Employer Assessment Policy and Procedure

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1. Documentation Control & Tracking

APPROVAL LIST

Name	Department	Comments	Date	Signature
LB Marais			13/1/2013	

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Name	Department
LB Marais	
JM Roode	
T Fourie	

CONTACT PERSONS AND PARTICIPANTS
The following people have been consulted regarding issues in this document:

Name	Role	Department
LB Marais	Partner	
Practice Forum no. 2 PTA	Independent adjudicators	

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2. Acronyms and Glossary of terms

The following table contains definitions of the acronyms used in this document.

Acronyms	Definition
DoL	Department of Labour
ETDP	Education Training and Development Practitioner
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance Body
FassetQA	Fasset Education and Training Quality Assurance Body
NLRD	National Learner's Record Database
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSB	National Standards Body
NYC	Not Yet Competent
SAICA	South African Institute of Chartered Accountants
TSR	Technical skills review
PSR	Professional skills review
ANA	Assessment Needs Analysis
IRBA	Independent regulatory Board for Auditors
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	The South African Qualifications Authority
SAQA Act	South African Qualifications Authority Act
SDA	Skills Development Act
SDF	Skills Development Facilitator
SETA	Sector Education Training Authority
SGB	Standards Generating Body
SME	Subject Matter Expert

A glossary of terms used within this report is contained in the table below.

Applied Competence	This is the union of foundational, practical and reflexive competence.
Assessment	Assessment is a structured process of gathering evidence and making a judgement about a person's competence against SAICA guidelines
Assessment Guide	This is the document (including assessment activities, instructions, model answers) used by the assessor to assess the learner against SAICA standards
Assessment process	This is the organisational process that is used to carry out competency-based assessment, within the guidelines laid out by SAQA and SAICA
Assessment product	This is the end result of assessment, usually in the form of completed assessment documentation.
Assessor	A person who has been declared competent against Unit Standard ID 7978 – Plan and Conduct Assessment of Learning Outcomes and who is registered by the relevant ETQA in accordance with established criteria. The assessor will measure the achievement of learner's against SAICA standards
Accreditation	This means the certification, usually for a particular period of time, of a person, a body or an institution as having the capacity to fulfil a particular function in the quality assurance system set up by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA).
Competence	See the definition for applied competence above. For assessment on the NQF, evidence must be produced to establish proof of competence against the relevant unit standard/s.
Credit	This is an award for achieving competence for a unit of learning. Each unit standard will have credits attached to it. One credit is equivalent to 10 hours of notional learning.
Evidence Facilitator	Person declared competent against unit standard ID 12544 – Facilitate the preparation and presentation of evidence for assessment - and is therefore able to help the learner gather evidence in the workplace for final presentation to the assessor.
Formative Assessments	These take place on an ongoing basis during training or coaching and may be conducted by trainers or coaches. The results of formative assessments may be used as evidence during summative assessments. The TSR's and PSR's may be summarized in Ana's.
Foundational Competence	The demonstrated understanding of what the learner is doing and why. This underpins the practical competence and therefore the actions taken,
Learnership	A learnership is defined as a work-based route for learning and gaining qualifications. It includes both structured work experience (practical) and structured institutional learning (theory). In other words it includes both on the job and academic components.
Moderator	An individual tasked with the purpose of checking whether the assessment process is carried out according to agreed guidelines and whether assessments are fair and valid.
Notional Hours of Learning	The time it will take for the average learner to gain competence against a registered unit standard.
Organisation	LB Marais ta Louis Marais and Partners
Outcome	Means the contextually demonstrated end product of a learning process
Practical Competence	The demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks in an authentic context. A range of actions or possibilities is considered, and decisions are made about what decisions to follow.
Qualification	This is the formal recognition of the achievement and accumulation of the required number and range of credits for unit standards.
Recognition of prior learning	The recognition of skills and knowledge gained by both formal and informal learning experiences using various assessment methods. It is discouraged to employ trainees from other firms.

