



basic education

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**TO: HEADS OF DEPARTMENT  
HEADS OF PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS  
HEADS OF PROVINCIAL CURRICULUM  
DISTRICT DIRECTORS  
CIRCUIT MANAGERS  
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS  
TEACHER UNIONS  
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY ASSOCIATIONS  
NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION**

**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT CIRCULAR NO.1 OF 2025**

**MARK ADJUSTMENT AND CONDONATION DISPENSATION FOR LEARNERS IN GRADES 4–9**

1. This circular must be read in conjunction with National Assessment Circular No 5 of 2022, pertaining to **Special Mark Adjustment and Condonation Dispensation for Learners in Grades 4–9 (Annexure A)**.
  
2. As was done in 2024, the attention of school principals and education managers is once again drawn specifically to the dispensation that **mark adjustments** of between 1% and 5% will be applicable to marks that are in the following mark ranges, **depending on the minimum achievement levels of the subject:**
  - (a) between 25% and 29%
  - (b) between 35% and 39%
  - (c) between 45% and 49%

3. It is also important to note that the **mark adjustments** will be applicable to a **maximum of three subjects**, that lie within the mark ranges as stated in paragraph (2) and therefore need to be adjusted.
4. In addition to mark adjustments, a condonation dispensation can also be implemented in terms of this circular. **Condonation** refers to a situation where the learner satisfies all the minimum achievement requirements, but is short of one requirement. In such a case the learner can be condoned and transferred to the next grade.

After the mark adjustment process has been completed, a learner may be short of one requirement for promotion to the next grade. The learner may present one of the following scenarios:

- (a) below 35% in Mathematics; or
- (b) below 35% in the First Additional Language; or
- (c) below 25% in two other subjects (excluding Home Language).

Such a learner **must be condoned in the one subject only**, so that the learner can progress to the next grade.

5. Refer to **Annexure B** for an illustration of possible common scenarios on mark adjustments and/or condonations.
6. In the case of **condonations**, the mark obtained by the learner in the affected subject must be reflected in the mark schedule and the letter “C” must be inserted next to the mark to indicate that the mark has been condoned. The same will apply in the way the mark is reflected in the learner’s report card and must be accompanied by the following statement:

*“(List the name of the subject) mark has been condoned and the learner is progressed to the next grade”*

7. It also needs to be noted that **the sequence of processes** described in this circular are as follows:
  - (a) Step 1: Apply the **progression policy**, if applicable to the learner

- (b) Step 2: Apply the dispensation on **mark adjustments**
  - (c) Step 3: Apply the **condonation** dispensation
8. School principals are reminded to work closely and collaboratively with their School Based Support Teams (SBST) to ensure that supporting evidence for learners who have been identified as being at risk of retention from the beginning of the 2025 academic year is available and verifiable, when the promotion and progression of learners are being determined. This includes verifiable evidence that parents/guardians have been kept fully informed and that the support required was provided to these learners throughout the school year. Where there is evidence that retention does not serve the best interest of the learner, the principal and SBST should ensure that the learner is progressed to the next grade with the required support.
9. Enquiries regarding this circular can be directed to Dr M Chetty from the National Assessment unit at the Department of Basic Education via email at [Chetty.M@dbe.gov.za](mailto:Chetty.M@dbe.gov.za) or to provincial assessment coordinators.
10. Your support and cooperation in ensuring compliance with the contents of this circular is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely



**MR HM MWELI**  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**  
**DATE: 12/11/2025**