

Monument Primary School

Academics and Assessment Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Testing, a smaller form of examination, points to the use of objective tests to measure change that is brought about by the learning process. It has more to do with the quantitative evaluation of the learner's progress.

The term evaluation refers to something much more than mere testing. It also includes those qualities / attributes of the learner that cannot be measured objectively e.g. school attendance, conduct, perseverance, helpfulness, etc.

In this policy we will however only concentrate on the writing of examinations.

2. THE VALUE OF EXAMINATIONS AND TESTS

- 2.1 It gives the educator a chance to see if his / her teaching methods have brought about the desired change envisaged by the aim of the lesson.
- 2.2 It serves to indicate the level of knowledge and skills the learner possesses. Where shortcomings or problems are detected, they can be diagnosed and remedial work can be done.
- 2.3 The results of tests and examinations are of value to the parent.
- 2.4 Testing plays an important motivational role. It forces learners to revise (study) their work, in order to give an account of their prowess.

3. CLASSIFICATION OF TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

3.1 The Essay Type

The answer to this type of test question can be anything from a few sentences, to paragraphs or an essay. A start with this type of question should already be made in Grade 5.

3.2 The Objective Test

This type of test consists of short test items which have short, plain and unambiguous answers. Because a larger number of questions can be asked, testing can be wider. There are a large number of these questions *inter alia*

3.2.1 Recall Questions

- Which mountain range in S.A. is the largest?
- When did World War II end?

3.2.2 Right or Wrong Questions

A statement is made and the learner has to say if it is right or wrong / true or false.

- A barometer is used to measure temperature (true / false).
- Mr. Mandela spent 27 years on Robben Island (true / false).

3.2.3 Completing of Sentences

- The is the largest river in Africa?
- The first democratic government of South Africa was elected in.....

3.2.4 Multiple Choice Questions

Here we can distinguish between two types, e.g. a simple and a more difficult question.

Simple MCQ:

- Penicillin was discovered by (Flemming; Stevenson).
- The telephone was invented by (Bell; Pasteur).

More difficult MCQ:

- Plant leaves wilt when
 - water absorption exceeds water loss
 - water loss exceeds water absorption
 - the same amount of water is released as was absorbed
 - the humidity is high

4. CRITERIA FOR A GOOD QUESTION

- 4.1 It should stimulate thought.
- 4.2 The question should be clear and unambiguous. Avoid language that is too abstract for the particular age group.
- 4.3 Questions must not pose an opportunity for vague answers.

5. FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN DRAWING UP A TEST OR EXAMINATION

- 5.1 Criteria for a good question (par. 4a – c).
- 5.2 The amount of questions asked in the subsections of an examination must take the importance of the section into consideration.
- 5.3 The duration of the examination is important. Use the time as prescribed by the Education Department.
- 5.4 The marks allocated and the time given for a particular examination must be written on the question paper.
- 5.5 The first questions on an examination paper must be relatively easy getting progressively more difficult. A wide variety of questions ranging from fairly easy to most difficult should be included in an examination question paper.
- 5.6 When a new type of question is included for the first time in a question paper, clear instructions must be given on how to answer it.
- 5.7 In the event of a written examination every learner must receive his / her own copy of the question paper.
- 5.8 Typing errors must be corrected before a question paper is duplicated.
- 5.9 The marks for a subsection should appear after every such subsection, regardless of the total marks awarded for a question paper.
- 5.10 No question paper can be properly marked without a memorandum. A comprehensive memorandum which makes provision for all relevant / possible answers to the questions must be drawn up.
- 5.11 The questions and memorandums should be on the same page. It makes the work of the examiners / moderators easier.

6. WRITING OF EXAMINATIONS

Thorough supervision / invigilation is necessary during an examination, even during the shortest class tests. The educator must not place learners in a position to be dishonest, but should also not create the impression that dishonesty is suspected.

