



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Att: News Editors
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GDE UPDATE ON 2021 NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS AND ONLINE LEARNER PLACEMENTS

The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) wishes to share an update on the province's state of readiness for the 2021 National Senior Certificate (NSC) October/November Examinations, which are scheduled to begin on Wednesday, 27 October 2021 and end on 6 December 2021. In addition to this, the GDE would also like to give an update on the progress of the 2022 Online Admissions Learner Placements.

National Senior Certificate Examinations

The NSC examination process is a complex cycle that requires attention to detail at every stage in order to ensure a credible examination outcome. It involves a number of process which include among others:

- Registration of examination centres
- Registration of candidates
- Setting of examination question papers (these are done by the DBE and approved by UMALUSI)
- Printing, packing and distribution
- Conduct of examinations
- Marking of examination scripts
- Capturing of marks
- Standardisation of marks by UMALUSI
- Resulting

From Wednesday, 27 October 2021 up to, and including, the 6th December 2021, the country will witness Grade 12 learners in public schools sit to write the NSC year-end examinations.

This will be a culmination of at least 12 continuous years that these young people spent in our public education system. It is our belief that these young people have been prepared and supported through the many programmes and interventions that our government had introduced during their tenure in our schooling system to ensure they are ready for this last milestone. Our continued mission is to ensure that those in the education system and under our care, especially from lower economic social strata, are also able to access quality education. This is because education is one of the greatest equalisers that is available within our reach.

It has been exactly 13 years since the inception of the NSC in 2008. The Class of 2021 is the eighth group to write the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) aligned NSC exams. This is the most important exam period in the basic education sector. This year's exams will be the second to occur amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, preparations by our Department for these assessments are paramount to ensure that they occur conveniently and securely for all qualifying candidates and stakeholders involved.

Number of Candidates Enrolled in 2021

Gauteng has enrolled **175 599** candidates to write this year's matric exams. This is an increase of 17.55% from 2020 where a total of **149 385** had enrolled to sit for the exams. This makes the Class of 2021 the highest enrolment number ever of candidates to sit for the National Senior Certificate examinations in the province.

Of the **175 599** candidates, **132 887** are Full Time candidates and **42 712** are Part Time candidates. Part Time candidates are those who have one or more outstanding subjects to qualify for the NSC qualification. The number of Full Time candidates includes **7979** candidates who have been progressed from Grade 11 to Grade 12. In addition, there are **1987** learners with Special Education Needs who will sit for the 2021 NSC examinations.

It is clear that the Gauteng basic education system provides opportunities for all young people to access one of the most important qualifications in our country. This is evidence of an equal opportunities system where each individual unleashes their own potential to achieve the results that they need.

Examination Centres (Venues) and Monitoring

In 2021, a total of **1004** examination centres have been accredited where all registered qualifying candidates will write the examination during the exam period. These centres are comprised of **652** Public Ordinary

Schools, **244** Independent Schools, **97** AET centres, and **8** Prisons and **3** designated centres in the province.

In preparation of conducting these exams for all qualifying candidates in the province, the GDE has established an extensive network of monitors across the province, having officially appointed and trained chief invigilators and monitors for all the aforementioned examination centres. The invigilators and monitors are sourced from our Head Office, Districts and other education stakeholders, to ensure that the processes relating to conduct, administration and management of the NSC examination is fair, credible and run with integrity.

Security arrangements have been put in place to safely manage the distribution and collection of question papers and answer sheets. These arrangements will be facilitated daily as the examinations progress.

Printing of Question Papers and Marking Processes

The province is running one of largest examination process in the country after KwaZulu-Natal. In this regard, we will have printed **2 171 915** question papers for the duration of the examination process. We have ensured that we increase security arrangements around the printing of question papers as a means of mitigating human error and other vulnerabilities.

The province has also selected and certified marking venues where marking of examination scripts will take place. A total of **30** marking centres have been approved in this regard. In addition, **12 889** markers have been appointed to mark the scripts after examinations have been written. We have also appointed **2 514** examination assistants who will serve the role of quality assurance of marked scripts at marking venues to ensure that there are no errors in the computing of learners' marks are addressed.

The first marking session will take place on **15 November 2021** and second marking session on **7 December 2021**. The marking process is expected to be completed by **23 December 2021**.

Ensuring the Integrity of the NSC Examinations

The credibility of the NSC examinations is paramount. It is important that all elements that may compromise the examination are eliminated to ensure that we run a credible examination process.

As one of the interventions, on Friday, 22 October 2021, learners across the province signed a pledge, meant to be an indication of all candidates' commitment and willingness to comply with the NSC Examination Code

of Conduct. This was conceptualized in 2013 by the Council of Education Ministers.

