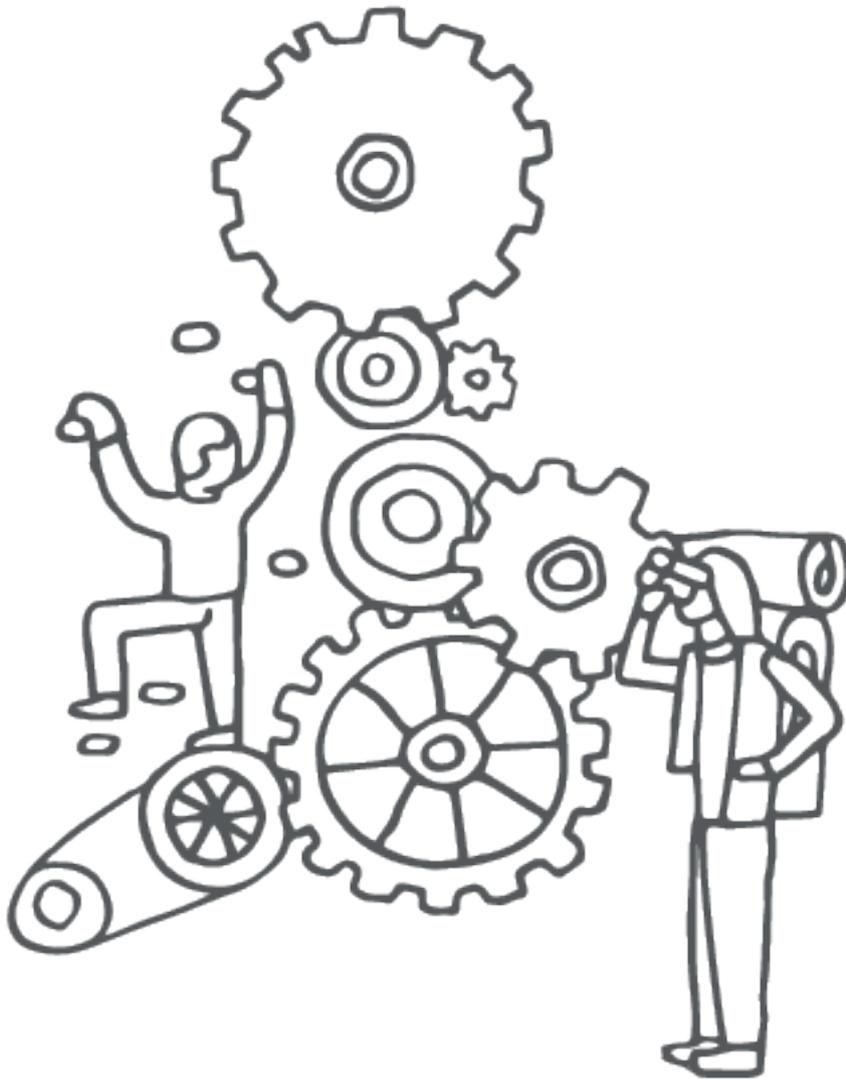


# Stage 2 Investigations Marking: Procedures and Guidelines 2022



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## Introduction

This document provides key information about the marking processes for Stage 2 Investigations. Its purpose is to promote a shared understanding of the roles and procedures that contribute to the integrity of students' external assessment results.

In Stage 2 subjects the external assessment can take one of two forms: investigations and examinations.

The term 'investigation' includes the range of external assessment types such as practical skills; report; folio; product and documentation; analysis; reflection; project; evaluation; language study; special study; issues study; issues analysis; investigation.

Note that investigations are double marked, usually by the teacher as the first marker and an external assessor as the second marker.

## Purposes of External Marking

The purposes of external marking are to:

- ensure that the performance standards in a subject have been interpreted and applied consistently to the assessment
- ensure that externally assessed results awarded to students across schools are comparable and fair
- provide valid and reliable external assessment results for students.

## Operating Principles

The following operating principles underpin the procedures for marking investigations for SACE subjects at Stage 2:

### Comparability

The procedures for assuring the integrity of SACE assessments maximise the consistent application of standards to all student assessment across all places of learning in the SACE.

### Fairness

The procedures for assuring the integrity of SACE assessments should be fair to students.

### Interdependence and Responsibility

The procedures for assuring the integrity of SACE assessments are based on the interconnected and complementary responsibilities of the student, the teacher or other provider, school leaders, and the SACE Board in the assessment process.

### Transparency

The procedures for assuring the integrity of SACE assessments are explicit and open to scrutiny.

