

The IEB supports the national commitment to transformation in education and training in order to deliver a skilled workforce. Our mission has a single, clear focus:

The Promotion of quality Assessment Practices



COMPANY PROFILE

What is the IEB?

The IEB is a well-established and respected assessment body, accredited appropriately for its various assessment functions. We are a proudly South African company, dedicated to the national vision of quality education for all. We are an active participant in the national education and training arena, engaging in national debates to provide an alternate voice in building our democratic system. We keenly support the national commitment to transformation in education and training in order to deliver a skilled workforce.

Our vision is to advance quality teaching and learning in South Africa through an assessment process of integrity, innovation and international comparability.

Our mission is to make a significant, ongoing contribution to human resource development in schools and in the world of work through the design, delivery and promotion of a wide range of high quality, affordable assessment products and services to all sectors.

Our key drivers are:

- Valid and reliable assessments
- Meeting international standards
- Research-based improvement and innovation
- Facilitator- and teacher- driven assessment
- Facilitator- and teacher- driven support
- Professional service for our clients

A brief history

The IEB has operated since 1989 when it assumed the examining function of the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB). At that time the IEB was the only non-racial examining authority in South Africa. An inspired and courageous group of principals at progressive independent schools that had operated on a non-racial basis in defiance of the prescriptions of the government of the day approached the JMB to take over its assessment function. The existence of a non-racial assessment body was the most important driver for the establishment of the IEB. Since then it has broadened its assessment activities to include assessment of adults in the workplace as well as training in assessment and related activities across the education and industry sectors in addition to schools. It retains its commitment to non-racial and quality education for all.

The IEB Philosophy of assessment

The IEB believes in the transformational power of assessment.

An often cited criticism of external assessment is that it encourages rote learning on the part of the learners, with a mechanical regurgitation of material developed by someone else, often without learners themselves having a deep understanding of its meaning or significance. This is where the IEB's assessment practices are different.

The IEB has a reputation for developing assessment instruments that require a critical response from learners, and hence demand a critical engagement on the part of learners with learning material. The IEB holds the view that educators need to teach learners how to think, not what to think; how to frame the important questions, not only what the answers are; how to critically engage, not what to say. The teaching and facilitation then must be geared to encouraging learners to consider issues for themselves; to be analytical, reflective and resourceful in order to provide unrehearsed, substantiated responses that they themselves have developed.

This approach demands of learners to understand how and why knowledge is applied in certain circumstances to obtain desired outcomes rather than simply reproducing repetitive lists of information and facts, on demand, without any real understanding of their origins, implications and applications in real-life contexts. Having learnt something for the purpose of repetition and actually applying the knowledge to get a result are two very different skill sets. In essence, IEB assessment addresses the 'why' and 'how' aspects of learning in addition to the 'what'.

The result is a more rounded learner with the ability to apply acquired knowledge in different scenarios and, through the process of analysis and deduction, arrive at an answer that follows a coherent thought process that is understood by the learner at every step of the way. The confidence this process engenders, encourages an independence of thought and interpretation that is essential for success in the modern world. This strategy too means that teachers and facilitators adopt a different teaching strategy. They are supported in that journey by the IEB.

Finance and Governance

The IEB is an independent assessment agency. It is a self-funding, non-governmental, non-profit and public benefit organisation. The IEB nevertheless operates within the constraints of national legislation and provisions for national quality assurance. The IEB is accredited by Umalusi for the assessment of the IEB National Senior Certificate for schools, and for the NQF Level 1 qualification for adult education. The IEB is also accredited by the ETDP-SETA to offer training courses for assessors, moderators, facilitators and designers of assessment and the QCTO for the Foundational Learning Competence.

The Board members of the IEB are well respected professionals from various client communities, namely higher education, schooling, training and the workplace. Board members are committed to the vision, mission and values of the IEB, and have a long history of service to South African education. They are not remunerated for their services in keeping with the non-profit status of the organisation.