Reflexive Competence	The demonstrated ability to integrate performance with understanding, so as to show that the learner is able to adapt to changed circumstances appropriately and responsibly, and to explain the reason behind an action.
Registered Assessor	In our firm this will be the training officer.
Summative Assessment	This takes place at the end of every six months and is reflected on the ANA.
Unit Standard	This is a registered statement of desired education and training outcomes and the associated assessment criteria. It is reflected in the SAICA training regulations as published from time to time.
V A C C S	The acronym used by the assessor to evaluate the evidence produced by the learner. V = valid, A = authentic, C = current, C = consistent and S = sufficient.
Verifier	An individual appointed by *the relevant SETA* to check the quality and consistency of assessment within a specific sector. In our environment this will be the SAICA official who conducts training office visits from time to time.

3. Premise of this Policy & Procedure Document

3.1 Purpose

With the introduction of the Skills Development Act (SDA) and The South African Qualifications (SAQA) Act, organisations implementing Fasset learnerships need to develop and assess individuals against the nationally registered unit standards for the relevant learnership. These unit standards and qualifications have been generated by SAICA under the control of The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and are registered on The National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Learners being assessed in this context will gain credits that will be captured on the National Learner's Record Database (NLRD).

In order to align with these Acts, the organisation shall implement a unit standards based assessment system which will assist in providing an accurate picture of the current skills and knowledge levels of learner's registered on the learnership across the organisation, as well as focus training on the actual skills gaps.

The purpose of implementing an assessment system within the organisation is to ensure:

- That the principles of good assessment are adhered to at all times
- That there is consistency in the evaluation of the learning process through the use of objective and structured assessment against national registered unit standards
- That valid and reliable assessment tools are used at all times to assess learners
- That a transparent and fair assessment process is implemented in the organisation
- That assessors are competent to assess and are held accountable for assessment decisions
- That there is provision for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- That there is a clear learner appeals process
- That learner assessment records are accurately kept
- That Louis Marais and Partners has a formal policy for the Assessment of trainees.

3.2 Objectives

The assessment system will contribute to the following objectives:

- To be used as a guideline by all involved in implementing the assessment process, i.e. registered assessors, line managers, learners and moderators
- To set and maintain a standardised and consistent approach to assessment in the organisation
- To serve as a reference point in dealing with issues and problems associated with the Assessment Process
- To gain Training Provider accreditation from FassetQA (Please refer to the FassetQA Final Provider Accreditation Process for more information)
- To gain recognition for learning achievements
- That Louis Marais and Partners comply with the requirements of SAICA for the CA(SA) training model.
- To serve as a working document which can be developed further over time.

3.3 Scope

In the organisation, this policy shall be applicable to all relevant parties, (e.g. Partner, training officer, assessor, learners, moderators and reviewers and managers) involved in implementing the learnership. This policy and procedure document will provide a much needed framework for the above mentioned parties to operate in when dealing with the many facets of learnership implementation.

It is imperative that the partner/manager are involved in the whole assessment process as they are often the people who have the most contact with the learners in the workplace. They must be aware of how the learner is progressing and if any further workplace experiential learning still needs to take place or be reinforced. At all times, the learner must consent to the manager's involvement(if applicable) in the assessment process.

3.4 Authority

3.4.1 Policy and/or Procedure Amendment and Authorisation

This policy and procedure document shall be reviewed and amended by the Training and Development Department or any other appropriate department in accordance with:

- Changes required by SAQA, FassetQA and any other relevant ETQA;
- Government Legislation;
- Internal Requirements (learners, business and/or operational); and
- Assessment Feedback Information.
- SAICA Training guidelines

This policy and procedure document as well as its amendments shall, at all times, reflect the broad principles of the NQF, the spirit and underpinning intentions of the Skills Development legislation and holistic best practice for Training and Development as directed by the Board or any other appropriate body and shall be authorised by the Partner.

The Assessment Policy and Procedure document shall be reviewed on an annual basis and/or when the need arises due to the conditions stipulated above. The review process will be carried out by suitably qualified and experienced persons in Assessment in the organisation. Amendments shall be made after approval by the said group and distributed to all relevant stakeholders in the organisation as per the normal organisational communication channels.

The implementation of the Assessment Policy and Procedure of the organisation shall be the responsibility of the Training and Development Department, registered assessors, moderators and evidence facilitators in conjunction with line managers involved in the development of the learners on the learnership.

3.4.2 Policy and/or Procedure Training and Adherence

The Partner shall ensure that he and all assessors, reviewers, moderators and managers, conform to the procedure. The training Officer shall ensure that all learners (employees), prospective learners and managers fully understand the policy and conform to the procedure outlined in this document, at all times.