In addition to signing the pledge, all candidates writing the 2021 NSC Exam, together with their parents, signed a Commitment Agreement, which binds the Department, the candidates and their parents to abide by all the rules and regulations that govern, conduct and administer the exams.

Finally, we are pleased to report that the Department of Basic Education and UMALUSI have approved all preparations by the GDE as meeting the required standards to run and conduct the 2021 NSC examinations.

Learner Preparation

The Department has worked tirelessly to guarantee each matric learner in Gauteng has an optimal chance of succeeding in these exams. This has been evident through the various subject specific interventions we have implemented throughout the year. These interventions have ensured learners have access to interactive revision material that not only provides them with past exam papers and memos, but also gives them access to videos and lessons that give them exam tips, techniques and step-by-step guidelines on how to approach and respond to examination questions.

Our most effective of these interventions has been the Secondary School Improvement Program (SSIP), a major strategic intervention for progressed and high-risk learners. The SSIP has been running since the beginning of the year during Saturdays and school holidays to sustain the improved Grade 12 performance over the past years.

As part of our final push strategy to ensure the preparedness of learners for these exams, we implemented Matric Revision Camps across the province. These camps were meant to provide opportunities for intensive study and drill sessions aimed at increased content coverage for matric learners, as well as intensive exam practice and preparation.

Psychosocial Support During Examinations

The GDE has a standing agreement with Child Line to assist learners who experience stress due to exam pressure or after receiving results. Learners can phone Child Line on their toll-free **0800 055 555** or **011 645 2000** (during working hours) for counselling assistance. Parents or members of the community are also urged to use these numbers to seek support for any learner they suspect of not coping.

With the intervention of the DBE, the NSC year-end exam timetable was adjusted to accommodate this year's Local Government Elections. As such, we would like to assure all candidates and stakeholders that these exams will not be disrupted by the Elections. In addition, we urge our communities to respect the process of these exams and refrain from causing any disruptions that may threaten the conduct and administration of these exams.

Observing COVID-19 Protocols during the Examination

The majority of teachers in Gauteng have vaccinated against COVID-19 and the many young people who are in Grade 12 have an opportunity to vaccinate. As the government has now presented an opportunity for individuals aged 12 years and older to vaccinate, we encourage all those who are eligible to use this opportunity and vaccinate as part of the drive to manage and mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

Similarly, we have been mindful that the examinations will be written during the conditions where COVID-19 pandemic is real. As a result, we have reinforced Standard Procedures that will be followed at all examination centres. These include the following:

- A maximum of 30 candidates per room with 1 metre distancing
- Masks to be worn all the times
- Isolation rooms have been provided for sick candidates in each examination centre
- Candidates who test positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to sit for exams in the same hall as other candidates
- Hand sanitizers and surface cleaners will be provided for all rooms used
- Sanitizing of hands and temperature scanning at entry points will take place
- Control sheets will be completed by all candidates, monitors, and invigilators
- Invigilators who display any COVID-19 related symptoms will be released to seek medical attention
- Invigilators will only be allowed to return after producing a doctor's letter or COVID-19 negative results
- Candidates who are confirmed positive will be quarantine as per prescribed health requirements
- Department of Health will be consulted for intervention and guidance

"We would like to wish all our Grade 12 learners the best of luck and assure them that they have our full support. Learners are urged to conduct themselves with honesty during the exam. Cheating and other exam irregularities may result in a criminal record. Tears and sweat taste

the same but will get you different results. Tears will get you sympathy and sweat will get you change,” – Gauteng Education MEC Mr Panyaza Lesufi

Update on the 2022 Online Admissions Placements

We would also like to provide an update on the placement of the Grade 1 and 8 learners for 2022. We are pleased to report that the 2022 Online Admissions in Gauteng for Grade 1 and 8 has reached the stage of administering and facilitating learner placements. This part of the admissions process involves parents and guardians either receiving a placement offer via SMS or on www.gdeadmissions.gov.za. Learner placements officially commenced on **15 October 2021** and will continue until **30 November 2021**.

To date, a total of **123 752** placement offers were released to parents. Of these, **47 906** applicants have accepted the offers and have, therefore, been placed. Our records show that **75 846** applicants received offers but have not yet accepted them. We ask parents who have not acted on responding to the

We urge parents, especially those who did not receive a placement offer via SMS, to log onto www.gdeadmissions.gov.za to check the status of their applications and accept an offer (or offers) if available. Offers may be accepted provisionally, while further offers are awaited or accepted as final. Once an offer is accepted as final, no further offers will be made. Parents who have not yet received placement offers are reminded that learner placements will be ongoing until **30 November 2021**.

For more information, contact the Gauteng Department of Education’s Spokesperson, Steve Mabona on 072 574 3860.

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