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MARITZBURG COLLEGE

EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT
ACCOMMODATION AND CONCESSIONS

INTRODUCTION

(The Examinations and Assessment Accommodation and Concessions policy document is based on the various Department of Education policies and procedures and should be read in conjunction with these.)

- 1.1. As a fundamental human right in South Africa, everyone has the right to basic education and freedom from discrimination. Based on these rights, every learner has the right not to be discriminated against in any form. For this reason, the Department of Education (DoE) (hereafter referred to as the Department), as part of their policy, allows for certain accommodations and examination concessions during controlled test environments (examinations and tests).
- 1.2. Importantly, the granting of accommodation and concessions is not to provide a person with an unfair advantage. The purpose is to equalise the different barriers learners may face. When considering alternative or adapted assessments/examinations, the aim is to obtain an accurate reflection of the learner's knowledge and skills being assessed. The sole purpose should be for the learner who has the necessary potential to be given a fair opportunity to demonstrate whether he can meet assessment requirements. Accommodation and concessions will always commence as conservatively as possible in order to maintain the independence of the learner.
- 1.3. Accommodation and concessions may be granted to the following two categories of learners:
 - (i) An immigrant learner
 - (ii) A learner who experiences barriers to learning
- 1.4. Annexure A provides an overview of the different types of accommodation and concessions that may be available at the discretion of the Department.

IMMIGRANT LEARNERS

- 2.1. For the purpose of accommodation and concession, an immigrant learner is:
 - (i) A learner who is a child or a dependent of a diplomatic representative of a foreign government accredited in South Africa; or
 - (ii) A learner who:
 - First enrolled at, and entered a South African school in Grade 7 or a more senior grade, or
 - Having begun their schooling at a school in South Africa, attended a school outside of South Africa for two or more consecutive years after Grade 3 or its equivalent and has subsequently returned to South Africa.
- 2.2. An immigrant learner in Grades 8-9:
 - (i) Must offer the two required official languages and comply with the School Based Assessment requirements of both official languages offered,
 - (ii) May pass one of the required two official languages on at least First Additional Language level and obtain a rating of Moderate Achievement (Level 3) in that language, provided he has offered all the subjects and complied with all the promotion requirements for immigrant candidates as stipulated in paragraph 4(1) of the policy document, National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12.
- 2.3. An immigrant learner in Grades 10-12:
 - (i) May offer only one official language on at least First Additional Language level, provided it is the language of learning and teaching,
 - (ii) Must offer a replacement subject in lieu of the other language not offered,
 - (iii) Obtain a rating of 30% level in the language offer, provided that he has complied with the requirements for immigrant candidates as stipulated in paragraph 33(1) of the policy document, National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12.

- 2.4. To be classified as an immigrant candidate, the learner must be in possession of:
 - (i) The relevant official documentation issued by the Department of Home Affairs; and
 - (ii) The relevant official documentation issued by the school where the learner entered the South African school system for the first time.
- 2.5. An immigrant status application must be compiled and submitted upon admission to Maritzburg College.

LEARNERS EXPERIENCING BARRIERS TO LEARNING

- 3.1. The following learners are regarded as learners with special needs for whom measures should be taken to assist with the barriers to learning that they may face:
 - (i) Learners who have neurological barriers to learning
 - (ii) Learners whose hearing impairments present barriers to learning
 - (iii) Learners who have severe visual barriers to learning
 - (iv) Learners who have physical barriers to learning
 - (v) Learners who experience intellectual barriers to learning
 - (vi) Learners with multiple barriers to learning
 - (vii) Learners with severe behavioural and emotional barriers to learning
 - (viii) Learners with any medically assessed special need that may not fall under the above categories.
- 3.2. Learners with barriers to learning are considered for accommodation or concessions based on a full evaluation of the extent and severity of the barriers faced and not on a diagnosis alone.

SCHOOL BASED CONCESSIONS COMMITTEE

- 4.1. Accommodation and examination concessions undergo different levels of processing. The final decision regarding all accommodation and concessions lies with the Department; however, the process begins at school with a recommendation made to the Department by the multi-disciplinary team making up the School Based Concessions Committee (SBCC).
- 4.2. The SBCC at Maritzburg College performs the functions of the School Based Support Team (SBST) and the School Based Assessment Committee (SBAC) as per Department policies.
- 4.3. The following individuals form part of the SBCC:
 - (i) Deputy Principal (Head of Academics)
 - (ii) Deputy Principal (Head of Operations)
 - (iii) Concessions Coordinator
 - (iv) College Psychologist
 - (v) Supporting staff include teacher(s) of learners referred to the SBCC, as well as other members of staff involved with the learner (e.g., mentor teacher, day housemaster)
- 4.4. The SBCC is responsible for compiling and reviewing applications at school level and submitting these to the Department.
- 4.5. The SBCC is required to submit objective evidence to the Department that the learner is facing an internal or external barrier that will disadvantage them during examinations and assessments.

