent these irregularities. |
| Assessment Management Minute: 0011/2023, dated 11 August 2023 | Risk management for the NSC and SC examinations – October/November 2023 and May/June 2024 | Guidelines on how examination centres should manage and mitigate the risks associated with the examinations. |

3. Measures to prevent irregularities prior to the writing of the examinations

- 3.1 The principal/centre manager must put measures in place to prevent behavioural and/or administrative irregularities and/or omissions.
- 3.2 Principals/centre managers are requested to arrange a pledge ceremony during the week of 16–20 October 2023 at their schools to allow candidates to commit to behaviour in line with the examination rules. The pledge certificate must be signed by all candidates to create awareness about the examination rules and the consequences if they are transgressed.
- 3.3 Principals/centre managers must ensure that all invigilators are adequately trained to perform their duties. **Only Western Cape Education Department (WCED) training material** must be utilised.
- 3.4 The following must be done **before candidates enter an examination room**:
- An invigilator must be placed at the door when candidates enter the examination room, to ensure that candidates enter in an orderly manner.
 - Invigilators must check every candidate to see if they qualify to write the session. Candidates may only write the subjects/examination papers indicated on their admission letters.
 - Invigilators must check if the identity document (ID) and the admission letter of every candidate corresponds.
 - Candidates without an admission letter may not be allowed into the examination room and the Directorate: Examinations Administration must be consulted.
 - Invigilators must implement the policy of the examination centre to prevent candidates from entering the examination room with unauthorised electronic devices (e.g cellphones, smart watches, programmable calculators etc.).
 - Invigilators must request candidates to perform a self-search of their pockets, plastic sleeves and pencil cases for unauthorised devices and/or material.

g) Invigilators must ensure that candidates are guided to their seats as per the seating plan.

3.5 As soon as an **imposter** has been identified, the chief invigilator must confiscate their ID and admission letter. Furthermore the candidate must be requested to make a full confession before the principal/centre manager/chief invigilator and a witness. As much information must be obtained from the candidate as possible. If the candidate refutes the accusation, allow them to continue writing with the understanding that the WCED will investigate the matter and an irregularity may be declared later. The WCED will report the matter to the South African Police Service.

4. **Procedures to be followed when reporting an irregularity (Annexure A)**

The following procedures apply to examination irregularities identified while the question paper is being written (e.g. electronic devices, unauthorised material and/or copying):

4.1 The invigilator must take possession of any unauthorised and/or incriminating material (such as crib notes or other materials/objects) which may have been used directly or indirectly to commit the irregularity.

4.2 If a candidate is caught with an unauthorised device (e.g. cellphone) in his possession, both the invigilator and the principal/centre manager or his/her delegate must check the cellphone for any incriminating evidence and return the cellphone to the candidate after the examination session. Any incriminating evidence found must be printed and attached to the confiscated answer script.

4.3 Any crib notes must be attached to the confiscated answer script, which then become the property of the WCED and neither the candidate nor his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to demand their return.

4.4 The invigilator must remove the candidate's answer script and write the word "**IRREGULARITY**" and the type of irregularity on the front cover.

4.5 The words "Answer script confiscated on _____ (date) at _____ (time) at _____ (place)" must also be written on the front cover in clear print.

4.6 The invigilator must provide the candidate with a new answer book which must be endorsed with the words "NEW ANSWER BOOK – REPLACES CONFISCATED ANSWER BOOK" and the date and time that it was issued.

4.7 The candidate must be informed that the fact that he/she is being allowed to continue with the examination **does not serve as a condonation** of his/her contravention of the examination regulations. Furthermore, the candidate must be informed that a written report will be submitted to the chief invigilator at the conclusion of the examination and that the incident will be reported to the WCED for consideration.

- 4.8 The candidate may not use the new answer book to answer questions that have already been answered and **may only continue from where he/she stopped** when the irregularity was discovered.
- 4.9 The invigilator must not allow any additional time to compensate for time lost in the course of detecting and processing the examination irregularity.
- 4.10 After the candidate has finished writing the examination concerned, the invigilator must submit a detailed written report concerning the irregularity to the chief invigilator without delay. The names, date, time and subject/paper must be clearly specified.
- 4.11 The answer scripts, irregularity form, any incriminating material and all applicable statements should be placed **in an envelope on top of the batched answer scripts** and the normal procedure for submitting answer scripts to the WCED must be followed. The envelope should be addressed for the attention of the Director: Assessment Management. The irregularity report form and all relevant reports/evidence must also be emailed to WCED.Irregularities@westerncape.gov.za and the relevant district assessment and examination coordinator immediately.
- 4.12 All the relevant documentation must be submitted, as insufficient documentation will cause unnecessary delays in releasing an outcome for the candidate.

5. **Procedures to be followed when reporting an examination incident (Annexure B)**

- 5.1 An examination incident is any event that temporarily disturbs an examination but can be resolved in the examination room without negatively affecting the candidates or compromising the credibility of the examination.
- 5.2 All incidents that occur in the examination room must be reported immediately to the Directorate: Assessment Management by completing the incident form, including the relevant documentation and sending it to WCED.Irregularities@westerncape.gov.za

6. **Procedures to be followed for complaints regarding question papers (Annexure C)**

- 6.1 All complaints regarding the quality and layout of or an omission in a question paper must reach the Directorate: Assessment Management within two days of that specific examination having been written.
- 6.2 This arrangement is necessary as the Department of Basic Education (DBE) may be required to take further action.
- 6.3 A completed complaint form must be submitted to the Directorate: Assessment Management in order to facilitate preparations for the DBE. All relevant documentation must be submitted to the Directorate: Assessment Management via WCED.Irregularities@westerncape.gov.za

7. **Collection of answer scripts (after an examination)**

- 7.1 All candidates must remain seated until the examination session has ended.
- 7.2 The chief invigilator must allocate **one invigilator** for every **30 candidates** and take responsibility for the collection of the answer scripts.
- 7.3 Each candidate must hand their answer script to the invigilator, who must check if the front page has been completed correctly and request the candidate to sign the script control register next to their name in return. Invigilators must verify that candidates sign the script control register next to the correct name. An invigilator may not sign the script control register on behalf of a candidate.
- 7.4 When the invigilator accepts an answer script from a candidate they must also ensure that any annexures (if part of the examination) are inserted into the answer script.
- 7.5 The invigilator must collect all answer scripts from the candidates at their desks and only once all answer scripts have been collected may the chief invigilator dismiss the candidates.
- 7.6 Invigilators must cross-check the number of answer scripts against the script control register and resolve any deviation.
- 7.7 Principals/centre managers/chief Invigilators are encouraged to request candidates to leave their question papers on their desks so that they leave the examination room with only their IDs, admission letters and stationery.

8. **Batching of answer scripts**

- 8.1 The chief invigilator must ensure that the batching of answer scripts occurs inside the examination room immediately after the writing of an examination session.
- 8.2 The chief invigilator must ensure that the area where batching takes place is neat and without any unauthorised material (unused answer books, spoilt answer scripts or question papers).
- 8.3 Answer scripts must be physically counted and reconciled with the number of candidates on the script control register as well as the mark sheet.
- 8.4 Answer scripts must be sequenced in order as per the mark sheet.
- 8.5 The chief invigilator must ensure that all answer scripts are collected and counted before they are wrapped and sealed in the plastic bag.

9. Principals/centre managers and chief invigilators are urgently requested to ensure that the above instructions are strictly adhered to during the NSC and SC examinations.

SIGNED: H MAHOMED

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT

DATE: 2023-10-12