



1st Quarter Newsletter

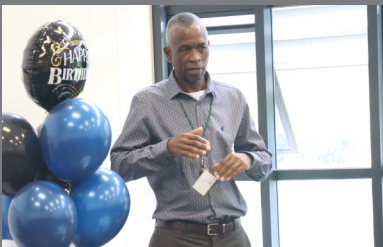
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EPCSE, EGCSE & IGCSE RESULTS

Minister of Education and Training releases 2023 EGCSE, EPCSE and IGCSE results

The Minister of Education and Training Hon. Owen Nxumalo released the much-awaited 2023 EGCSE, EPCSE and IGCSE results.

The results were released on the 20th February 2024.

Before the official release, results were first presented to the Prime Minister Hon. Russell Dlamini and Cabinet Ministers at Cabinet Offices by a team from the Examinations Council of Eswatini led by the organisation's Chief Executive Officer Dr Mandlenkhosi Dlamini.

The Minister highlighted that the 2023 candidature increased significantly compared to the 2022 cohort. He attributed this growth to 'out of school' candidates re-entering the system to continue education and taking the examinations. Despite the 2023 candidature increasing, the Minister noted a decline in performance when compared to 2022 and previous years. The national pass rate generally declined for EGCSE, EPCSE and IGCSE examinations. "Predicted grades provided by the schools before the examination session alerted us that the overall performance this year was expected to be lower than in previous years due to the dispositions in learning that candidates encountered since 2019," he said. The Minister noted that quite a few candidates did not perform well even in subjects that were not affected by the resit examination. He observed a decline in performance even with the IGCSE examination which, from question paper development, marking and results processing is handled by the accreditor Cambridge University Press and Assessment.

Hon Minister explains why resit examination took place

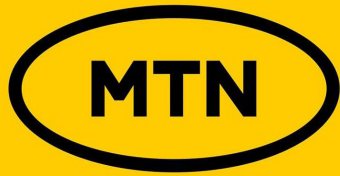


The Hon. Minister of Education and Training Mr Owen Nxumalo with the ECESWA CEO

The Hon. Minister of Education and Training Mr Owen Nxumalo informed the public that ECESWA ordered a re-sit examination after carefully consideration analysing many factors. ECESWA ordered a resit examination in November 2023 for seven components involving four (4) subjects following the leakage of question papers. The Minister explained that on balance, it was felt to be fairer to all candidates to give them the opportunity to sit for papers rather than estimating their performance based on their scores in other papers or even cancelling these exams for the year.

The Minister expressed his disappointment in the fact that some candidates did not perform well in the resit examination, yet others did well. He hastened to explain that ECESWA presented the results statistics as they were, and that this data is for the benefit of concerned stakeholders who may want to ascertain the causes of the decline in performance and possible interventions.

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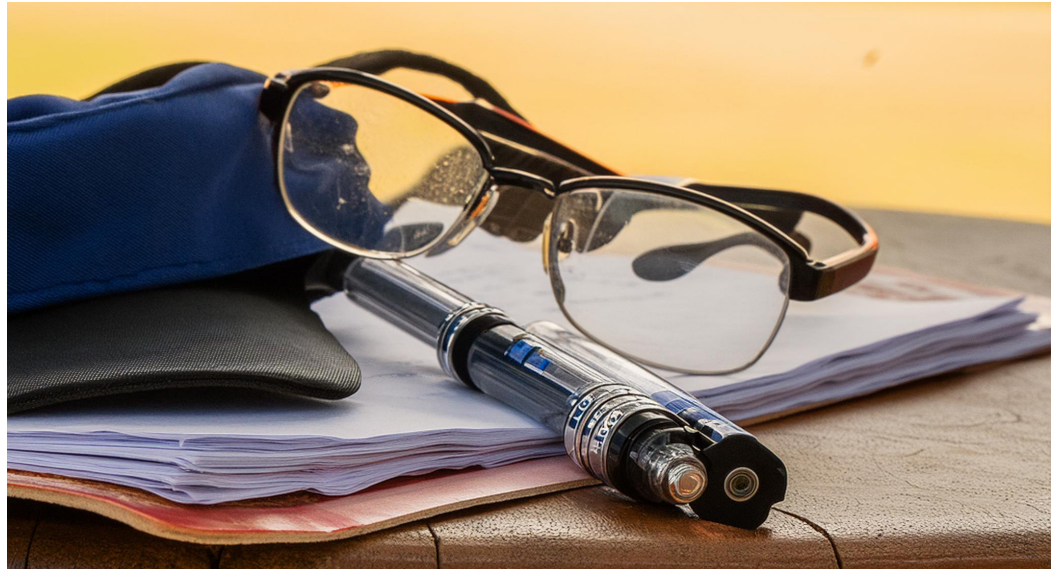
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Summary of results



EGCSE

- The candidature increased by 16.87% from 16 537 in 2022 to 19 326 in 2023.
- The number of absentees decreased by 11.39% from 553 in 2022 to 490 in 2023.
- The 2023 national pass percentage declined from 92.58% in 2022 to 88.33% in 2023. This means the EGCSE pass rate declined by 4.25% in 2023.