Employment profile

The IEB has 50 full-time members of staff and employs in the region of 2000 people on a consultancy basis. All are professionals in their area of expertise and carry out their responsibilities with a keen sense of the importance of quality and accuracy in what they do.

The IEB in partnership

The IEB has a long history of working in cooperation with government, statutory bodies in education and a range of education and training institutions. The IEB is committed to work in partnership with other organisations to address the education and skills development challenges that face our nation.

The IEB is proud to be a working partner of the Department of Basic Education, responsible for the assessment of all non-official languages for the National Senior Certificate (including Mandarin from 2018). The IEB also provides the assessment of sector-specific subjects such as Equine Studies, Nautical Science, Maritime Economics, and Sports and Exercise Science. A very positive working relationship exists between the IEB and the relevant sections of the national and provincial departments, which goes a long way to ensuring the successful implementation of this public-private partnership.

The IEB's involvement with adult education has brought it into direct working relationships with various SETAs, a substantial number of companies in industry and key AET initiatives of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). We are an Assessment Quality Partner (AQP) for the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) in the assessment of the Foundational Learning Competence, and the Department of Higher Education as they begin to address the challenges of skills shortages in the workplace.

The IEB has established working links with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and is in constant contact with international bodies of assessment through its membership of the International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA) as well as the Association for Educational Assessment Africa (AEAA) and the Southern African Association for Educational Assessment (SAAEA). The IEB's Grade 12 NSC qualification and Advanced Programme courses in Mathematics and English have been internationally benchmarked by UK NARIC as equivalent to the AS and A levels respectively.

What do we offer?

We offer quality-based assessment products and services for educational institutions and industry. Our assessment processes are relevant, innovative and internationally comparable, providing credible results, which accurately reflect a learner's level of competence.

Our assessments follow the latest developments in the field of education and, where appropriate, are designed to meet legislative requirements. Our products and services are supported by sound organisational values of integrity and quality with a strong service ethic.

IEB services are tailored to the three key sectors, namely assessment of students in schooling from the Foundation phase through to the Further Education and Training phase, assessment of adults in the workplace, and training in assessment practice across institutions of learning and industry.

Assessment in Schools

The IEB provides the following assessments for learners at school:

- **The National Senior Certificate (Grade 12)**
This qualification is the major school-leaving and tertiary entrance examination in South Africa. The IEB assesses the South African national curriculum using its own Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAGS). It conducts the assessment under the auspices of Umalusi, who finally approves the results. IEB students are among the top performers in the country, with an average pass rate of 98%. The IEB NSC is benchmarked at the AS-level.
- **Grade 9: Subject Specific Tests**
The IEB offers Grade 9 Subject Specific tests in English, Afrikaans and Mathematics.
- **Grade 6 and 9: Core Skills Tests**
The Core Skills Test is a non-curriculum based assessment which focuses on the application of skills and knowledge that a Grade 6 or 9 learner should have developed over their period of time in school. The key focus of the test is on the skills required for effective operation in life and society outside of the formal learning environment. The rationale is that, by exposing children to a range of thinking skills and levels of complexity from an early age, encourages a disposition to question beyond the obvious and the development of an inquisitive mind – the key characteristics of an independent thinker and learner.
- **ACER International Benchmarking Tests (IBTs)**
 - English (Grades 3 – 10)
 - Mathematics (Grades 3 – 10)
 - Science (Grades 3 – 8)

The IEB is in partnership with ACER to offer the IBTs. These tests are used by schools to gauge the English, Mathematics and Science achievements of their students in relation to local, national and international standards. The tests are also available in Afrikaans.

