

Marking: Stage 2 External examination



Government
of South Australia



SACE
BOARD
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Introduction

This document provides key information about the marking processes for Stage 2 external examinations. 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: examinations, and investigations.

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 examination marking procedures 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.

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:

- *Batch* – a collection of written examinations. A batch of examinations usually consists of a randomised selection of fifty scripts from a variety of schools.
- *Benchmarking* – the process of selecting and using student examination scripts 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.
- *Double-marked assessments* – assessments that are marked independently by two markers. For examinations, both markers are appointed by the SACE Board.
- *Examination* – common assessment (written and oral) for all students enrolled in the subject, to assess knowledge, skills, and understanding, as specified in the subject outline and in accordance with the performance standards.
- *External assessment (component)* – assessment specifications for assessment tasks are 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 and marking guidelines/marks scheme.
- *Marking guidelines/marks scheme* – a set of instructions used to determine the allocation of marks for possible responses.
- *Numeric equivalent* – the number corresponding to a grade level.
- *Single-marked assessments* – assessments that are marked by one person appointed by the SACE Board. The marking process is supported by a supervision process.
- *Supervisor* – a person responsible for supporting the establishment of reliability before marking begins, and for maintaining reliability throughout the marking process.

Roles and responsibilities

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Manager, Curriculum and Assessment
- SACE Officer – Curriculum and Assessment/Education Consultant
- Manager, Results and Information Management
- Operations and Results
- askSACE
- Lead Practitioner (External Assessment)

The SACE Board:

- appoints an assessment panel for external marking, consisting of
 - the Lead Practitioner (External Assessment)
 - 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
- requires all assessment panel members to
 - maintain confidentiality throughout and after the marking process in accordance with the Requirements for Lead Practitioner (External Assessment) and Assessment Panel Members (see Appendix 1) and the *Code of Conduct Declaration* (see Appendix 2)
 - declare any potential conflicts of interest prior to the commencement of marking (see Appendix 2)
 - ensure the security of student results, information, and materials (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2)
- in conjunction with the Lead Practitioner (External Assessment), allocates
 - assessment panel members to a team if the examination is marked in sections
 - each marker to a supervisor.

Operations and Results

- with the Project Officer and Education Consultant, oversees the preparation of the marking schedule, and consults with the Lead Practitioner (External Assessment)
- ensures that markers are not allocated scripts from any individual students with whom they have a conflict of interest
- monitors progress of marking
- refers potential breaches of rules and other issues to the Manager, Curriculum and Assessment.

The Education Consultant

- with the Lead Practitioner (External Assessment), leads the marker training process
- advises markers about the procedures related to marking and script handling
- advises markers about work health and safety (see Appendix 3)
- advises markers about the *Independent Commission Against Corruption* (see Appendix 4)
- oversees the marking process
- with Operations and Results monitors adherence to the marking schedule
- supports reliability by responding to markers' queries
- oversees the quality assurance processes undertaken at the completion of marking.

The Lead Practitioner (External Assessment):

- responds to queries from the Education Consultant, and the Project Officer, on the preparation of the marking schedule
- prepares (with supervisors, as appropriate) benchmarking materials for use prior to the start of marking
- prepares (with supervisors, as appropriate) marking guidelines/marks scheme for use by the marking panel
- prepares training materials for use at the marker training meeting(s)
- conducts a benchmarking exercise before the start of marking, using common scripts for each subject and marking guidelines, or provides a detailed explanation of the marks scheme and solutions; for oral examinations in languages, 'scripts' (throughout this document) includes recorded materials
- supports (with the help of supervisors) the consistent interpretation and application of the marking guidelines/marks scheme throughout the marking process.

Supervisors:

- attend the supervisor training meeting
- where appropriate, support the Lead Practitioner (External Assessment) and the Education Consultant in selecting and preparing benchmarking materials and marking guidelines, or solutions and a marks scheme
- support discussion to clarify assessment decisions during benchmarking
- participate initially in the marking process
- support the consistent interpretation and application of the performance standards and adhere to the marking guidelines/marks scheme
- support adherence to the marking schedule
- supervise marked batches
- submit a marking report and a supervision report to the Education Consultant.

Markers:

- participate in the marker training meeting
- follow the marking schedule prepared by the SACE Board
- follow specified marking procedures, marking guidelines, marks scheme and/or benchmark materials
- advise the supervisor of any concerns about individual scripts
- submit a marking report to the Education Consultant.