EPCSE

- The Eswatini Prevocational Certificate of Secondary Education Programme (EPCSE) was examined for the third time in 2023 under the accreditation agreement with Cambridge. You will recall that the EPCSE programme is now equivalent with the EGCSE programme. So EPCSE graduates now compete equally with EGCSE graduates for entry into tertiary institutions.
- Despite all these, the programme continues to suffer from a very low candidature, yet it could be one of the solutions to the problem of youth unemployment in the kingdom.
- Only 304 EPCSE candidates registered for the examination in 2023. A total of 296 candidates eventually wrote the examination in 2023.
- The overall pass rate for EPCSE declined to 96.73% in 2023 from 99.81% in 2022. The EPCSE pass rate declined by 3.08%.

IGCSE

- The overall pass rate for IGCSE also drastically declined by 8.25% in 2023 when compared to 2022. The IGCSE pass rate for the 2023 examination is 84.07% while in 2022 it was 92.32%.

Senior Printing Supervisor William Dlamini retires gracefully



The Examination Administration and Results Processing (EARP) Department hosted a farewell lunch for long serving Senior Supervisor William Dlamini. Dlamini's departmental farewell lunch also coincided with his birthday. EARP Director Mr Gifted Maziya described reaching the statutory retirement age as a blessing because not many people live to see their retirement day. The Director then showered praises on Mr Dlamini for being an outstanding leader, team player and for displaying a strong work ethic throughout his tenure at ECESWA. The Director hastened to acknowledge that it would be difficult to find someone who would so diligently serve ECESWA in the manner that Mr Dlamini had.

Reminiscing on the good old times spent together, his former colleagues in the Department also spoke highly of the retiring supervisor. "We appreciate your contribution while you were with us, we learnt a lot from you and in life generally," said Mr Lucky Mkhonto, who also acknowledged that the Lord's grace had sustained Mr

Dlamini thus far.

This is what his colleagues had to say about him:

Thulani Malindzisa: "Mr Dlamini respected the young and old. I personally learnt a lot from him".

Mazwi Sifundza: "On behalf of my colleagues we thank Mr Dlamini for motivating us within and outside the work environment".

Nandi Hlubi: "Mr Dlamini was a very clean, caring and highly organised gentleman. He had wisdom to deal with different personalities".

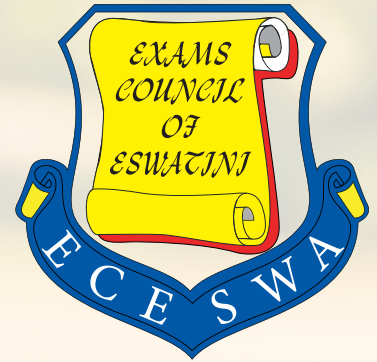
Gugu Mthethwa: "I worked with Mr Dlamini for a short time, but I noticed that he was a very organised man. He had a very strong work ethic. From the love he has for his car, I can safely say that he is a loving soul".

...Retiring Supervisor praises colleagues for support

In retrospect, the retiring Printing Supervisor William Dlamini showered accolades on his colleagues for making his stay and tenure at ECESWA worthwhile. "I count myself very lucky because I had such wonderful colleagues who were very supportive. With your support we overcame stressful situations," he remarked, also admitting that his career was not always glossy as he had also weathered many storms and troubling moments. Dlamini said the EARP Director's support had left him humbled and in awe of his wisdom on many occasions. He finally thanked his colleagues for the farewell lunch. "I would like to thank God for everything. In my entire life I have never celebrated my birthday but today I am celebrating both my birthday and retirement," he said. Dlamini also thanked the Registrar for having a good and warm heart. "He is a wonderful and a transparent man," he said.