7. POST-EXAMINATION TREATMENT

- 7.1 Tests and examinations should be thoroughly and objectively marked.
- 7.2 Marks must be added up correctly and the subtotals should preferably be written on the left-hand side of the examination script. The grand total must be written on the first page of the script.
- 7.3 Examination scripts must be marked within the allocated time as stipulated on the examination instruction. Marked scripts, accompanied by a copy of the memorandum, must be handed in at the principal's office not later than 10h00 on the date stipulated.
- 7.4 All marks must be written on the class lists immediately after moderation. The average mark and percentage should be calculated and in the case of subject teaching, handed to the class teacher.
- 7.5 The marks of the different subjects must then be written on the marking schedules and handed to the moderators for verification.
- 7.6 Examination scripts must be filed alphabetically or according to merit. Then they must be bound and handed in at the deputy principal's office, with a copy of the question paper and memorandum.
- 7.7 Discuss the question paper with the learners.
- 7.8 Do remedial work if necessary.

8. ORAL EXAMINATIONS

Oral examinations are informal. Allocation of marks must take place right through the year. At the end of the term all these marks are added up and averaged. The averaged mark serves as the examination mark for the term.

9. TYPING

Each educator is responsible for the typing of his / her own subject's examination question paper.

10. MODERATING

The examination (question papers, examination scripts, and mark sheets) will be moderated by the appointed moderator. Moderating must be done in green pen. The moderator must complete a School Base Assessment form, by filling in the names of the children in the grade that he/she moderated.

11. FREQUENCY OF EXAMINATIONS.

Compulsory examinations will be held in June (mid-year) and November (year-end) for grades 4 to 7.

12. EXAMINATION TIME-TABLES

Examination time-tables must be drawn up for all examinations.

The times allocated by the Regional office of the Department of Education, for these internal examinations, must be followed. Examinations must take place between the stipulated dates.

13. CLOSING OF THE SCHOOL DURING EXAMINATIONS

The stipulated times for closing the school earlier during exams, as laid down by the Regional Department of Education, must be adhered to.

14. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Learners must attend school up to the last day of the quarter. No learner should be allowed to stay home, even if all the examinations for the quarter has been completed.

An educational programme for the remaining official school days of the quarter, must be drawn up in consultation with the School Governing Body.

15. INFORMATION REQUIRED BY REGIONAL EDUCATION OFFICE

Any information required by the Regional Education office, regarding examinations, must be forwarded to them timeously.

16. EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

An Examination committee headed by a Deputy Principal, must be appointed by the school principal. The duties of this committee will be the following:

- 16.1 Drawing up examination time-tables.
- 16.2 Drawing up a list of invigilators.
- 16.3 Drawing up a list of moderators.
- 16.4 Drawing up security measures.
- 16.5 Drawing up a post-examination education programme in consultation with the educators and School Governing Body.
- 16.6 Drawing up return dates for all examination documentation e.g.
 - Question papers.
 - Marked examination scripts for moderating.
 - Schedule of marks.
 - Reports of progress.
- 16.7 Planning and post-examination meetings with educators.
- 16.8 Drawing up of a post-examination report for the principal and School Governing Body.

17. FORMAL ASSESSMENT TASKS FOR TERM 1-4 IN EACH GRADE AND FOR EACH SUBJECT (REFER TO DEPARTMENTAL INFO)

- 17.1 The assessment guidelines of the school should also be considered when assessing.
- 17.2 Learners need to be guided by informing them in advance of what needs to be prepared for assessment, when assessment will take place and how assessment will take place.
- 17.3 Purpose and scope of assessment
 - Assessment is the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information to assist teachers in making decisions about the progress of their students.
 - Assessment should provide evidence of student performance relative to learning outcomes and assessment standards as described in the National Curriculum Statement for grades R-12.
 - Classroom assessment should be both formal and informal, and should be used to provide feedback to students that supports and enhances their O

- Formal assessment tasks must be designed to provide systematic evaluation of student performance and progress, and evidence which can be used to evaluate student performance relative to the assessment standards for each specific learning programme, learning area or subject.
- For each learning programme, learning area or subject, the formal assessment tasks should include a range of appropriate activities. These may include examinations, tests, projects, oral presentations, written reports, demonstrations, performances, investigations, practical work, and creative writing.