4. Policy

Assessment should at all times be conducted according to the principles of assessment defined by SAQA, and SAICA (as ETQA)namely:

Ethical	Assessment shall be carried out with high levels of integrity, responsibility and commitment at all times in the organisation. The credibility of the entire assessment process shall be protected and maintained consistently and unconditionally,
Appropriateness	The assessment activities used to assess the learner are suited to the performance being assessed.
Fairness	The entire assessment process should not present any artificial barriers to achievements, which are NOT related to the competence of the learner, in terms of the evidence produced.
Manageability	The assessment process is easily arranged and incorporated into the existing organisational structure.
Integration into work or learning	Evidence collection is integrated into the normal work or learning process where this is appropriate and feasible.
Validity	The assessment activities focus on the requirements laid down in the unit standard, i.e. the assessment is fit for purpose and measures what it claims to measure.
Reliability	The assessment activities yield consistent results upon repeated use provided that there has been no development in between uses.
Direct	The activities in the assessment mirror the conditions of actual performance as closely as possible.
Authenticity	The assessor is satisfied that the work being assessed is attributable to the learner being assessed alone.
Sufficient	The evidence collected establishes that all criteria have been met and that performance to the required standard can be repeated consistently.
Systematic	Planning and recording is sufficiently rigorous to ensure that assessment is fair.
Open	Learners can contribute to the planning and accumulation of evidence. Learners understand the assessment process and the criteria that apply to each assessment context. The assessment process is transparent and accessible to all learners throughout the organisation
Consistent	The same assessor would repeat the same judgement given the same evidence of competence. The judgement made by one assessor is similar to the judgement that would be made by another assessor.

4.1 The practical organisation of assessment

Trainees complete TSR's PSR's and ANA's in their own time. Consultation with the assessor /Reviewer may be done during or after hours.

4.1.1 Assessment Policy 1: Access to Assessments

Assessment will take place within prescribed timeframes (as per predetermined assessment cycles), within the general guidelines of the training regulations as published from time to time by SAICA. This currently occurs every two months (TSR and PSR) and six monthly (ANA's).

The learner shall be responsible for informing the registered assessor that he/she is ready to be assessed. This information shall be communicated by handing in his TSR/PSR/ANA for review.

The training officer will issue one written warning if the trainee is not complying with the training regulations before disciplinary action is envoked. The trainee shall have one week to remedy his non compliance.

4.1.2 Assessment Policy 2: Assessment Guides and Activities

Assessment is to be done in terms of SAICA training guidelines as published from time to time.

The format of the assessment activities and assessment guides shall be completed in the prescribed organisational format (as per the appropriate templates) and as per SAICA requirements, where appropriate. The documents to be included when designing assessment activities and assessment guides are, amongst others:

- CA(SA) model Implementation guide
- Training guidelines
- Technical Skills Review template
- Professional Skills Review template
- Assessment Needs Analysis template
- Assessment Appeals Forms

4.1.3 Assessment Policy 3: Assessors & Moderators

The roles of the assessor and the moderator in the whole assessment process, is a very responsible and accountable one. The integrity and commitment of both the assessor and the moderator to a strictly controlled assessment process will contribute to the overall credibility of the assessment system in the organisation.

Broadly, the role of the assessor is to ensure that assessment is conducted against the principles of good assessment and that all NQF assessments in the organisation are conducted in an ethical and transparent manner, at all times, with strict adherence to the administrative process outlined in the Quality Management System of the organisation.

The role of the moderator is to ensure that assessment is conducted within the QMS guidelines of the organisation and any FassetQA requirements relevant to the sector.

As sole proprietor it is possible that these functions rest on one person. It is foreseeable that independent consultants may need to be employed should disputes arise.

♦ **Assessment Policy 3.1: Nomination and Selection of Assessors, Moderators and Evidence Facilitators**

As sole proprietor this will fall on the training officer. In disputed matters employees are to have input as regards to the consultants used to adjudicate in order to promote fairness.