IMPORTANT PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO ACCOMMODATION AND CONCESSION ASSESSMENTS AND APPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The Department emphasises the fact that accommodation and examination concessions are granted only with exception to mainstream learners.
- 5.2. Accommodation and concessions are last resorts in an intervention strategy and other forms of support (including but not limited to various forms of academic support, medication, professional therapies, and involvement of parents/guardians) must be proven ineffective before applying for accommodation and concessions.
- 5.3. Independence, not scholastic achievement, is prioritised in the evaluation of learners.
- 5.4. Accommodation may not be allowed in order to compensate for a lack of language proficiency in a first additional language i.e., lags in language comprehension, sentence construction, and/or slight lags in reading and spelling.
- 5.5. Applications for accommodation and concessions must be done by the school on behalf of the learner. Applications/requests from parents/guardians will not be considered directly by the Department.
- 5.6. Applications are considered individually on merit.
- 5.7. Confirmation of eligibility for accommodation or concessions should be completed during the GET phase. Therefore, learners referred to the SBCC in the FET phase are unlikely to meet the necessary criteria to be recommended for applications to the Department.
- 5.8. Learners who write the NSC examination may not receive or apply for accommodation or concessions for the first time in Grade 12; except in the case of ad hoc concessions (Refer to 6.5.).

PROCEDURE

The following procedure is subject to change in accordance with developments in Departmental policies and procedures.

- 6.1. Identification
 - 6.1.1. Learners can be identified in the following ways:
 - (i) Recommendation by previous schools/educational institutions
 - If a learner has been granted formal concessions by the Department in their Grade 7 year, these concessions will remain in place for their Grade 8 and 9 years. Formal reapplication will be done in Grade 10 at the start of the FET phase in preparation for the NSC examinations. The learner is not guaranteed to be granted the same concessions at the time of reapplication.
 - If a learner received concessions at his primary school/previous high school (if entering Maritzburg College after Grade 8) internally (and not formally granted by the Department), such a learner will NOT automatically receive concessions at Maritzburg College. The complete procedure will be followed.
 - If a learner previously attended an independent school and has formal concessions granted by the IEB, such a learner will NOT automatically receive concessions at Maritzburg College. The complete procedure will be followed.
 - Parents/guardians must inform the school of previous learning disabilities when entering Maritzburg College in the first year of admission. The learner will be referred to the SBCC who will request supporting information from the learner's previous school if this has not already been received.

(ii) The class/subject teachers observe the learner's functioning and/or performance in class assessments and examinations during the GET phase at Maritzburg College. Teachers report potential candidates to the SBCC, and the complete procedure is followed.

- (iii) Recommendations by external psychologists, therapists, and medical specialists
- Reports from external professionals may be referred to the SBCC for consideration.
 - Reports from external professionals are only considered in conjunction with school-based observation and assessment and the complete procedure is followed.

6.2. Assessment and evaluation

- 6.2.1. Upon identification and referral to the SBCC, the SBCC evaluates the provided information to identify the type of assistance required and to determine the need for accommodation or concessions.
- 6.2.2. A file is created for learners and a copy of their Learner Profile is placed in this file. If the learner does not have a Learner Profile, one is created.
- 6.2.3. The relevant documentation is requested from relevant parties (schools, parents etc.) and required to be submitted to the Concessions Coordinator for filing.
- 6.2.4. The SBCC coordinates a school-based evaluation including Teacher Comment Forms (Annexure B), and obtaining examples of written scholastic work (e.g., an incomplete examination paper, illegible handwriting, spelling errors, etc.).
- 6.2.5. Learners are discussed individually at SBCC meetings and recommendations are made and recorded in the learner's file.
- 6.2.6. Recommendations are communicated to parents. Parents are expected to engage with the relevant teachers as well as external professionals and service providers directly in making necessary arrangements.
- 6.2.7. The SBCC, as per Department policies, focuses on promoting learner development of skills to achieve independence. Intervention (including but not limited to academic support and professional therapies) will be first line recommendations.
- 6.2.8. Recommended interventions should be applied and evidence of such retained before a learner is reviewed (or referred back to) the SBCC. When a learner is reviewed by the SBCC, the implementation of these recommendations and interventions will be evaluated prior to any application to the Department.
- 6.2.9. Should the recommended interventions be found ineffective, the SBCC will then compile an application and present recommendations regarding formal concessions to the Department.
- 6.2.10. Applications will only be sent to the Department where there is sufficient supporting evidence, and all documentation has been provided.