Confidentiality and security

All supervisors and markers 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, security, and safe transport of examinations in their possession.

Marking must not be done in the presence of others or in any other way that breaches the confidentiality of the papers. When not being marked, examinations should be kept locked away and out of sight.

External marking procedures

Marker and supervisor training

All markers and supervisors must participate in marker training and, in the case of supervisors, supervisor training. When appropriate, subgroups of the marking panel will be formed to focus on the marking of one section of the examination.

Marker training will take one or both of the forms described below. The Lead Practitioner (External Assessment, with the supervisors, if applicable) leads discussion to:

- clarify assessment decisions about the standards of the benchmarking scripts. Markers assess a number of benchmarking scripts at different grade levels, using the marking guidelines. More scripts may be distributed to confirm understanding of standards.
- explain the allocation of marks in the marks scheme. Some subjects (e.g. some mathematics and science subjects) have a second marker training meeting after a specified number of scripts have been marked. Discussion focuses on the variety of observed student responses to each question and how the marks scheme can be applied to each of these.

Markers refer to the benchmarking scripts and the benchmarking decisions during the marking period. Any printed benchmarking scripts and marking guidelines/marks scheme must be returned to Operations and Results with the final marked batch, or securely destroyed. All documents downloaded onto personal/school devices must be deleted.

Marking schedule

For paper marking, on your marking dashboard in Schools Online you will see your schedule detailing the allocation of batches including their delivery and return dates

For electronic examinations, markers will be given a marking due date by which they must finalise their marking allocation.

Markers must advise askSACE promptly if there is a problem, such as illness, that may affect their ability to meet the schedule.

All paper marking/supervision batches will be delivered by courier to markers and supervisors, either directly to their school or to a private address where markers/supervisors are not currently working at a school.

Batches will be returned to the SACE Board by courier from the location that they were delivered. Markers/supervisors will receive notification via SMS and email on the day that the marking/supervision batches will be delivered.

Markers/supervisors will be provided with courier bags, labels or consignment notes, and instructions for couriering marked/supervised batches.

Markers must return marked batches according to the schedule.

Markers can telephone askSACE 8115 4700 if they have any queries related to marking.

Handling batches for paper examinations

Batches:

- are allocated so that no marker is given a batch containing the script of any student for whom the marker has advised a potential conflict of interest
- contain up to a maximum of 50 scripts
- contain a random selection of scripts from a variety of schools.

The white batch header lists the registration number of each student in the batch. It is important that the scripts are kept in the order shown on the batch header.

Markers must check the scripts against the information on the batch header before and after marking. Any discrepancy should be immediately drawn to the attention of askSACE by emailing askSACE@sa.gov.au.

Marking guidelines

Marking

The script is marked with reference to the marking guidelines/marks scheme. When examinations have questions with multiple parts, the marks gained for each part are entered onto the mark sheet in schools online, the system will automatically total each part.

Markers must not put any other annotations or markings on paper scripts.

A paper script that has some of the student work highlighted (e.g. for students who arrived late) and other work completed but not highlighted, should be marked in its entirety. On the basis of information provided by the school, the SACE Board will determine whether or not the marks for work that is not highlighted should be included.

Markers must mark all questions that the student has attempted in the script.

If a student crosses out a response and then decides that it was the correct (or the most correct) answer, then the student should indicate clearly to the marker which part of their response should be considered. This could be done by circling or highlighting the response, or part of the response that the student wants to be considered and write "please mark this work". Students

do not need to rewrite their answers in this case, unless the crossing out has rendered the response unreadable.

When students are required to choose the question(s) they intend to answer and the student answers more than the required number of questions, markers must mark all answers provided by the student. The marker records the mark for the attempt that gains the highest mark.

Paper examination markers who find responses written in the wrong booklet should not mark the response, tag the relevant page with a note and notify askSACE by emailing askSACE@sa.gov.au.

Completing online marks sheets for paper examinations

A batch of examination scripts including a white batch header will be couriered to markers, the online mark sheets will be available in Schools Online.

Markers

- check the student SACE registration number on the script matches the student registration number on the screen.
- click the 'absent' bubble on the individual marks sheet when an 'A' on the batch header indicates that a student was absent and did not undertake the examination. They do not record a result for these students
- click the 'Blank Book' bubble on the individual mark sheet if the question book contains no writing
- complete the 'Marks' column on the screen by
 - recording marks inside the appropriate boxes.
 - recording 'zero' only if an answer has been attempted but is completely incorrect or earns no marks.
 - recording 'N' if a student has not attempted the question.

