



UCT ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL

POLICIES

Assessment and Promotion Requirements Policy



in collaboration with
VALENTURE INSTITUTE





OVERVIEW

Purpose	The purpose of this document is to outline the rules for Grade Promotion, Progression and Retention of learners for a grade to ensure that teams involved are clear on the prescripts and requirements that must be applied when executing on finalising the end of grade promotion status for each learner.
Custodian	Head of Academics School Assessment Irregularity Committee Progression Committee
Approval Authority	Chief Academic Officer
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1. Introduction

Assessment is central to teaching and learning experiences, and it is critical that all school stakeholders have as much knowledge as possible about a learner's development. Assessments are designed to improve learner learning, monitor effectiveness of programmes and provide future directions, consolidate the concepts being covered and provide an opportunity to embed the knowledge gained into longer-term memory.

A further reason for assessment (particularly School Based Assessments assessments) is to give the learner a chance to become familiar with exam-based questioning and the associated final examination skills. It is imperative that both learners and guardians have a clear understanding of the reasons for assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success and the tools used to make consistent judgements.

The key aim of assessments designed by UCT Online High School is the assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning. It is not this policy's intention to set out the various means by which assessment will take place. Assessment practices are determined by the team members responsible for teaching and learning, pedagogy, and curriculum design. They will be informed by the requirements of each individual course, any requirements set down by our accreditation and registration partners (where applicable) and nationally prescribed curriculum. Guardians and learners are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the assessment practices of their respective subjects.



2. Scope and Legislative Framework

This policy applies to learners enrolled with UCT Online High School. New admissions select their subjects during the process and this is handled separately in accordance with the Admissions Policy and Academic Handbook. This Policy was developed in line with the following National Policies and Regulations.

- A. The National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12. This comprises Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for all approved school subjects.
- B. The National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grade R – 12.
- C. The National Protocol for Assessment, Grades R – 12.

3. Definitions

Informal Assessment: Tasks that assess small amounts of learning. They are very important in helping a learner gradually assimilate the learning objectives being covered in an organised and continuous way. It helps the learner gauge how well they are grasping particular concepts or skills within the learning path ahead of higher-stakes assessments at the end of a term or semester.

School based assessment: These are tasks that assess larger volumes of work. They are in the form of cycle tests, projects, exams, orals, practical tasks, written tasks and the assessed content covers a number of topics. This form of assessment gives a good indication as to how well a learner can integrate information from different topics as they can effectively assess higher-order thinking. These assessments take place at the end of the teaching and learning cycle.

Self Assessment: The learner assesses their own progress, using a simple marking guide or rubric. Suitable for baseline or formative assessments.

Promotion: means the movement of a learner from one grade to the next when that learner *meets the academic promotion requirements of that specific grade*.

Progression: means the advancement of a learner from one grade to the next based on various factors in spite of the learner not meeting the academic promotion requirements.

Condonation – means the relaxation of promotion requirements as contemplated in this document and specifically allowed for by the Department of Basic Education and SACAI.

Retention: Grade retention is the practice in which learners are required to repeat a grade because they did not meet the promotion requirements, and are not eligible for progression or condonation.

4. Academic Committees

There are two important academic committees that every UCT Online High School learner and guardian must know about. As mentioned below, these committees play an important role in promoting ethical conduct in formal assessments.

4.1 Promotion and Progression Committee

The Promotion and Progression Committee is responsible for overseeing the process of determining learners' promotion status. The mandate of the Committee is to establish whether a learner should be retained in the grade they are currently in, or progressed to the next grade. Only once the Committee has formally signed-off on the Promotion Schedule(s) will the outcomes be considered final and



academic reports can then be released. At the end of each academic year / grade learners need to receive a Promotion Status based on their academic performance.

Members

- Chief Academic Officer
- Head of Academics
- Academic Managers

4.2 School Assessment Irregularity Committee

The School Assessment Irregularity Committee (SAIC) is dedicated to maintaining the fairness and credibility of all assessments conducted within our school. The committee addresses any irregularities that may arise during internal school based assessments (SBAs), Cycle Tests or examinations to ensure compliance with both SACAI and national standards and foster a culture of academic honesty. The committee comprises of the following members:

- **Chief Academic Officer:** Leads the committee
- **Head of Academics:** Manages academic programs, ensures curricular integrity and oversees all assessment-related activities.
- **Academic Managers:** Oversee specific subject areas and contribute expertise on assessment matters.