6.3. Application to the Department

- 6.3.1. Applications are submitted to the Department in the Grade 8 year (for those learners who have not been granted formal concessions for the GET phase in their Grade 7 year).
- 6.3.2. Applications are subject to review and resubmission in the Grade 10 year at the start of the learner's FET phase.
- 6.3.3. Applications are subject to review and resubmission at the beginning of the Grade 12 year.
- 6.3.4. The parent/guardian completes the Parent/Guardian Consent and Acknowledgement Form (Annexure C2).

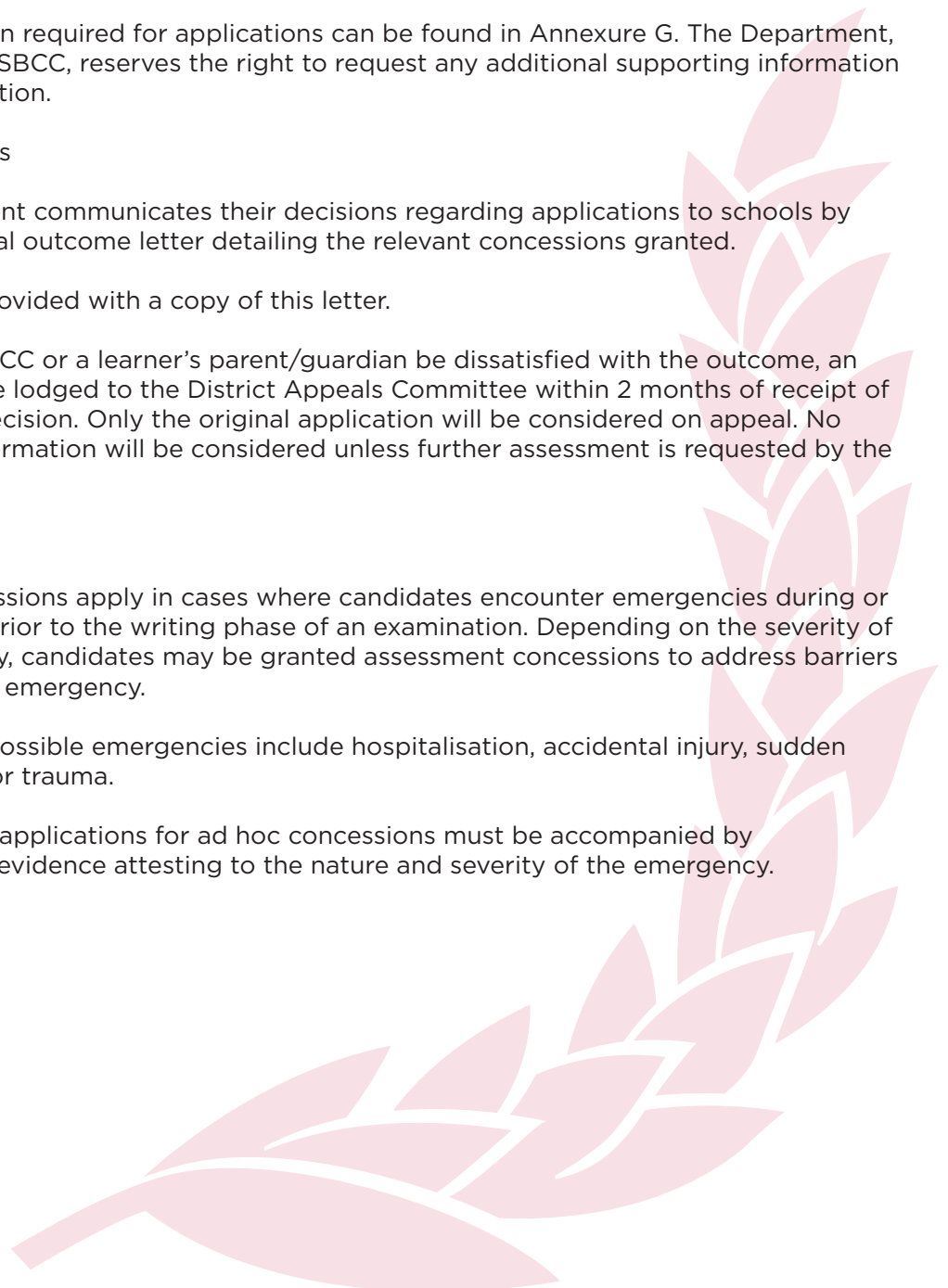
- 6.3.5. The SBCC undertakes to ensure that all supporting documents and reports provided by parents and teachers are compiled for the application as per the requirements of the Department.
- 6.3.6. Additional documentation and updated reports may be requested on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.3.7. Medical/other health professional and psychological reports are to be completed with consideration to relevant annexures (See annexures D, E, and F).
- 6.3.8. Professional reports and evidence of intervention as early as Foundation/Intermediate phase must be retained and submitted with every application.
- 6.3.9. While psychoeducational reports are a critical component of an application, any diagnosis and recommendations made by a specialist cannot be considered in isolation in the processes of recommending and granting concessions.
- 6.3.10. A final recommendation for the provision of concessions is made by the SBCC in accordance with the KZN Department of Education policies and procedures and applications are submitted to the Department for approval.
- 6.3.11. Documentation required for applications can be found in Annexure G. The Department, as well as the SBCC, reserves the right to request any additional supporting information or documentation.