The white batch header may indicate that there are scripts to come. These scripts are indicated by a 'TC' on the batch header. An orange sheet with the student registration number is placed in the batch by Operations and Results to indicate the location of missing scripts. TC will be indicated next to the registration number in the student list on the screen.

Markers for single-marked examinations will need to contact their supervisor by phone or email to resolve any parts of the paper where they are unsure of the marks that should be allocated. The marker can also make comments on the individual mark sheet on the screen.

Potential breaches of rules or reason for concern

If a marker discovers inappropriate and/or offensive drawings or comments in a script they should report the issue in the examination system providing relevant comments. Breaches of rules identified by markers will be investigated and penalties may apply.

Where student welfare is of concern, immediately notify askSACE - askSACE@sa.gov.au, including all relevant information (e.g. SACE registration number and a scan/photo of the relevant page(s)). Additionally, report the issue in the examination system. The SACE Board will make a pastoral care call to the school to ensure the student's well-being.

Oral examiners should report any inappropriate and/or offensive conduct to the Education Consultant at the examination centre.

Marking reports

Markers are required to submit a marking report to the Education Consultant as soon as they have finished marking.

The report should contain comments on the quality of student performance, and other information relevant to helping teachers and students to interpret the assessment requirements of the subject.

The marking reports are used when the *Subject Assessment Advice* is written.

Single-marking supervision – paper examinations

When single marking is undertaken, one or more supervisors, according to the number of students, are appointed.

Batches

The SACE Board allocates the number of batches to each marker and supervisor.

Every batch must be supervised. The supervisor looks for evidence that each marker is applying the marking guidelines/marks scheme consistently and within the set tolerance.

The first batch for each marker is returned to Operations and Results when the marking has been completed so that supervisors can commence supervision and give the marker prompt, detailed feedback, as appropriate. The marker continues to mark during this time, unless advised by the supervisor to stop, and incorporates any feedback from the supervisor regarding their marking in the first batch.

All batches must be marked, supervised, and returned to Operations and Results by the final date indicated on the marking schedule.

Supporting reliability of marking standards

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that markers apply the marking guidelines/marks scheme consistently. As well as contributing to the marker training process, where appropriate, they:

- answer markers' queries about the interpretation and application of the marking guidelines/marks scheme
- supervise batches (see below)
- provide continuing feedback to individual markers.

Supervisors must participate in training on the supervision of the single-marking process.

Supervision process

The examination supervisors undertake training on the application of the supervision process.

The supervisor initially remarks *every fifth script* to check the accuracy of marking.

- Where marking is found to be within tolerance for a script, the supervisor continues to remark every fifth script throughout the first and subsequent batches.
- Where marking is found to be out of tolerance in any fifth script, the supervisor then remarks all four scripts preceding the out of tolerance script.
 - If the supervisor finds no more than one further script with out of tolerance marking in the four preceding scripts, the supervisor returns to every fifth script for supervision.

Note: Where the marking of any further supervised scripts is found to be out of tolerance the supervisor remarks the four preceding scripts each time.

- If the supervisor finds two or more scripts out of tolerance in the four preceding scripts, the supervisor contacts the marker and asks them to stop marking until feedback can be provided.
- Where inconsistent marking is identified in the supervision process, the supervisor initiates a discussion with the Education Consultant to discuss the marker's continued involvement in the marking process.
In this instance inconsistent marking is identified as:
 - inconsistent application of the mark scheme causing out of tolerance marking
 - the marking of 2 out of every 5 scripts across any batch, on average, is found to be out of tolerance.

The Education Consultant consults the Manager, Curriculum and Assessment and informs the supervisor and marker of the outcome.

Feedback to markers

The supervisor provides feedback to individual markers at the completion of supervision of the first batch and then during the remaining marking and supervision process.

- Where marking is found to be within tolerance the marker is instructed to continue marking and return all subsequent batches as per schedule.
- Where consistent errors are identified in the marking, the supervisor provides clear instructions/further training to the marker on the application of the mark scheme. They advise the marker that, before returning any further batches as per schedule, they must go back to all marked scripts and amend the marking as per the feedback provided.

Supervisors' reports

Supervisors are required to submit to the Education Consultant a marking report and a supervision report.

