

Final stretch for 2018 matriculants

In just 15 days, the 2018 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations will kick off with the first practical examination in Computer Applications Technology (CAT).



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A total of 37,340 candidates will sit for the CAT exam. This will be followed by the practical examination for Information Technology that will be administered to 4 170 candidates on Tuesday, 16 October.

The 2018 NSC examination will get off to a full start on Monday, 22 October, with the writing of the examinations in non-official languages.

“The Minister, Deputy Minister and Director-General, wish all Grade 12 learners well over this period. You have kept the course over these 12 years. This is now the last mile. Give it your best,” said Basic Education spokesperson Elijah Mhlanga.

The 2018 NSC examinations comprise 796,542 candidates, writing across 6,888 examination centres in the country.

The number of full-time candidates is 629,141, while the number of part-time candidates is 167,401. The examination extends over five-and-a-half weeks and will conclude on 28 November.

Marking will commence on 1 December 2018 across most provincial education departments, except for the larger provinces where marking will start earlier to ensure that all marking is completed by 15 December 2018.

A total of 44,505 markers have been appointed to mark across the 141 marking centres.

“Markers have been appointed and trained across all nine provinces. Here again, the department has conducted an audit of marker appointments to ensure that only those that satisfy the criteria are appointed,” said Mhlanga.

Sign language exam at home language level

For the first time this year, the department will administer an examination in South African Sign Language at Home Language level to 58 deaf candidates across 10 schools.

The question papers will be signed and learners will respond by signing. The exam will be recorded using the appropriate technology.

“The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has piloted its assessment processes in this regard, and we don’t foresee any difficulties with this examination,” said Mhlanga.

Another first for the department is the writing of the examination in Technical Mathematics and Technical Science.

Umalusi moderation

A total of 147 NSC question papers have been set, internally moderated by the DBE and approved by Umalusi. The question papers have been adapted for blind and deaf candidates. Brailing of question papers for the blind and enlargements of font sizes for the partially sighted has also been completed.

Printing and packing of the question papers by the Provincial Education Departments is at an advanced stage.

Safety precautions

An aspect of the system that the department has honed in on in 2018, is the different points at which the question paper is stored en-route to the school.

“The department has audited each of these points and only those points that comply with the stringent criteria are allowed to store question papers. These storage points will be closely monitored by the Provincial Education Departments and the National Department,” said Mhlanga.

The department has also engaged the services of all the security agencies, who will assist in maintaining a presence where necessary and will respond to requests at short notice.

The other strategy employed by the department to strengthen the administration of the examination is the categorisation of examination centres based on the risk profile of the examination centres. Monitoring is customised to suit the risk profile.

Examination centres that were implicated in any kind of examination malpractice in previous years will be monitored by a resident monitor based at the school.

Schools will exercise zero tolerance to ensure that any learner that attempts to resort to unfair practices is identified and punished.

“On 12 October 2018, candidates across the country will voluntarily sign a pledge to commit to upholding the integrity of the examinations by not participating in any malpractice,” said Mhlanga.

Learner support

To assist learners with final preparations, the department has advised learners to make use of online support programmes.

“Parents must now ensure that learners are supported by ensuring they eat correctly, rest adequately and give their best. The revision that is done in the last few days prior to the examination is always extremely critical.

“Plan your study timetable wisely and always make sure that you follow the examination timetable correctly. Check and double check with your friends that you are preparing for the right paper,” said the department.

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