6.4. Application Outcomes

- 6.4.1. The Department communicates their decisions regarding applications to schools by way of a formal outcome letter detailing the relevant concessions granted.
- 6.4.2. Parents are provided with a copy of this letter.
- 6.4.3. Should the SBCC or a learner's parent/guardian be dissatisfied with the outcome, an appeal may be lodged to the District Appeals Committee within 2 months of receipt of the original decision. Only the original application will be considered on appeal. No additional information will be considered unless further assessment is requested by the Department.

6.5. Ad hoc concessions

- 6.5.1. Ad hoc concessions apply in cases where candidates encounter emergencies during or immediately prior to the writing phase of an examination. Depending on the severity of the emergency, candidates may be granted assessment concessions to address barriers caused by the emergency.
- 6.5.2. Examples of possible emergencies include hospitalisation, accidental injury, sudden onset illness, or trauma.
- 6.5.3. Requests and applications for ad hoc concessions must be accompanied by documentary evidence attesting to the nature and severity of the emergency.



EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS PERTAINING TO LEARNERS WHO RECEIVE ACCOMMODATION OR CONCESSIONS

- 7.1. For Grades 8-11, the Concessions Coordinator coordinates the necessary arrangements for internal examinations in advance along with the learner, parent/guardian, teachers, and relevant school support staff. The Concessions Coordinator will communicate at the time what is required of the relevant parties.
- 7.2. For NSC examinations, necessary arrangements are overseen by the Deputy Principal (Head of Operations) to ensure that all accommodation and concessions arrangements are aligned with policy and do not constitute any irregularities.
- 7.3. For NSC examinations, the letter of approval from the District Based Accommodation/Assessment Committee must be pasted onto the desk of each candidate who has been granted accommodation/concessions stipulating what the accommodation/concessions are.
- 7.4. All provision of accommodation/concessions will be implemented as per official Department policies and procedures regarding invigilators, accommodation providers, and relevant documentary validation of procedures.



ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION/EXAMINATION CONCESSIONS

As per Government Gazette, No. 37652, 16 May 2014 (Approval of the Amendments to the Policy Document, National Policy pertaining to the Conduct, Administration, and Management of Examinations and Assessment for the National Senior Certificate)