## Definitions

The following terms are used in this document:

- *benchmarking* – the process of selecting and using student assessment materials to illustrate performance standards at different levels and training markers with the materials to ensure that assessment decisions are consistent in the one year and from one year to another year.
- *calibration script* – a common investigation used in the marking process for markers to calibrate their standards.
- *external assessment (component)* – the assessment specifications for assessment tasks defined by the SACE Board; each student's performance is assessed by at least one person who is appointed by the SACE Board, and who is not the student's teacher.
- *external assessment grade* – the final result for the external assessment component of a subject.
- *grade band* – the five bands of achievement described in the performance standards: A, B, C, D, E.
- *grade level* – the levels of achievement that are reported to the SACE Board by schools and reported to students by the SACE Board: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, E+, E, E-
- *marker* – a person who makes an assessment decision based on the evidence of learning provided by the student, and with reference to the performance standards.
- *marking guidelines* – a set of instructions used to determine the allocation of marks for assessments.
- *numeric equivalent* – the number corresponding to a grade level.
- *PLATO* – Professional Learning in Assessment and Teaching Online, the SACE Board's online platform used for benchmarking and other online learning.
- *supervisor* – a marker appointed by the SACE Board to re-mark investigations that are identified as having marks that are out of tolerance.

## Roles and responsibilities

- Education Consultant
- Business Operations
- Lead Practitioner

### The SACE Board:

- appoints an assessment panel for external marking, consisting of
  - the Lead Practitioner
  - supervisors (the number depends on the size of the student cohort and the number of markers appointed)
  - markers (the number depends on the size of the cohort)
- trains markers in the marking processes through PLATO
- monitors participation in the benchmarking process, using PLATO
- advises markers about work health and safety, using PLATO (see Appendix 1)
- advises markers about the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), using PLATO (see Appendix 2)
- requires all assessment panel members to:
  - ensure the security of student results, information, and materials (see Appendix 3 and Appendix 4)
  - maintain confidentiality throughout and after the marking process in accordance with the Requirements for Chief Supervisors and Assessment Panel Members (see Appendix 3) and the Code of Conduct Declaration (see Appendix 4)
  - declare any potential conflicts of interest (see Appendix 4)
- determines the start and end date for online marking.

### Business Operations:

- manages the progress of online marking
- monitors adherence to the marking schedule
- ensures that markers are not allocated investigations from:
  - their own school
  - a school with which they have an association
  - a school with which they have a conflict of interest
  - any individual student with whom they have a conflict of interest
- refers potential breaches of rules to the Director, Education Services.

### The Education Consultant:

- supports reliability by responding to markers' queries and outcomes of marking calibration scripts
- oversees the quality assurance processes undertaken at the completion of marking.
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### The Lead Practitioner (External Assessment):

- prepares (with supervisors, as appropriate) benchmarking materials for use prior to the start of marking, and calibration scripts for use during the marking process
- contributes to the production of an online benchmarking course.

**Supervisors:**

- complete the online supervisor training
- where appropriate, support the Lead Practitioner and the Education Consultant in selecting and preparing benchmarking materials
- participate initially in the marking process
- mark investigations that are identified as having marks that are out of tolerance
- complete the justification comment box for each student identified and assessed through the supervision process.

**Markers:**

- complete the online marker training and benchmarking exercise through PLATO
- monitor their marking progress using the online status indicator
- follow specified marking procedures and guidelines
- advise the SACE Board of any concerns about individual investigations, using the appropriate online procedure
- submit a marking report to [askSACE@sa.gov.au](mailto:askSACE@sa.gov.au).

## Confidentiality and security

All markers and supervisors receive an appointment notice from the SACE Board of South Australia.

The notice is accompanied by forms for:

- the Code of Conduct Declaration, including notification of potential conflicts of interest
- electronic banking details.

These forms are:

- required once each calendar year
- to be completed and returned to the SACE Board before marking begins.

Markers and supervisors are responsible for the care and security of their password and login details, and for the deletion of any files related to the marking process.

Marking must not be done in the presence of others or in any other way that breaches the confidentiality of the investigations.

## External marking procedures

### Marker and Supervisor Training

All markers and supervisors must complete:

- the benchmarking exercise online using PLATO
- the online marker training and
- in the case of supervisors, complete the online supervisor training.

Markers refer to the benchmarking pieces and the benchmarking decisions during the marking period.

### Marking Schedule

Marking must proceed according to the schedule. Supervision is additional to the initial schedule. Markers maintain close contact with the SACE Board. They must advise [askSACE@sa.gov.au](mailto:askSACE@sa.gov.au) if there is a problem, such as illness, that may affect their ability to meet the due dates.