♦ **Assessment Policy 3.2: Training of Assessors**

The assessors will undergo comprehensive training and development against the registered unit standard **ID 7978 Plan and Conduct Assessment of Learning Outcomes** by accredited external or workplace training providers. Part of this development will include:

- National Skills Development legislation and how this relates to workplace assessment
- Assessment in the context of the NQF
- Understanding the SAQA definition of applied competence
- Understanding the principles of good assessment
- Planning the entire assessment process both with the individual learner and within the entire organisation
- Gathering evidence
- Conducting the assessment with the learner
- Evaluating the evidence
- Providing feedback to the learner and relevant parties

- Reviewing the entire assessment process
- Company specific Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Moderation and internal verification process (if required)

The assessor are to attend all possible training provided by SAICA.

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♦ Assessment Policy 4: Assessment Process

A standardised and objective assessment process will ensure the consistency of workplace assessments against registered unit standards and/or qualifications and will provide clear guidelines for assessors, moderators and evidence facilitators.

The training regulation read together with the implementation guide is accepted as assessment guides.

Only assessors registered with SAICA will be permitted to assess learners in the organisation.

The assessment of the learner will be conducted against pre-developed assessment guides(SAICA training regulations) for the relevant unit standards, at all times. No assessor is permitted to assess a learner against an assessment guide that has not been developed by a competent assessment guide developer.

Only competent evidence facilitators will be permitted to assist learners in the evidence collection process in the organisation.

Only registered moderators with SAICA will be permitted to moderate in the organisation. The moderator will ensure, through the audit and verification process that assessment in the organisation is being implemented in accordance with the Principles of Good Assessment, this Assessment Policy and Procedure, The Quality Management Policy and Procedure of the organisation, as well as any other organisational, SAICA and/or SAQA requirements.

Moderation of assessment in the organisation will be done on a pre-determined scheduled basis and ALL relevant assessment documents and records must be maintained in a structured and orderly manner at all times.

Specific moderation objectives may be stipulated by the appropriate organisational department at the time of each moderation session, dependent upon, amongst others, the stage of assessment implementation in the organisation.

4.1.4 Assessment Policy 4.1: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL involves the recognition of alternative (formal, informal and non-formal) learning pathways of individuals, so that the learner is awarded credits in the form of gaining competence against unit standards, where the learning meets the requirements of the unit standard/s and/or qualification.

The aim of RPL, as defined by SAQA[1], is to:

- Facilitate access to, and mobility and progress within education, training and career paths
- Accelerate redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities.

[1] (The Recognition of Prior Learning in the context of the South African National Qualifications Framework – Policy Document September 2002)

RPL Assessment is not to be regarded as standing outside of assessment within the organisation. It is part of the assessment process that addresses the specific issues mentioned above. In a RPL assessment context, the learner will always be asked to provide evidence of his/her current performance against the registered unit standard/s and/or qualification.

RPL will be based on the **SAQA RPL Policy Document** (refer to Annexure A) and FassetQA guidelines, as well as in consultation with Subject Matter Experts and the relevant line managers. The RPL process will be managed by registered assessors and moderators.

RPL can be initiated by current employees through the appropriate application process and by new recruits, through the recruitment policy.

As with all assessment:

- The date of the RPL assessment will be negotiated between the learner and the assessor.
- Assessment methods selected for RPL will be based on the assessment guide/s for the relevant unit standard/s.
- RPL assessment towards a qualification will be conducted in line with the relevant rules of combination for the qualification.
- In order to achieve the qualification, the learner applying for RPL will be assessed against the fundamental, core and elective unit standards for the appropriate NQF Levels.

The appeals process for RPL will be the same as for other unit standards based assessments.

4.1.5 Assessment Policy 4.2: Re-Assessments

If a learner is declared not yet competent (NYC) against a registered national unit standard, qualification or part thereof, he/she may be re-assessed.

The re-assessment must take place within a reasonable timeframe as per organisational constraints and as agreed upon in the formal feedback process.

A learner may only attempt an assessment of a particular registered national unit standard, qualification or part thereof, a maximum of three times. Thereafter, the learner should be referred for career development counselling and/or the assessor must investigate the reasons for the continued “not yet competence” of the learner. This information must be reported to the learner’s line manager as well as the Assessment line manager in order to take corrective action and/or supportive steps.

4.1.6 Assessment Policy 5: Appeals

Learners being assessed will be given the opportunity to appeal against the results of the assessment process.