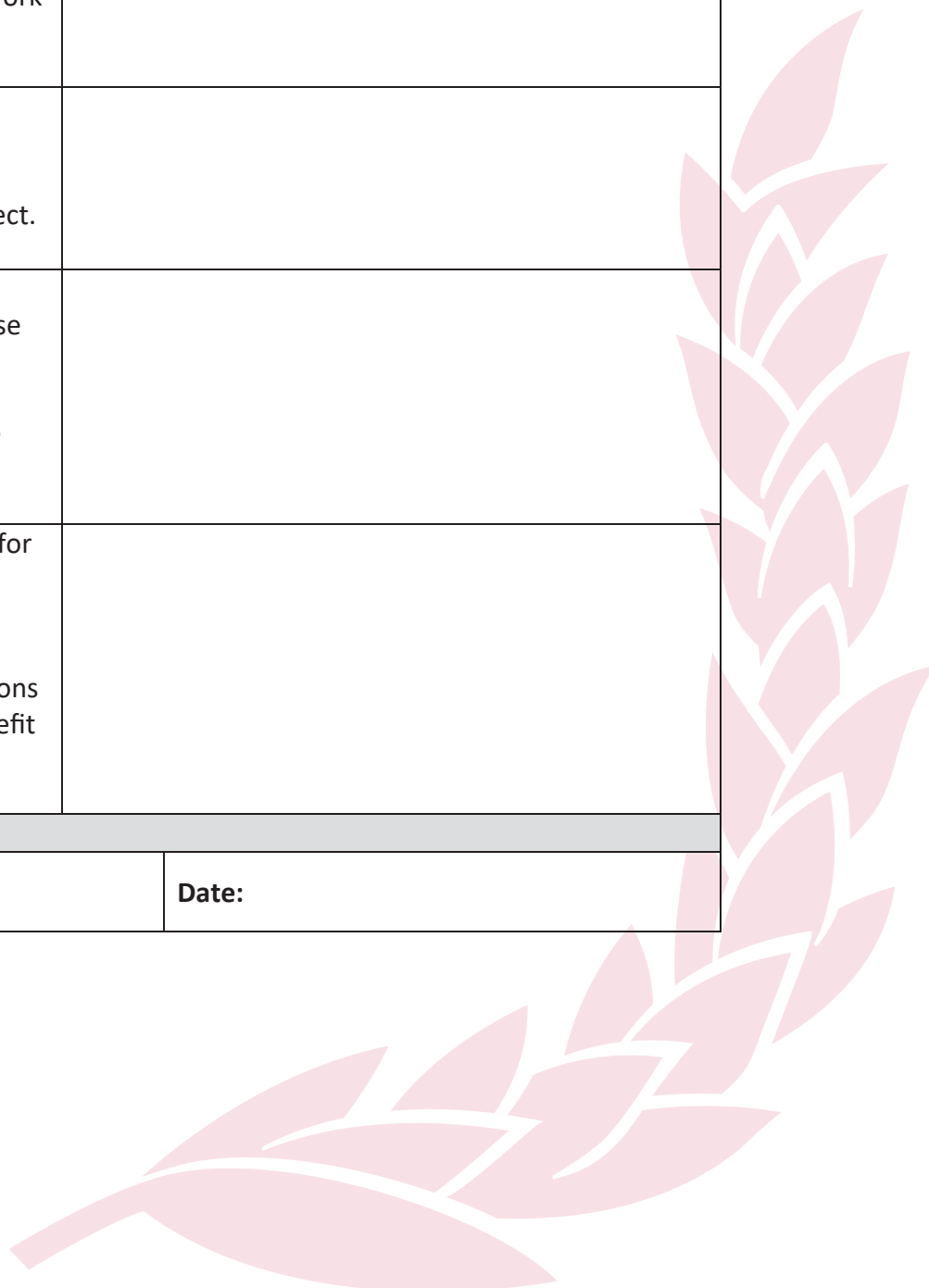
Depending on the severity of barriers experienced, the following options can be available at the discretion of the Provincial Assessment Committee:

Strategy/ Accommodation	Visual barriers/impaired vision/colour blindness	Deafness/hard of hearing	Physical barriers	Learning barriers	Behaviour/anxiety/ ADD/ADHD/autism /psychiatric disorders	Other medical conditions
Adaptation of questions	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Additional time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital Player/Recorder	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Braille	✓					
Computer/voice to text/text to voice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enlarged print	✓		✓			
Handwriting	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Medication/food intake	✓		✓			✓
Personal assistant			✓			✓
Prompter				✓	✓	
Reader	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Rest breaks	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Scribe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Separate venue	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sign language interpreter		✓				
Spelling		✓		✓		
Transcription of braille	✓			✓		
Video/DVD recorder/webcam		✓		✓		

ANNEXURE B

TEACHER COMMENT FORM

Learner name:		Grade:		
Teacher name:		Subject:		
Is the learner's behaviour conducive to learning? Please tick.	Never	Often	Sometimes	Always
Is the learner's work ethic conducive to learning? Please tick.	Never	Often	Sometimes	Always
Please provide a comparison of the learner's performance in classwork and tests/examinations.				
Please comment on specific observations regarding the learner's mastery of content, concepts and skills in your subject.				
What intervention do you think could benefit this learner? Please indicate interventions that you have implemented in your classroom and comment on the effectiveness of these.				
Do you feel that an application for specific accommodation/concessions is necessary? If so, please specify what accommodation/concessions you feel this learner would benefit from.				
Signature:		Date:		



ANNEXURE C

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORMS

C1. PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM RE SBCC

This consent form is to be signed by the parent/legal guardian upon identification of a learner to the SBCC.