5. Assessments and Examination Rules

All programmes include informal assessment, and school based assessments (SBA) Specific details regarding assessment are stipulated in the Academic Handbook. Final National Senior Certificate Examinations, taken in October/November of a learner's Grade 12 year, are set by the examining body and must take place at a physical venue.



5.1 Assessment submission

Assessments are submitted on the UCT Online High School Campus and the timeline of submission is communicated on the online campus.

5.2 School Based assessment regrade

- Learners or guardians may request a regrade of a marked formal assessment within the academic term or during the termly appeals process. However, no re-grades will be considered after a summative assessment has been written.
- Please note that a regrade request may result in an increase, decrease, or no change in assessment marks.

5.2 Grade queries

- If a learner, or their guardian(s), wishes to query the grading of a formal assessment on the basis of picking up an error, a grading query can be submitted by the learner on the guardian portal within the academic term or during the termly appeals process.
- Please note that the grading queries are limited to terms 1, 2 and 3. There will be no grading queries allowed for term 4.
- All the grading queries will be reviewed and completed as soon as reasonably possible. Written feedback will be provided to both the learner and the guardian.
- The outcome of the grading appeal is final and no further questions regarding the same issue will be responded to.



6. Learner Submission Errors

UCT Online High School enables learners to be custodians of their own online high school academic journey through orientation courses. Instructive and experiential training in the General Orientation Course provides the opportunity for learners to understand and practise proper submission processes for the assessment submissions they will encounter in their learning path with UCT Online High School.

This is to ensure learners are equipped with the necessary administrative skills and experience for the submission process prior to commencing their subject courses. As a result, learners are able to focus on the academic work in their academic modules and assessments and minimise anxiety and delays associated with incorrect submissions.

6.1 Policy summary

- All UCT Online High School enrolled learner assessment submissions will be marked as submitted. If the marker cannot mark the submission due to a learner submission error, the learner may receive zero for the assessment.
- A learner may request a **resubmission** for a formal assessment that have been graded zero provided the following criteria is met;
 - The assessment is a formal assessment, but not a Cycle Test or Exam component.
 - It has been graded.
 - The learner has remaining resubmission credits for the given term.
 - The resubmission hard deadline for the module has not passed.
- Learner scripts must be uploaded directly on the OLC and no manual upload requests for cycle tests and examinations would be allowed.



- Learners are required to submit correct assessments and will be marked on what is submitted. Learners have the responsibility to ensure they have completed the review and practice submissions in the General Orientation Course to ensure they understand how to, and have successfully been able to, submit assessments. This includes Listening comprehensions, scanning and submitting single page and multi-page documents, saving and sharing video files, saving and downloading documents, Cycle test invigilation.
- Learners have the responsibility to ensure they read and understand the instructions for each assessment in the learning path carefully before continuing with their submission.
- **No formal SBAs or informal assessments may be typed** including cycle tests, examinations, and formal assessments. Learners will receive 0 for the typed sections of the assessment unless they have a typing concession. Exceptions to this policy include:
 - Visual Arts Sourcebook & Artwork submissions.
 - Assessments which require PowerPoint Presentations.
 - Information Technology or Computer Applications and Technology PATs
- If a learner submission in the learning path is interrupted on a final submission attempt and the learner is unable to submit in the allocated time, they must inform the Support Team as soon as they are able to provide evidence (in the form of a screenshot of the error with the date and time visible).

6.2 Cycle Tests and examinations

Cycle tests and examinations make up a large percentage of a learners' mark. These happen in pre-scheduled time slots, under proctored conditions. Before the scheduled cycle test and exam, learners must have signed up and tested the web browser version of The Invigilator App to ensure that they know how to use TIA.



The following will apply to cycle test and exam submissions:

- All cycle tests and exam scripts must be submitted directly on the Online Learning Campus. Scripts must not be uploaded on the TIA. Scripts uploaded on TIA will be rejected. As a result, a learner will receive a zero for that specific assessment.
- Should a learner submit an incorrect document, they will receive zero and will not be granted a chance to resubmit.
- Should a learner submit only parts of the test or exam, they will be marked on what is received.
- Should a learner submit an illegible document, they will be marked on what can be read.
- Should a learner experience any errors during a Cycle Test or Examination, they must contact the Support Team immediately, with as much context as reasonably possible and valid evidence of the error, with time and date visible.

7. National Senior Certificate Examinations

The National Senior Certificate ("NSC") examinations (also known as matric exams) are written by Grade 12 learners at the end of the year. The NSC exams are external exams administered by SACAI. Unlike cycle tests and SBAs, NSC exams are written in-person at a physical exam venue.