The first step is to appeal in writing stating reasons for the appeal. If the dispute cannot be adjudicated internally a suitable candidate will be proposed by the Assessor. This assessor will be a colleague with suitable training who will be called upon to resolve the dispute by mutual agreement.
All complaints and appeals must be reported to the Partner within seven (7) working days of receiving the assessment result. The Partner (or appropriate person in charge of Assessment) will then conform to the internal appeals procedure. The Partner/ (or appropriate person in charge of Assessment) will acknowledge the appeal and investigate the matter timeously. In the event of the appeal being justified, a final decision will be taken to either uphold the assessment result or make provision for the learner to be re-assessed by another registered assessor.

The aim of the appeals procedure is to facilitate understanding of the assessment procedure rather than to adjudicate the actual assessment result. Should the learner complaint be against a registered assessor, the learner must log a grievance as determined by the internal grievance procedure, and the matter will be handled accordingly.

Should the consultation by the independent colleague not be successful only then will the process revert to the SAICA Appeals process a copy of which is attached hereto as Annexure A.

4.1.7 Assessment Policy .6: Administration

All portfolios of evidence and learner records shall be retained electronically or in hard copy for a minimum of three (3) years or for the full period of employment by the organisation, whichever is the longest.

Changes to documents and templates can only be authorised by the Skills Development Facilitator and/or any other designated party.

The Assessor shall keep all documents relating to current assessments in a safe and secure place. The Moderator shall ensure that the assessor is storing all hard and soft copies in a safe, secure and orderly manner, on a monthly basis.

4.1.8 Assessment Policy 7: Support to Learners

Support to learners shall be ongoing and shall aim to meet the development needs of the learner at all times, in order to facilitate the process of gaining competence against a registered unit standard/s and/or qualification.

Assessors shall discuss the developmental needs of learners with relevant parties and they should contribute to ensuring that Learner support is integrated with the direct results of the assessment process.

All learners are to be trained on an induction course which covers the CA (SA) training model and the assessment process. The induction course are to be presented by outside accredited training provider (E.G. PRO BETA)

This document will be part of the in house training provided to new trainees with emphasis on how the SAICA training model fits into the national framework. SAICA as ETQA , the role of SAQA.

5. Procedure

5.1 Access to Assessment

As authors of their Assessment documentation trainees have full access to all information.

5.2 Training Model decisions

The firm is accredited to offer Auditing and Assurance as an Elective. The client base of the firm should allow trainees to gain advanced experience in this Elective as well as the compulsory skills. If trainees are not gaining exposure as a result of poor rotation the Assessment Needs Analysis should be used to communicate the lack of rotation.

The resulting residuals are :

- Financial Management
- Management decision making and control.
- Taxation.
- Internal Audit Risk Management and Governance.

The Assessment Needs Analysis is the document used to identify areas of residuals that the trainee is not getting exposure to. The plan at the end of the ANA sets out areas where the trainee has not gained exposure in. Work scheduling will enable trainees to gain exposure to most residuals. Residuals that are not covered are timeously identified so that appropriate simulation courses are identified and sourced.

These will typically come from sections within the residuals Internal audit Risk management and Governance, Financial Management as well as Management and decision making and control.

Decision trees with path labels as published by SAICA are adopted as the formal policy of adjudicating ratings.

The firm's policy regarding measurement of the level of experience are :

ADVANCED EXPERIENCE (For all compulsory and Electives)
Trainees must obtain sufficient experience to gain a comprehensive understanding of the concepts and techniques, and must be able to apply these concepts and techniques in complex situations or environments.

BASIC EXPERIENCE
Trainees must obtain sufficient experience to gain a basic understanding of the concepts and techniques, and must be able apply these concepts and techniques in simple uncomplicated situations or environments.

It can be anticipated that first years can even be involved with advanced experience but they will probably only achieve the required level in in year 3.

5.3 Assessors and Moderators

- The training officer will be registered with SAICA and will only act as assessor and moderator as long as he is accredited with SAICA.

5.4 The Assessment process

Assessments must be conducted according to the following process:

1. Plan for the Assessment
2. Conduct Pre-assessment discussion
3. Conduct the Assessment
4. Provide Feedback

5.4.1 Plan for the Assessment

Planning for the assessment must be conducted using the assessment guide(decision tree) as a guideline. The Assessor must plan the assessment with the learner. The planning and scheduling of the assessment is to be a negotiated process between the learner and the assessor and, where applicable, the manager must be informed of the assessment plan.