I, _____, the parent/legal guardian of _____ hereby give permission for all supporting documentation and evidence provided for the purpose of accommodation/concession consideration to be forwarded to and accessed by the School Based Concessions Committee as appropriate.

I undertake to provide all required documentation to the SBCC and understand that I am responsible for supporting my child in arranging and undertaking the recommended interventions. I understand that should the documentation provided be insufficient, an application will not be made to the Department of Education. I understand that the final and formal accommodation/concessions decision is at the discretion of the Department of Education.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



ANNEXURE C

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORMS

C2. PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM RE DOE

This consent form is to be signed by the parent/legal guardian as part of the application process to the Department.

I, _____, the parent/legal guardian of _____ hereby give permission for all supporting documentation and evidence provided for the purpose of an accommodation/concession application to be forwarded to and accessed by the Department of Education concessions panel/s.

I understand that the final and formal accommodation/concessions decision is at the discretion of the Department of Education. I understand that any recommendations made by Maritzburg College regarding the application are not a guarantee of the Department of Education awarding the same or any accommodation/concession.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

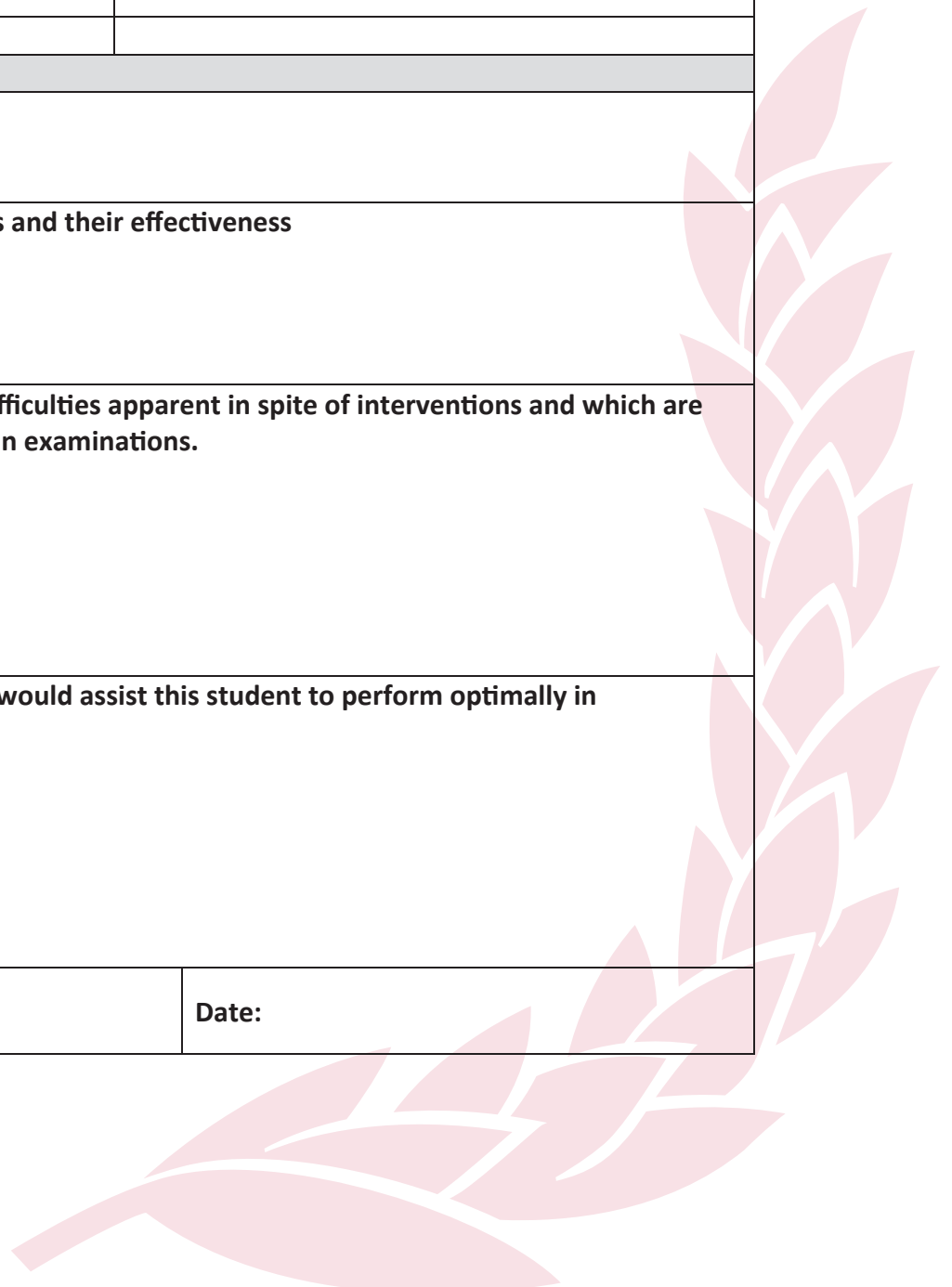


ANNEXURE D

MEDICAL REPORT TEMPLATE

This template is to serve as a guide. Medical reports in different formats on professional letterheads will be accepted but should include all below information

Name of Learner:	
D.O.B.:	
Assessed by:	
Profession:	
HPCSA Registration:	
Practice No.:	
Facility/practice where assessment was conducted:	
Date of assessment/s:	
Contact No.:	
Email address:	
Diagnosis/diagnoses	
Current intervention strategies and their effectiveness	
Please describe the residual difficulties apparent in spite of interventions and which are likely to impede performance in examinations.	
Please describe what you feel would assist this student to perform optimally in examination situations.	
Signature:	Date:



ANNEXURE E

CRITERIA FOR PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

