

Press release: Independent Examinations Board (IEB) National Senior Certificate Examinations 2024

[13 January 2025]: The Independent Examinations Board (IEB) achieved an overall pass rate of **98.47%** in the 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations, the highest pass rate recorded in the past five (5) years. All candidates who successfully completed the 2024 IEB NSC examinations obtained a pass that qualifies them for tertiary study at one of three levels, plus those who attained an endorsed certificate:

- **89.37%** of the cohort achieved entry to **degree study**, compared to 88.59% in 2023.
- **7.56%** qualified for entry to **diploma study**, compared to 8.31% in 2023.
- **1.53%** achieved entry for study at the **Higher Certificate level**, compared to 1.57% in 2023.
- **0.02%** achieved an endorsed certificate.

14 990 full-time and 1314 part-time candidates (a total of **16 304**), wrote the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) NSC examinations in October and November 2024 at 275 examination venues. This is more than the 13 967 full-time candidates and 1213 part-time candidates, a total of 15 180 in 2023.

The increase of **1 124** comprises of 292 candidates from nine new schools that wrote the IEB NSC examinations for the first time in 2024. The balance of 832 comes from schools that have been writing the IEB NSC examination for years. Both these figures speak to the significant growth that the IEB continues to witness.

The IEB takes pride in announcing that the 2024 NSC examination session was conducted with unwavering integrity, entirely free of any irregularities that could have compromised its credibility.

Confidence Dikgole, CEO of the IEB says the Class of 2024 stands as a testament to resilience and perseverance, having faced the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic during their formative high school years.

"In Grade 8, amidst the severe lockdown of 2020, they encountered disruptions to foundational learning, adapted to new modes of education, and navigated the psychological impacts of uncertainty and isolation. While these challenges may not have directly affected their Grade 12 year, they undoubtedly shaped their academic journey. Their ability to overcome these obstacles highlights their determination and commitment, making their achievements in the 2024 NSC examinations even more commendable.

"The ubiquitous use of technology is something that also cannot be ignored. There is a body of research suggesting that smart phones have potential to raise mental health issues as well as impacting on the concentration of young people to study, resulting in shorter attention spans. Some schools have started curtailing their use and availability during the school day. The Class of 2024 marks a generation increasingly shaped by these technological advancements, including the use of Generative AI in learning. While these tools may have supported personalised learning and accessibility to information, they also highlight the growing need for

cultivating critical thinking and responsible technology use in education. The IEB continues to adapt its assessments to ensure that they measure genuine understanding and skills in a rapidly evolving academic landscape," adds Dikgole.

Despite the issues raised above, the Class of 2024 achieved an outstanding degree study pass rate of **89.37%**, marking the highest rate recorded in the past five (5) years. This remarkable accomplishment warrants special recognition and underscores the exceptional quality of performance demonstrated by this cohort.

In keeping with its commitment to inclusive assessment, the IEB offered Accommodations and Adapted Papers to learners who needed them. These provisions ensure that all students have fair access to the examination content while preserving the integrity and fairness of the NSC exams. This practice is internationally recognised, demonstrating a dedication to providing equal opportunities for every learner to showcase their knowledge and abilities, regardless of their circumstances. It upholds the principles of inclusive education, fostering a more equitable and comprehensive approach to assessment worldwide.

Accommodations were approved for 10,95% of candidates, totalling 1 785 out of **16 304** candidates, for the 2024 NSC Examination session.

Question papers were adapted as follows:

- a) **Hearing Impairment:** Fifteen subjects underwent adaptations for five candidates with hearing impairment. These adaptations included techniques such as bolding, underlining, use of white space, and embedded glossary.
- b) **Brailed Papers for Visual Impairment:** One subject was transcribed into Braille, for a candidate with visual impairment.
- c) **Visual Impairment:** Adaptations were made for the one candidate with visual impairment in 6 subjects.

The IEB closely monitored the writing of the 2024 NSC examinations at 274 out of 275 examination venues using real-time electronic video surveillance systems. Additionally, physical monitoring took place at 66 examination centres. This monitoring ensures the integrity and security of the examination process, while also enabling the prompt identification and resolution of any irregularities that might affect the validity of the results.