The Assessor and learner must prepare all of the required assessment documentation, as highlighted in this procedure, and record the information on the relevant database.

The Assessor must check that all assessment logistics, equipment, venue and environmental issues are ready for assessment or Pre-assessment discussion.

Assessments are done within the time frames set out by SAICA. This rule is non negotiable.

A review may be focused on less competencies to save time in busy periods but must allways be done within the required time frames.

5.4.2 Learner conducts self Assessment

Learners complete self assesments on TSR's and PSR's two monthly with respect to notable work carried out during the period.
Once the selfe-assessment is completed, the trainee must hand in his review documentation to the reviewer/assesor.

Ana's are completed every six months and trainees must ensure that ratings by reviewers are carried forward to the ANA. The handing in of the ANA to the assessor is considered completion od step one by the trainee.

5.4.3 Conduct the Assessment/Review

All assessments/Reviews must be conduct using the relevant decision tree as guide**.**

At the end of the process, the assessor must make an assessment judgement based on the compliance of evidence against the assessment criteria and or training guidelines.

5.4.4 Provide Feedback

Once the assessment process is completed, the assessor must provide specific feedback to the learner on the results of the assessment**.** If learner is considered to be "Not Yet Competent", the assessor should provide counselling and advice on what the learner needs to do to be re-assessed.

5.5 Re-assessment of learners

After the first assessment, if a learner is not yet competent on a unit of learning, qualification or part thereof, he/she may have two further attempts at an assessment. After the first attempt the following process should be followed:

- The mentor/trainers must counsel and advise learner on what needs to be achieved before re-assessment. This may include:
  - Further training, coaching or on-the-job practice;
  - Pre-assessment discussion; and
  - Re-assessment.

If the learner is not yet competent after two attempts then the following process should be followed:

- The moderator must be informed of the situation.
- The line manager/ supervisor and moderator must develop plans to assist the learner in achieving competence. This should take place through counselling and advising the learner and may include:
  - Coaching, re-training, on-the job practice;
  - Pre-assessment discussion; and
  - Re-assessment.

If the learner, after the third and final attempt, is not yet competent then the assessor must report the matter to the line manager. The line manager must then integrate this information with the performance management system and carry out corrective action.

5.6 Appeals process

The grounds for the appeal may be on the basis of unfairness or discrimination. The complaint must be submitted by the candidate/learner to the Training Officer within five (5) working days of receiving assessment results. This must be completed on the Assessment Appeals Form.

The appeals process is as follows:

- The complaint/appeal is logged with the relevant party (as defined in this policy document);
- The complaint/appeal is reported to the training officer and placed in the learner's file;
- The employee's record is updated;
- The relevant party carries out an investigation, allowing both the learner and assessor the opportunity to present their cases;
- The relevant party makes a judgement on whether the assessment decision should be upheld or if the learner should be re-assessed. The investigation must be completed within (10) working days after receipt of complaint;
- The relevant party informs all the relevant parties of the final decision on whether to uphold the assessment decision or whether to re-allocate an assessor to conduct a further assessment; and
- The learner's record is updated with the decision.

If the learner is not satisfied with the outcome, then the learner may re-appeal against the final decision. This escalation must be logged with the training officer (or other appropriate person) within five (5) working days of receiving the judgement from the relevant party. The training officer (or other appropriate person) shall then investigate the matter further. This will entail the following:
The matter is referred to any of the practitioners of Practice Forum no. 2 Pretoria for adjudication by a colleague.

Should there still be no consensus on the appeal findings, then the appeal shall be treated in terms of the SAICA rules regarding the appeals process (Annexure A).

5.7 Administration Process

The assessor/moderator shall ensure that all documentation, assessment, appeals forms and templates kept in a safe and secure place. On completion of administration requirements the assessor/ moderator shall:

- The assessor shall record all events, attendance and results on the relevant data base;
- Forward all documentation required to the relevant training departments; and
- The relevant department shall ensure that the documentation is forwarded to the appropriate persons on a weekly basis for review and filed in the relevant learner files.

6. Annexure A: Supporting Documents

Document	
. SAICA Appeals Policy and Procedure	