The retiring Senior Supervisor with colleagues in the EARP Department



Grading and Grade Review

ECESWA / Cambridge Grading and Grade review

The 2023 Grading and Grade Review was conducted between 29th January and 9th February 2024 at the ECESWA premises. The purpose of grading is to mitigate the effects of external elements that might disadvantage or even give candidates an undue advantage in the examination. A pre-grading meeting was held virtually with Cambridge University Press and Assessment in preparation for the 2023 Grading. This was followed by departmental standardisation meeting to prepare for this exercise. The purpose of the meeting was to harmonise the intricate grading.

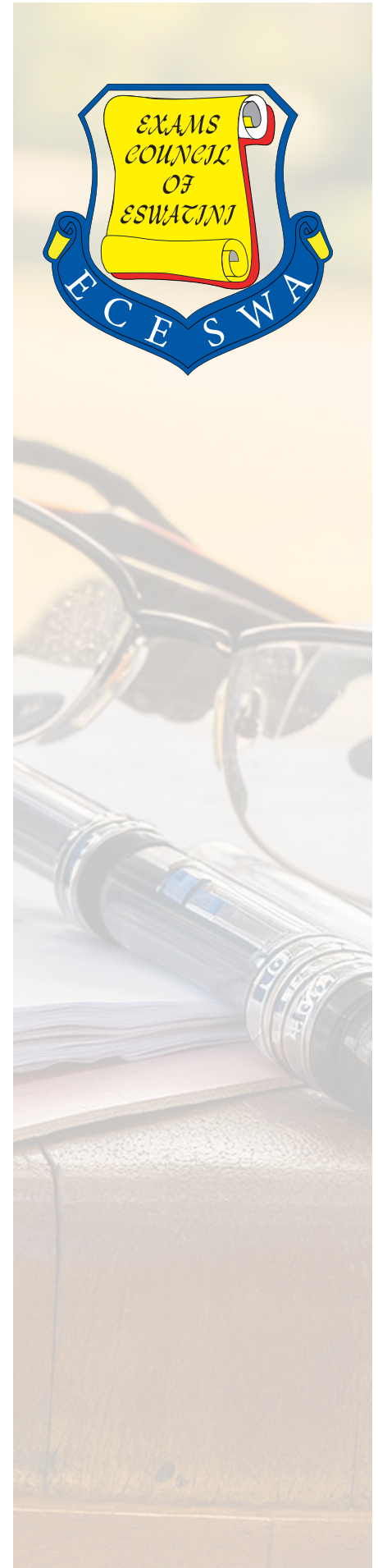
The 2023 Grading and Grade Review exercises were attended by a Cambridge consultant, Gale Deeney who came to ensure compliance with set grading standards and requirements as part of the accreditation process. She worked with the Grading Committee which was led by Dr Sifiso Hlandze with support from the ECESWA CEO Dr Mandlenkhosi Dlamini who attended many of the grading meetings and took a keen interest in proceedings. The 2023 Grading was also attended by three International Observers from Kenya and Zambia. They not only participated in the grading process but also validated the process. The grading meeting also offers an opportunity for benchmarking to share knowledge and experiences on assessment for examining bodies thus enhancing assessment

science and practice, as well as strengthening mutual understanding and relationships. Dr Hlandze chaired the meetings while the Product



Moonga Hakalyamba,
one of the International Observers from
Examinations Council of Zambia

Managers / Subject Officers took the lead in presenting information on the syllabuses for which they were responsible. Principal Examiners were not invited to the meetings although their SRS forms were used for reference.



MOMO Payments Announcement

Momo payments

The Examinations Council of Eswatini is pleased to announce that examination fees can now be paid through MTN's Mobile Money platform. To pay your examination fees through MoMo, all you need to do is follow these easy steps:

1. Dial *007*1*1#
2. Enter Number: 78891990
3. Enter Amount
4. Enter Centre Number and Child's Name
5. Confirm payment and Enter MoMo pin
6. Take a screenshot of payment and send on WhatsApp to the same number for proof of payment.

Examination fees payments

The deadlines for payment of 2024 examination fees are as follows:

JC- 8 April 2024

EPC - 10 May 2024

EGCSE - 7 June 2024

Staff Placements

We welcome all new staff members to the ECESWA family



Ms. Promise Masilela has been appointed as a Revenue Accountant, effective March 2024. She was previously engaged by the organisation on a temporary basis. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from the University of Eswatini with majors in Accounting and Finance. She also holds an Advanced Diploma in Accounting Sciences from Milpark Education and currently on her journey of becoming a Chartered Accountant. She previously worked at PKF Chartered Accountants as an Accountant.