The 2024 IEB NSC examinations were quality assured by Umalusi, the Quality Assurance Council for the General and Further Education and Training. The quality assurance entailed moderation of question papers, monitoring of the writing of the examinations, verification of marking, standardisation of marks. The aim of quality assurance conducted by Umalusi on the IEB examinations is to ensure the credibility, fairness, and consistency of the assessment processes and outcomes. By reviewing and approving the IEB assessments and examinations, Umalusi ensures that the examinations meet national standards and uphold the integrity of the education system. This process helps maintain public trust in the qualifications awarded by the IEB, contributing to the overall quality and reliability of education in South Africa.

In approving release of the 2024 IEB NSC results, Umalusi indicated that having studied all the evidence presented to them by the IEB, *"the Executive Committee (EXCO) of Umalusi Council concluded that the examinations were administered largely in accordance with the Regulations Pertaining to the Conduct, Administration, and Management of the National Senior Certificate Examinations. There were no systemic irregularities reported that might*

*have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of the **November 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC)** examinations administered by the IEB".*

The IEB and its Board extend heartfelt congratulations to the NSC Class of 2024! A special recognition goes to the teachers, parents, guardians, and all those who have supported these learners on their academic journey. Despite the challenges faced, the Class of 2024's remarkable performance proves that dedication, persistence, and resilience are the keys to success. To those who didn't reach their goals, don't lose hope. South Africa's education system offers various paths for success. We encourage learners to explore these options to chart their way to future achievements.

Special announcement for the candidates:

The closing date for the application for remarking is 31 January 2025 and the results from remarking will be released on 1 March 2025. The closing date for learners who qualify to enrol for the May/June examination is 14 March 2025.

Additional information

Combined Abitur-NSC 2024

The Combined Abitur-NSC is a qualification offered by the German Schools in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria. The qualification consists of five subjects assessed by the IEB and seven subjects assessed by the German Education authorities. Through this government-to-government agreement, successful learners in the Combined Abitur-NSC are recognised by German education authorities for entry to German universities and by the South African education authorities for entry to South African universities. Of the 79 candidates who offered this qualification, 75 (94.94%) passed with entry to degree study. The IEB sees its involvement with this qualification as a means of keeping South African students in touch with global standards and developments.

Background for media

- The IEB had **14 990** full-time and **1 314** part-time candidates in Grade 12 in 2024. A total of **16 304** candidates writing at 275 IEB registered examination centres across the country as follows:

Province	2024		2023	
	Number of Candidates	Number of Schools	Number of Candidates	Number of Schools
Eastern Cape	640	15	667	15
Free State	188	5	178	5
Gauteng	9 567	138	9 124	135
KZN	2 392	39	2 285	38
Limpopo	605	14	413	12
Mpumalanga	413	7	504	9
Northern Cape	128	3	305	6
North West	299	5	97	2
Western Cape	2 072	30	1 607	26
TOTAL	16 304	256	15 180	248

The total number of examination venues 275, includes centres that deal only with part-time candidates and centres that host more than one examination venue, namely distance education providers.

About the IEB

The IEB is an independent assessment body, separate from the public examinations body; the Department of Basic Education. The IEB operates within the constraints of national legislation and provisions of the national quality assurance body, Umalusi.

The IEB is accredited by Umalusi; Quality Assurance Council for the General and Further Education and Training to offer examinations in the schooling and adult education sectors for the Grade 12 examinations and the GETC ABET (NQF Level 1) examinations respectively. The IEB examinations are quality assured by Umalusi to ensure standards are maintained, and that the examinations are fair, valid and reliable.

The IEB offers examinations for the IEB registered schools at the Grade 12 level, in line with national policy, based on the National Curriculum Statements and using various forms of assessment, including final summative examination and continuous assessment – i.e. orals, practicals and portfolios. So the IEB NSC examinations are assessed on the CAPS Curriculum of the Ministry of Basic Education in South Africa.

The IEB is dedicated to upholding a system that maintains high-quality standards, prioritizing the interests of South African learners for whom education is a constitutional right.

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