7.1 South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute

- a. The South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) is a private assessment body accredited by Umalusi to assess the National Senior Certificate (NSC).
- b. UCT Online High School is registered with SACAI to ensure the quality of its educational offering and Grade 12 learners write their final NSC examinations through SACAI.



- c. UCT Online High School does not set external examinations for subjects and programmes. All external examinations are set by the examination body for the subjects and programmes a learner is enrolled for. Examinations are written under proctored conditions.
- d. SACAI is primarily responsible for the administration and quality assurance of the NSC examinations. This includes managing all logistical and administrative processes related to the conduct of the NSC examinations, including:
 - i. Registering the learners for the NSC final examinations.
 - ii. Reviewing and approving Grade 12 subject changes, accommodations and concession applications.
 - iii. Securing and assigning learners to examination venues.

7.2 Guardians and learners

The Grade 12 year is significantly more demanding than prior grades. Learner success is directly influenced by many factors, including guardian involvement and adherence to SACAI and school requirements. Guardians are therefore responsible, amongst others, for the following:

- a. **School communication:** UCT Online High School's main form of communication with guardians is through emails. Guardians are thus required to regularly check their emails and timeously respond to the school's emails before the stipulated deadlines. It is your responsibility to:
 - i. Ensure that you are subscribed to all communication.
 - ii. Inform the school if your contact details have changed.
 - iii. Inform the school if your residential address has changed.



- b. **Payment of examination fees:** the tuition fees are not inclusive of exam fees levied by the examining body. The guardian is responsible for the payment of the examination fees. The exam fees are charged and paid to SACAI. The school merely collects and pays the fees to SACAI on behalf of guardians and learners. Failure to pay the exam fees by the stipulated deadline, means that the learner will not be able to write the NSC final examination.
- c. **Payment of additional fees:** the guardians are also responsible for additional Grade 12-related fees, including fees relating to concession applications and separate venues for practical exams.
- d. **Support and engagement:** guardians must support their learners, including regular monitoring of learner progress and performance via the Guardian Portal and direct learner check-ins.
- e. **Examinations rules:** guardians and learners must familiarise themselves with the exam rules. Rules regarding all facets of examinations are set by the examination body for the subjects and programmes. These rules will be provided to learners and must be adhered to at all times.
- f. **Writing examinations:** It is the learner's sole responsibility, under the care of their guardian(s), to ensure attendance at an exam that has been registered for. Guardians and learners are entirely responsible for the arrival of a learner at the allocated examination venue according to the date(s) and time(s) stipulated on the examination timetable.

7.3 National Senior Certificate

- The National Senior Certificate is the official Grade 12 school leaving qualification. The certificate is issued by Umalusi to learners that participated and passed the NSC examinations.



- Umalusi and SACAI do not directly deal with learners and guardians. All the certificates are collected by SACAI from uMalusi, and distributed to the school. the NSC certificates from Umalusi and distributes them to the school.
- The school distributes the certificates to learners and guardians. This is usually preceded by a school communication on how the certificates will be distributed. Guardians are required to confirm the delivery address and contact number before the certificate is dispatched. The school cannot be held liable for certificates that are delivered to a wrong address.

8. Academic Reports

Termly academic reports will be issued to learners and guardians at specific intervals. For UCT Online High School learners these will be termly (4 times a year), following the South African school calendar. Please note, Grade 12 learners will not receive a Term 4 report, since they write their final examinations with SACAI, and SACAI issues a Statement of Results in January of the following year.

Reports will only be issued upon completion of all termly modules and the associated assessments for that term. Failure to complete the modules and assessments may result in reports being released late. Please note that from Term 2 2026, a learner report will only be regenerated where a mark appeal has resulted in the learner's achievement level changing. A report will not be regenerated where there is a mark change but the achievement level remains the same.

9. Excusal from school based assessments

The learners are required to write and submit all the school based assessments to be eligible for promotion. Learners who do not participate and submit SBAs will receive a zero and this increases the potential risk of being retained in the grade.



This notwithstanding, a learner with a valid reason may be excused from an SBA. An excusal is a school decision to exclude learners from completing any formal assessment without affecting their end of year results. Once an excusal is granted, the learner is excluded from all relevant formal assessments during a specific time period.

9.1 Requirements for excusal

An excusal is not automatically granted. A guardian must officially request that a learner be excused from a specific formal assessment/s with clear reasons. The following are valid reasons for an excusal as set out by the DBE:

A. Illness (physical or psychological)

A valid medical certificate as issued by a registered medical practitioner must be submitted.

B. Family bereavement

The death of an immediate family member as supported by a death certificate.