17.4 Frequency of assessment

- Continuous assessment
 - Informal continuous assessment should form part of the daily classroom routine of teachers as a means to monitor student progress and to provide feedback to students. This informal monitoring should include homework checks, questioning, teacher observation of student work, discussion, brief informal oral or written tests etc.
 - Formal continuous assessment should take place on a regular basis and should be based on the prescriptions as laid down by the department of education for the learning area and grade. Each subject head is required to submit a subject assessment plan for the year which lists the following items for each grade:
 - the nature of formal continuous assessment tasks
 - the set date or completion date for each task
 - the mark allocation for each task
 - the proportion of marks that the task will contribute to the total final CASS mark
 - which assessment tasks will be included in the portfolio of every student
 - the teacher responsible for setting the assessment task

17.5 Examinations

- Formal examinations will take place in the second and fourth terms of each year. The second term examinations may be included as one of the formal CASS tasks for a subject or learning area.
- Mid-year and final reports to parents will reflect the CASS mark, the examination mark and the final marks achieved by each student. All marks will be given as percentages.
- On completion of examinations, students will be given an opportunity to review their papers.
- After the mid-year examination these scripts will be used for remediation purposes and to improve the examination technique of students.

17.6 Portfolios

- Learning area/subject portfolio: each learning area/subject head is required to keep a portfolio of all material related to the assessment of the subject for the year for each grade. The portfolio must include the following:
 - the assessment plan for the year for each grade
 - the formal CASS assessment tasks for each grade, including the rubric.
 - memorandum used to assess the task (once completed)

- a copy of the examination papers and marking memorandum for each grade (once completed)
- the learning programmes, work schedules and lesson plans (once completed) for each grade
- the subject averages, symbol and code distributions for each grade for the subject or learning area
- the mark list for each grade that lists each student's marks, for the formal assessment as well as the average mark for each assessment task
- a student portfolio guidelines document for each grade. It should list the assessment tasks that must be included in each student's portfolio for the subject.
- provides students with guidelines on how to manage their portfolio, including information on which evidence to store, how the material should be stored, and suitable ways of cataloguing their material
- provides students with guidelines on selecting additional material for inclusion with their portfolio, and how this should be stored and catalogued.
- Teacher portfolio: each teacher is required to keep a portfolio of all material related to his/her teaching and assessment for each class that he/she teaches. The portfolio must include the following:
 - The assessment plan for the year for each subject and grade that he/she teaches
 - The formal CASS assessment tasks for each subject and grade that he/she teaches, including the rubric or marking memorandum (once completed).
 - A copy of the examination papers and marking memorandum for each grade (once completed)
 - The work schedule(s) and lesson plan(s) (once completed) for each subject and grade that he/she teaches
 - The mark lists for each subject and grade that he/she teaches. A listing for each student of all marks included as part of the formal assessment, as well as the average mark for the class and the grade, for each assessment task.
 - The student portfolio guidelines document for each subject and grade that he/she teaches.
- Student portfolio: each student is required to keep a portfolio of evidence of his personal work for each subject as listed on the portfolio guidelines document for that subject. The material (evidence) must be stored and catalogued in the manner prescribed in the portfolio guidelines document provided by their subject teacher.

17.7 Work missed through absence or dishonesty:

- Students who miss an examination through ill-health are required to provide a doctor's certificate confirming this.
- Students who miss a standardised (CASS) test through ill health or other legitimate reasons will be expected to write the test on the day they return to school. Their mark may be adjusted at the teacher's discretion.
- Students who for legitimate reasons such as ill health miss tasks which form part of their CASS assessment should be given an opportunity to complete these tasks on the day that they return to school.

- Students who fail to hand in assignments or who miss tasks through absence for reasons that are not legitimate may be kept after school to complete said task.
- A student may be given 0 for a task only in instances of proven dishonesty or plagiarism.

17.8 Assessment concessions for learners with barriers to learning

On the advice of a competent professional such as a doctor, educational psychologist or psychometrist, a learner with temporary or permanent barriers to learning may be granted various concessions. The names of these learners will be listed on the notice board in the staffroom, together with the concession they are permitted. Concessions may include:

- additional time to complete tests and examinations
- spelling dispensations
- handwriting dispensations.

SIGNED AT _____ ON THIS ____ DAY OF _____ 20__

Governing Body Chair