A full psycho-educational report that provides a comprehensive clinical history as well as interpretation of comprehensive assessments administered by a registered psychologist thoroughly assessing an individual's barriers to learning is required. This report is required to be no older than 2 years at the time of submission to the Department. This means that a learner is required to obtain an updated report at the beginning of the FET phase.

The battery of assessments must include:

<p>A. Cognitive Assessment</p>	<p>The psychologist may choose from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSAIS-R (Additional sub-tests Coding and Memory for Digits must be included) • WISC-IV (UK) • WAIS-III/IV (UK) <p><i>If a cognitive assessment has been completed in a learner's high school years, this does not need to be repeated. However, the results of the cognitive assessment previously completed must be commented on and integrated into the findings of the report.</i></p>
<p>B. Educational Assessment</p> <p><i>Standardised scores in addition to age equivalent scores must be reported on.</i></p> <p><i>Examples of errors to be provided.</i></p> <p><i>Required tests may be supplemented by additional tests should it be felt that this will assist in identifying a specific difficulty.</i></p>	<p>a) Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Edinburgh Reading Test Stage 4 (Hodder and Stoughton) • A graded word reading test • A test of non-word reading • Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE) • Word Chains <p>b) Writing exercises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20-minute informal writing sample on a topic the learner can write about without too much thought (e.g., my family, holiday), under time pressure giving the number of words per minute. • 20-minute informal writing sample on a topic that requires active processing of knowledge and experience while communicating ideas in the written form (e.g., the future of South Africa), under time pressure giving the number of words per minute. • 10-minute copying task, from a text well below the reading age of the learner. • If the use of a computer is applied for, an additional three writing samples (with different topics) must be typed. <p>c) Spelling</p> <p>A choice of one of the following tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSI • Vernon Graded Word Spelling Test • BAS Spelling • WORD Spelling • WIAT Spelling

ANNEXURE F

CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGIST DECLARATION

To be completed with most recent psycho-educational report accompanying formal application to Department of Education.