C. Appointments at court, social services or any other official agency for a period of 5 days or more.

Written evidence from the legal team, presiding officer, social worker or other official handling the case to be submitted as proof.

D. Giving birth

Subject to written confirmation by a registered medical practitioner.

E. Acts of nature

These refer to events outside of human control. Institutions might be required to submit evidence of such event(s) having occurred and/or reports from counsellors, psychiatrists etc as needed.

F. Infrastructure collapse



- Serious wifi/electricity and other infrastructure collapse that affects the area where the learner resides for more than 5 days.
- Official documentation from the relevant organisation is needed.

G. Attending a religious or cultural obligation

Learners attending religious or cultural obligations, require a letter from the parent(s) / guardians.

H. Representing the country or province in a sporting or cultural event

Official letter of invitation to the event required or from the convenor of the sports or cultural team.

I. Any other valid reason as determined by the Head of Academics

9.2 Grade 12 Excusals

- a. Grade 12s may be excused from Cycle Tests and exams with the following exceptions:
 - No excusals for CAT & IT theory papers in Term 1 cycle tests. An additional opportunity will be made available to learners with a valid reason for missing the paper in the final week of 23 March.
 - No excusals for June exams as learners will have an additional opportunity to write during that holiday (29 June - 3 July) where they have a valid reason for missing the exam.
 - No excusals for prelims.
- b. No excusals will be allowed for SBAs, all SBAs are expected to be completed by the hard deadline.



9.3 Grade 8 - 11 Excusals

Grades 8–11 learners may still request excusals, but all excusal requests must be submitted by a defined deadline each term. Late excusals cannot be submitted through the appeals process.

9.4 Excusal deadlines

	Grading appeals & excusals open	Grading appeals & excusals close	Grading appeals & sanction appeals open	Grading appeals & sanction appeals close
Term 1	12 January	27 March	9 April	10 April
Term 2	7 April	26 June	23 July	24 July
Term 3	20 July	18 September	8 October	9 October
Term 4	5 October	20 November	10 December: Please note no grading appeals will be accepted. Only appeals on retention.	January 2027

9.5 What is not a reason for an excusal

- Travelling
- Holidays
- Loadshedding



- Any connectivity or network-related issues, errors, or difficulties
- Preparing for a sports or cultural event
- Financial suspension
- Any device-related issues, errors, or difficulties
- Any technical issues, errors, or difficulties with The Invigilator App
- Planned or unplanned power outages lasting less than five consecutive days
- Any issues, errors, or difficulties resulting from user error.

10. Promotion and Progression

Learners who are enrolled in the National Senior Certificate offering navigate through phases in their educational journey. Each phase (E.g. Senior Phase) is made up of individual year grades (E.g. Grade 8, 9); and each of these phases and grades have requirements for promotion into the successive grade as codified in regulations. Compliance with these promotion requirements is imperative for both the School and learners.

10.1 Promotion requirements

a. Senior Phase (Grades 7-9)

Senior Phase Promotion Requirements for Grades 7 – 9. A learner must offer nine subjects and achieve the following minimum standards:

- Home Language (HL) Level 4 (Adequate Achievement) (50% – 59%).
- First Additional Language (FAL) Level 3 (Moderate Achievement) (40% – 49%).
- Mathematics Level 3 (Moderate Achievement) (40% – 49%).
- Any THREE (3) of the other required subjects Level 3 (Moderate Achievement) (40% – 49%).
- Any TWO (2) of the remaining subjects Level 2 (Elementary Achievement) (30% – 39%).



Weightings

When calculating the final promotion marks, the following weightings should apply:

Languages:

- School Based Assessment component = 70%
- End of year examination = 30%

EMS, Creative Arts, Life Orientation, Mathematics, Technology, Social Science:

- School Based Assessment component = 60%
- End of year examination = 40%

Natural Science:

- School Based Assessment component = 40%
- End of year examination = 60%

Instructional time

The instructional time for grades 7, 8 and 9 is 27,5 hours per week. Learners who miss the equivalent of 20 school days a year which is equal to 110 active academic engagement hours are at risk of being retained.

b. Further Education and Training Phase (G10-12) ¹

A learner must offer the following seven (7) subjects and achieve the following minimum requirements:

¹ Refer to [Annexure B](#)



- Home Language: 40%
- Two (2) other subjects: learners must achieve a minimum of 40% in each subject.
- Three (3) other subjects: learners must achieve a minimum of 30% in each subject.