### Marking Guidelines

#### Marking

The investigations are marked with reference to the performance standards and in accordance with the marking guidelines. The relevant assessment design criteria and specific features are identified in the subject outline.

Markers determine a grade (in the range A+ to E-) and a corresponding numeric equivalent (out of 30) for each student's investigation.

#### Monitoring Reliability

Calibration scripts are used in the online marking process to support markers' understanding of the performance standards.

Markers are encouraged to be mindful of distractors and may find the following reminders useful to support their own reliability.

- Do not be afraid to award high marks up to 30. Mark realistically in line with Stage 2 expectations.
- Each investigation deserves appropriate attention. The last investigation marked should get the same level of attention as the first.
- Be wary of awarding many of the same mark, or many very low marks. This is usually unexpected. Where necessary, have a break and recalibrate using the benchmarks, calibration scripts, and the performance standards.

## Issues Management

### Word Count

When the marker identifies an obviously excessive word count, markers should give credit for what is within a reasonable word count. Markers should not spend unnecessary time counting words. Words clearly beyond the specified word limit are not taken into account in the assessment decision as indicated in the SACE Board Word Count Policy.

Markers can seek additional advice from the SACE Board.

### Breaches of Rules

Markers should record cases of suspected plagiarism, collusion, or other possible breaches on the issues tab on the online marking page. Any relevant information should be included (specific pages where plagiarism is suspected, possible plagiarised sources) that will help SACE Board staff to investigate the potential breach.

When a breach is suspected the investigation must be marked at face value by the marker with reference to the performance standards and in accordance with the marking guidelines. After the marking process, SACE Board staff will investigate the breach and, if it is confirmed, apply the appropriate penalty.

### Topics Outside Subject Scope

A topic outside the subject scope is not usually a breach of rules.

When a topic is outside the subject scope, the investigation:

- is not automatically awarded a result of zero
- should be marked by considering evidence against the performance standards for the subject.

Markers should record on the issues tab on the online marking page details of any topics outside the subject scope, and how they were managed in the marking process.

If a marker feels unable to mark an investigation because of ethical concerns The marker must notify the SACE Board using the issues field on the online marking system.

## Supervision Guidelines

Supervisors re-mark investigations that are identified as having marks that are out of tolerance.

Supervisors read the entire response, mark the investigation, and record the mark.

They record a comment for each of their decisions in the online justification comment box.

## Marking Reports

Markers are required to submit a marking report as soon as they have finished marking to the SACE Board at askSACE@sa.gov.au. The report should contain comments on the quality of student performance, and other information relevant to helping teachers and students interpret the assessment requirements of the subject. The marking reports are used when the Subject Assessment Advice is written.

## Marking and supervision process for Stage 2 Investigations

- Investigations are marked by at least two people to provide more than one judgment on the quality of the work.
- The second marker, who is a SACE Board appointed marker, assesses the work and awards a mark, without knowing the marks awarded by the first marker.
- A supervisor's judgment is sought when the marks awarded by Marker 1 and Marker 2 fall outside the established tolerance for that subject.
- All students' work is marked in accordance with a defined and consistent process.
- The reliability of SACE Board markers is checked through the marking process and the collection and review of statistical data.

### Markers 1 and 2

1. Marker 1 (teacher) marks the investigations.  
They provide a score out of 30 for investigations in all subjects.
2. Marker 2 (SACE Board marker) marks the investigations as allocated.  
They also provide a score out of 30 for investigations in all subjects.  
Marker 2 does not know the marks given by Marker 1.
3. When the marks provided by Marker 1 and Marker 2 are within tolerance the two marks are aggregated to determine the final mark.

### Markers 1, 2, and the supervisor

4. Investigations where the difference in marks provided by Marker 1 and Marker 2 exceeds the tolerance are identified for re-marking.
5. The supervisor re-marks investigations that are identified.  
If the supervisor's mark is within tolerance of the marks provided by Marker 1 or Marker 2, the supervisor's mark replaces whichever is further from it.
6. If the supervisor's mark is equidistant from the marks provided by Marker 1 and Marker 2 or outside the tolerance with both Marker 1 and Marker 2, the supervisor's mark replaces the marks provided by both Marker 1 and Marker 2.
7. The supervisor completes the justification comment box for each student identified and assessed through the supervision process.