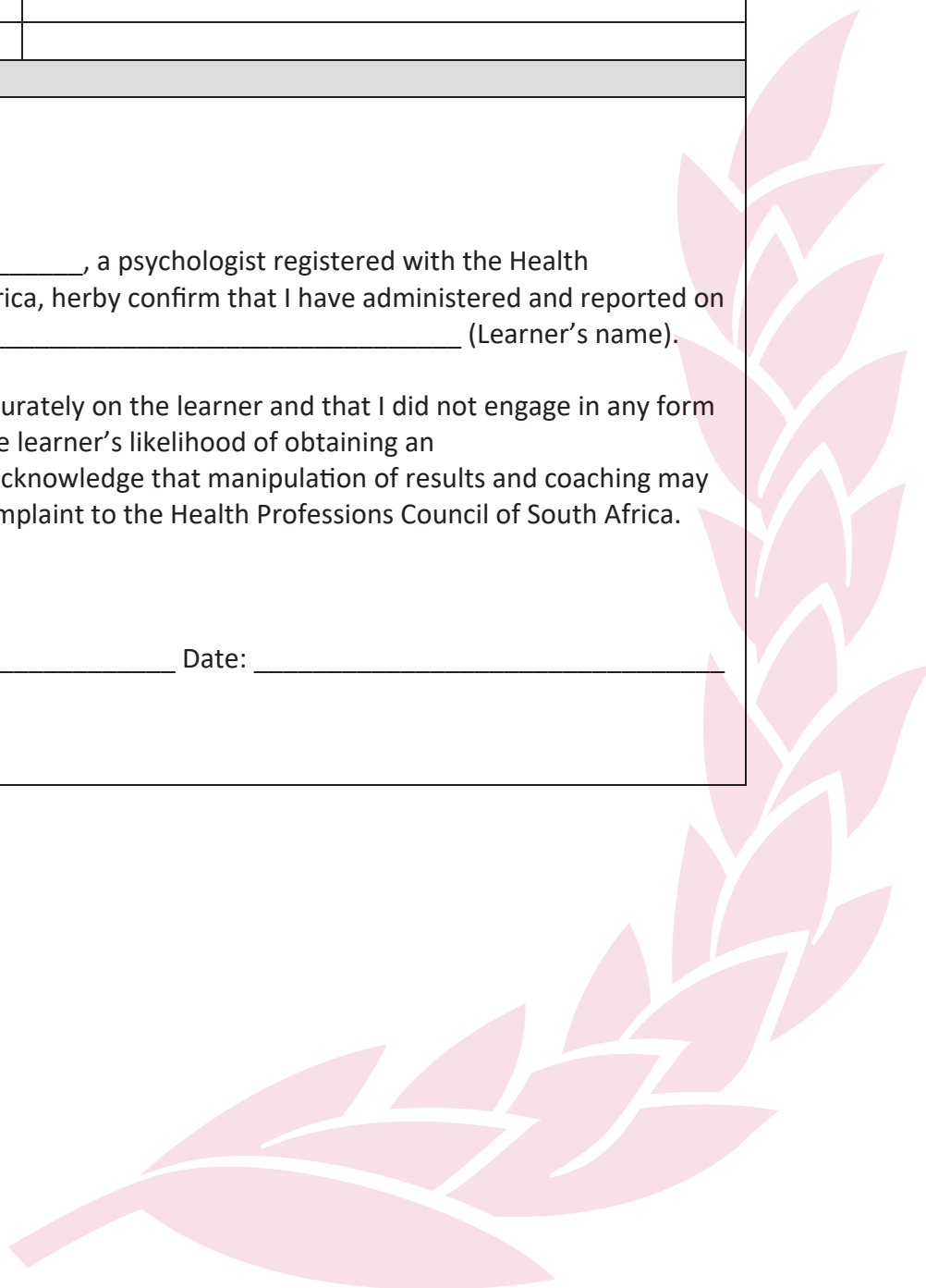
Name of Learner:	
D.O.B.:	
Assessed by:	
Profession:	
HPCSA Registration:	
Practice No.:	
Facility/practice where assessment was conducted:	
Date of assessment/s:	
Contact No.:	
Email address:	

Psychologist Affirmation

I, _____, a psychologist registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, hereby confirm that I have administered and reported on the required assessments for _____ (Learner's name).

I affirm that I have reported accurately on the learner and that I did not engage in any form of coaching so as to increase the learner's likelihood of obtaining an accommodation/concession. I acknowledge that manipulation of results and coaching may result in the submission of a complaint to the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



ANNEXURE F

GENERAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO BE PROVIDED BY PARENTS

The SBCC reserves the right to request any additional supporting information or documentation on a case-by-case basis.

<i>Compulsory component of all applications</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Copy of identity document/birth certificate2. Psychoeducational report not older than 2 years
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Medical report not older than 2 years <i>In cases of specific diagnoses, specialist reports are required. E.g., ADHD requires a paediatrician/psychiatrist report, epilepsy requires neurologist report</i>4. End of year school reports from all phases of schooling (Foundation, Intermediate, GET, FET)5. Previous concessions letters from the department as well as any applications previously sent that may not have received a response6. Academic support reports (e.g., remedial education, tutoring etc.)7. Any allied health professional reports detailing therapies and interventions