Weightings

When calculating the final progression, the following weightings should apply:

All subjects (except for LO):

- School Based Assessment component = 25%
- End of year examination = 75%

Life Orientation:

- School Based Assessment component = 75%
- End of year examination = 25%

Instructional time

The minimum legislated instructional time for grades 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12 is 27,5 hours per week. Learners who miss the equivalent of 20 school days a year which is equal to 110 active academic engagement hours are at risk of being retained.

10.2 Progression

Progression can be used to prevent a learner from being retained in a phase for a period exceeding four years as stipulated in the Admission policy for ordinary public schools as published as Government Notice 2432, Government Gazette, Vol.



400, No. 19377 of 19 October 1998, provided that the underperformance of the learner in the previous grade is addressed in the grade to which the learner has been progressed.

Condonations are required to be approved by the Promotion & Progression Committee based on the criteria outlined in this policy.

Progression will only be applied in cases where it is considered in the **best interest of the learner** to be progressed to the next grade. Considering this, progression must be implemented subject to the following principles.

- (a) The learner must have not met the promotion requirements for their Grade, and previously retained in that specific phase.
- (b) Regular school attendance. The learner must not be absent for more than 20 school days, without a valid reason, as this constitutes irregular attendance.
- (c) The SBA requirements for all subjects must be satisfied, including those subjects where the minimum requirement was not met.
- (d) A progressed learner must be provided with additional support.

Progression in Grades 10-12 does not guarantee the final certification of a learner in Grade 12 and such a learner must comply with the certification requirements as contemplated in paragraph 37(1)(a) of the policy document, National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12 to enable them to obtain a National Senior Certificate.

A learner may be progressed for one of more of the following reasons:

- 1. Previously retained in the phase
- 2. Condonation
- 3. Age



10.2.1 Previously retained in a phase

Progression can be used to prevent a learner from being retained in a Phase for a period exceeding 4 years. The learner must have not met the promotion requirements for their Grade, and previously retained/repeated a grade within that phase.

10.2.2 Condonations and mark adjustment

Senior Phase

- a) A mark adjustment of a maximum of 5% is allowed **in a maximum of three subjects** offered by the learner. This implies that a learner can be awarded a mark of between 1% - 5% of the mark attained by the learner if this will give the learner an achieved status.
- b) Thereafter, the condonation in mathematics must be applied. Where the learner has met all the requirements in respect of promotion from one grade to the next grade, except has not attained a level 3 (40% or higher) in Mathematics and therefore has to be retained, such a learner must be condoned in Mathematics.

Further Education and Training

No condonations will be applied in the Further Education and Training Phase except for the condonation that is applied by Umalusi in grade 12.

A condonation of a **maximum of one (1) subject** will only be applied by uMalusi to a Grade 12 candidate in the final National Senior Certificate examination in terms of the following-

- (i) if such a candidate requires a maximum of 2%, either to obtain a pass at 30% or 40%; and



- (ii) such a condonation is applied in only one subject, provided the application of the condonation allows the candidate to obtain the National Senior Certificate qualification.

10.2.3 Age Considerations

If the learner's age exceeds the maximum age for the grade, they may be progressed to the next grade.

Grade of Entry	Standard age at start of grade	Minimum age at start of grade	Maximum age at start of grade
8	14	12	16
9	15	13	17
10	16	14	18
11	17	15	19
12	18	16	20

11. Retention and Repetition

Retention

When a learner has not met the minimum promotion requirements, and does not qualify for Progression, they will be retained in the grade. A learner may only be retained once in the Senior Phase and once in the FET Phase in order to prevent the learner being retained in this phase for longer than four years. It is critical that repetition is recorded as a status indicator against a learner's record on the system so that future promotion periods maintain integrity.



12. Appeals

The learners enjoy the right to appeal their academic results. The right to appeal is intended to promote fairness, transparency and to correct any potential errors. The appeal must be submitted in writing with reasons before the stipulated deadline.

12.1 Termly Appeals

Learners and guardians will be provided an opportunity to appeal their termly results. Termly appeals for cycle tests and SBAs will take place at the end of each term. This will include appeals regarding academic dishonesty and TIA proctoring.

12.2 End of Year Appeals

The End of year appeals will only be available to learners who were progressed or retained. The appeal window will run into the new year and, where necessary, the progression committee will reconvene to sign-off on any changes to the schedule. The learner/guardian can only appeal a SBA once within the communicated appeals deadlines, and the outcome of the appeal is final.

12.3 Learner Report Regeneration

Depending on the outcome of the appeal and impact on the learner's promotion status, a report may be regenerated. It is important, however, to note that from term 2, a learner report will only be regenerated where a learner has an achievement level change.