### Final Integrity Check

8. A SACE Board panel conducts a final integrity check of results.

## APPENDIX 1

### Workstation guidelines – tips and good practice

These guidelines may support you in ensuring you consider your health and wellbeing when working online.

#### Chair

When selecting a chair, consider one that is adjustable, comfortable, stable and suitable for prolonged work.

Consider adjusting your seat height so that when seated:

- thighs are not compressed by front edge of seat
- upper leg is approximately horizontal or angled slightly upwards with feet on floor or footrest
- sufficient clearance between the thigh and lower edge of desk
- sufficient clearance between front edge of seat and lower leg.

#### Desk

- All equipment, pens, paper, folders etc., should be within easy reaching distance without the need to twist body or stretch from seated position.
- Beneath desk should be clear of obstructions so that knee and foot have clearance.
- Cords and cables should be secured out of the way.

#### Monitor

When head is erect, the top of screen should be in line with eyes.

Considering adjusting screen so that when looking at screen:

- viewing distance between eye and screen is between 400mm – 700mm (arm's length)
- the angle between screen surface and line of sight is approximately 90 degrees
- the downward angle between line of sight and the horizontal is approximately 35 degrees
- monitor is placed so there are no reflections from windows or other light sources.

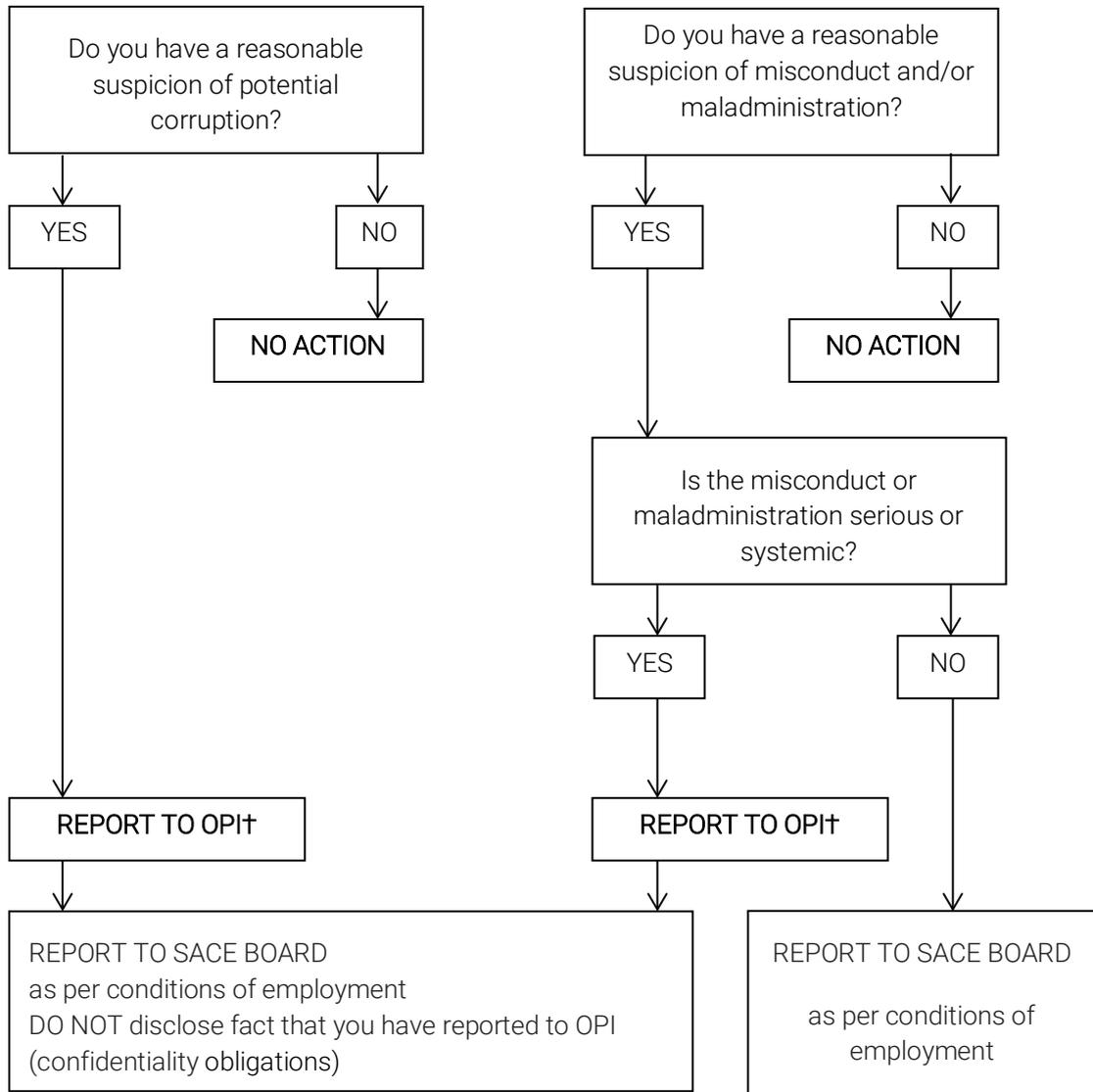
#### Work and rest rates

- Try to alternate different tasks with working at computer
- If not possible to vary tasks, take 10-minute breaks every hour (or 5 minutes per half hour) from using the computer (breaks should not be accumulated) – get up and walk around or do some stretches or exercises at your desk.
- Take frequent mini pauses by viewing something at a long distance (more than 3 metres) to rest the eyes e.g., look across room/out of the window.

Adapted from [www.safework.sa.gov.au](http://www.safework.sa.gov.au)

## APPENDIX 2

### ICAC\*: Summary of Reporting Obligations



\*ICAC – Independent Commission Against Corruption

†OPI – Office for Public Integrity

## APPENDIX 3

**REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSESSMENT PANEL MEMBERS**

*Please retain this information sheet for your personal reference.*

Assessment Panel members, including Lead Practitioners, involved in the quality assurance processes of planning, clarifying, confirming (moderation and marking), and improving for their subject, must:

- attend training meetings as required
- be scrupulous in all aspects of their involvement in the school assessment or external assessment processes
- conform to strict requirements regarding security and confidentiality of the assessment processes
- not disclose or discuss confidential information with other assessment panel members relating to setting or vetting examination papers, or moderation and marking processes and schedules, other than in ways specified in SACE Board documents, not comment about their work to schools and the general public. Any public comment on the assessment processes is restricted to the Chief Executive of the SACE Board of South Australia.
- during setting and vetting, keep working drafts of examinations under tight security, and not label them as a SACE Board examination paper. Setters and vetters of examinations *must not* retain any draft copies of examination questions or papers