Mr Wandile Malinga, has been appointed as a Graphic Designer. He holds an Associate Degree in Information and Communications Technology from the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology. He also holds an Honours Degree in Computing and Information Technologies from Derby University, United Kingdom which he acquired in May 2019. Before his appointment as Graphic Designer, he was engaged by ECESWA on a temporary basis as an IT Technician and Graphic Designer. On 1st January, 2024, he was offered the position of Graphic Designer on a permanent basis.



Ms Lomagugu Sikhondze, completed her high school at Lobamba National High School. She embarked on her professional journey with ECESWA in 2022 initially in a temporary capacity. She was engaged on a permanent basis on the 1st January 2024.



Ms Lindiwe Dlamini, joined ECESWA on the 4th March 2024, as a Dispatch Officer. She previously served on a temporary basis in the EARP Department (Results Processing Unit). Before joining ECESWA, Lindiwe worked at SOS Children's Village as a National Fundraiser. She also worked for the Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) NGO which is now known as ENACTUS. She studied Business Administration, in the United States of America.

We welcome all new staff members to the ECESWA family



Mr Mazwi Sifundza, has been appointed as a Dispatch Officer, effective March 4, 2024. He completed his high school in 2012 at Mncozini High School. He was previously engaged temporarily by the organisation since October 2014.



Ms Mihla Dlamini joined ECESWA on the 2nd April 2024 as an intern from the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology. She is currently pursuing an Associate Degree in Public Relations. She is attached to the Communications Office.

Ongoing Activities

Submission of Registration Corrections

12th April 2024- Deadline 1

31st May 2024- Deadline 2

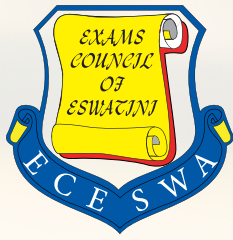
Centres are reminded that any change in subjects and subject options after the second deadline will be at a fee. All registration correspondence must be emailed to eregistration@examsCouncil.org.sz.

Upcoming activities

14th SAAEA Conference

On the 13th to 16th May 2024, delegates from 11 Examination Boards from nine countries in Southern Africa (Eswatini, South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania) will be gathered at Esibayeni Lodge in Matsapha, Eswatini for the 14th Southern Africa Association for Educational Assessment (SAAEA) Conference. This is a biennial conference where Educational Assessment Professionals and Scholars present research papers on current and best assessment practices in education based on a given theme.

The Examinations Council of Eswatini invites educators, researchers and all stakeholders to participate in this Conference, whose theme is "Transforming Educational Assessment for Quality, Equality and Fairness in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)". For details, please visit our website www.examsCouncil.org.sz.



ECESWA hosts Secondary and High School Heads of Centre to an annual review meeting

The Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA) hosted secondary and high school Heads of Centre to an annual review meeting which was held at the ECESWA Auditorium on the 19th March 2024.

In this meeting ECESWA gave much needed feedback to the Heads of Centre on how the 2023 Lower Secondary Checkpoint Assessment (LSCA), JC, EGCSE/EPCSE and IGCSE examinations had been handled. The Heads of Centre also expressed their opinions on the 2023 examinations. They also registered their concerns and flagged areas of improvement for the running of the examinations. ECESWA CEO Dr Mandlenkosi Dlamini, commended Heads of Centre for displaying the highest level of professionalism and understanding during the 2023 resit examination. ECESWA ordered a resit examination in November 2023 following the leakage of seven (7) components.

In his remarks, Dr Dlamini also praised the Heads of Centre who were courageous enough to raise an alarm on the leakage of question papers. The CEO acknowledged that the resit examination was not easy for schools and had come at a huge financial cost. He said he was fully aware that many Centres did not have the funds to cater for the resit examination expenses and that it took a lot of personal and financial sacrifice to effectively manage the situation. Meanwhile, Dr Dlamini explained that the resit examination was meant to ensure that the ground was level for all candidates. He also assured the Heads of Centre that ECESWA would do everything to protect the integrity and credibility of examinations.

Going forward, the ECESWA CEO highlighted that the organisation would put in place mitigation measures to enhance the security of question papers.

Several pertinent presentations regarding the running of examinations were made by ECESWA personnel in this meeting. Such presentations bordered on the following: Registration for the 2024 examinations, Access Arrangements, Special Consideration, handling of school based examinations and finance matters.

Meanwhile, Heads of Centre requested ECESWA to timeously hold invigilation's workshops for the 2024 examinations. They also brought it to ECESWA's attention that the registration of 2024 candidates was somehow affected by the call made by the Deputy Prime Minister's office for out of school children to be immediately readmitted to schools.