- **Advanced Programme**
The IEB has developed Advanced Programme courses aimed at the gifted learner; requiring an extension in application of subject knowledge and, in turn, more rigorous preparation for the demands of study at undergraduate level. Currently the IEB offers an Advanced Programme courses in Mathematics and in literature-based courses in English and in Afrikaans. The Advanced Programme courses in English and Mathematics are benchmarked at the A-level.
- **leBTs (Grade 11)**
A curriculum based multiple-choice assessment in Mathematics and Physical Sciences. These assessments provide an opportunity for learners to come to grips with multiple-choice assessment as a methodology and also to enhance their skills in dealing with assessments without the assistance of calculators.
- **leBT Thinking Skills**
This assessment is available to learners in Grade 10 or Grade 11. It focuses on the specific skills of problem-solving and critical thinking.

- **The Primary School Initiative (PSI) and MATCH**
PSI aims to promote the importance of good teaching and assessment practices at the primary school level. MATCH (Measuring Abilities and Thinking Competencies for high schools) is a Grade 7 assessment designed to evaluate critical knowledge and skills that learners need for success at high school. PSI is growing a collaborative network of primary school educators in Southern Africa who are dedicated to improving the quality of teaching and learning at their schools. Regular workshops and training courses are used to raise awareness of educational trends both locally and internationally.

Assessment and assessment services in adult learning and industry

The IEB provides the following assessments for adult learners and industry:

- Learning area assessments for the GETC (NQF Level 1) as well as AET Levels 1 – 3
- Communications and Mathematical Literacy assessments - 11 times a year
- Placement assessments: placement assessments are aimed at directing a learner toward the level of instruction at which s/he should commence study. These are conducted on demand
- Foundational Learning Competence in Communications and Mathematical Literacy
- Other services as required

The IEB is a well-known and respected leader in establishing AET assessment to improve the quality of life and productivity of workers in the workplace. Learners who pass IEB examinations hold a credible certificate of competence can be confident that they have the skills to perform at the level indicated on their certificates. In addition employers have the assurance of a reliable indicator of their employees' skills level.

Training in Assessment and Quality Assurance

In 1995 the IEB established its training division, IEB Assessment Education and Training (IEB ASSET), to support the need for capacity building in assessment practice in the country. This was stimulated by emerging policies linked to the transformation of education and training, with an emphasis on quality assessment practice.

In May 2000, IEB ASSET was given a distinct identity within the IEB because there was a need for accredited training in assessment at a national level. In February 2002, IEB Assessment Education and Training (Pty) Ltd was accredited as a provider of training with the ETDP SETA.

IEB ASSET's vision is to transform learning through training in quality assessment. It is proud of its portfolio of products that are delivered by competent facilitators nationally across a wide range of fields. The quality of its work is recognised by its clients.

IEB ASSET offers the following training products:

- Accredited courses for
 - Assessors
 - Moderators
 - Design of assessment
 - Facilitators
- Customised workshops, tailored for client needs

The strength of IEB ASSET is that it provides customised training to a range of clients across education institutions, including schools, provincial departments of education, universities and FET colleges, as well as industry. Experienced, knowledgeable and versatile facilitators ensure that the training is tailor-made to the needs of the participants, taking into account their working environments as well as the requirements of the relevant unit standards.

IEB ASSET has a highly skilled, expert staff working under its Director. It is supported by the larger infrastructure of the IEB in terms of professional expertise, management guidance, financial management and support services. It makes use of a pool of consultants who have all been developed through a rigorous screening and mentoring process. While its Head Office is in Johannesburg, IEB ASSET delivers its training services in all nine provinces.

VISION

The **vision** of the IEB is to advance quality teaching and learning in South Africa through an assessment process of integrity, innovation and international comparability.

The IEB is cognisant that assessment is essential in developing learners who are responsible South African citizens, able to negotiate the challenges of a global world. Through our assessments, we are motivated to develop learners who are:

- critical users of information
- ethical reasoners
- problem solvers
- creative and reflective thinkers
- lifelong learners
- society members respectful of diversity, particularly in the Southern African context
- active citizens who are committed to upholding the principles of the South African Constitution and the wellbeing of all people.

The IEB supports the position that actively promoting quality education for every South African citizen is fundamental in establishing a just, open society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights, in which cultural diversity is appreciated and embraced.

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