- not divulge their involvement to other people. Under no circumstances should teachers who are assessment panel members inform or allow their students to infer that they are assessment panel members, having access to privileged information
- take utmost care with the assessment materials provided by students, e.g. school assessment materials, examination scripts, investigations, multimedia evidence of performances or products, or oral presentations
- not engage in commercial tutoring or coaching activities on a direct payment basis in the year in which they are an assessment panel member
- work collaboratively and professionally with other assessment panel members
- follow all processes as specified in SACE Board documents
- keep to established timelines.

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# APPENDIX 4



**CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION**  
*Please read the Code of Conduct enclosed and then complete the form and sign the declaration below in the presence of a witness.*

I declare that

- the personal details given above are correct.
- I have not been in receipt of a South Australian Government Targeted Voluntary Separation Package within the last 3 years. I will notify the SACE Board of SA immediately should this change.
- I have read and agree to be bound by both the SACE Board of SA's 'Code of Conduct' until 31 December 2019 and the policies from which it derives, and the *Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector (2010)*, which are available on or via the SACE Board of SA intranet. I note that these policies are updated periodically and that the detail may change.
- I have declared any potential conflict of interest and will advise the SACE Board of SA of any change in this status.
- I understand that any breach of these provisions may be subject to an investigation and result in disciplinary action.
- I agree that all intellectual property rights created in, or arising from my employment with the SACE Board of SA shall be the property of and vested in the SACE Board of SA and the State of South Australia.
- I agree not to be named as creator of a document if it is determined that it would be inappropriate or unreasonable.

**POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION**  
*Please complete the relevant sections and cross out those sections that do not apply.*

**FRIEND OR RELATIVE STUDYING A STAGE 2 SUBJECT**

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ SACE registration number (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Subjects studied (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

If any matters concerning the above student, including his or her results, are referred to me for consideration, I will ensure that they are forwarded to the SACE Board of SA Executive Leadership Team for a decision.

I also agree not to attempt to access or convey any information held by the SACE Board regarding this student.

Further, I will avoid contact as much as possible with those sections of the SACE Board involved in examination preparation and results collection.

**COMMERCIAL INTEREST**

I undertake tutoring for which I receive remuneration Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

I am, I write for, or I have a connection with, a commercial publisher Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

*Please give details of the organisation(s) concerned and any financial remuneration provisions.*

\_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHING**

During my year of duties on the panel, I will be teaching this subject. Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

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