Marking report

The marking report should contain comments on the quality of student performance, and other information relevant to helping teachers and students to interpret the assessment requirements of the subject.

The marking reports are used when the Subject Assessment Advice is written.

Supervision report

The supervision report should contain comments on the consistency and reliability of individual markers in their team (marking standards; keeping to the schedule).

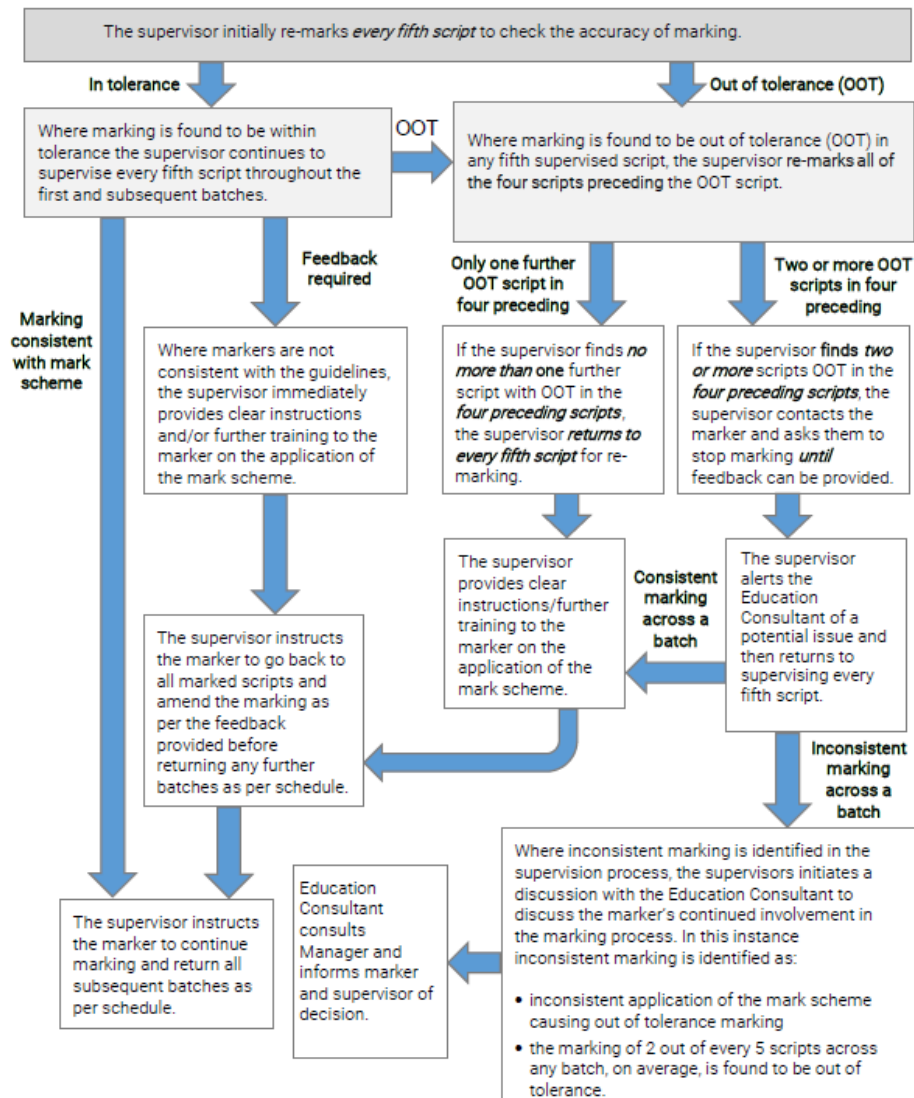
This report helps in the selection of subsequent marking panels.

This information is made available to markers through the Education Consultant on request.

Stage 2 Examinations - Single-marking Supervision Workflow

The SACE Board allocates a number of markers to each supervisor. The supervisor looks for evidence that each marker is applying the marking guidelines/marks scheme consistently within the set tolerance.

Each marker returns one batch of marking initially. For the initial, and following, batches for each marker, the supervisor undertakes the following supervision process:



Double-marking supervision

When double marking is undertaken, one or more supervisors, according to the number of students, are appointed.

Supervisors are responsible for resolving tolerances for scripts that have been identified as out of tolerance. Supervisors:

- contribute to the marker training process
- answer markers' queries
- re-mark the script to resolve tolerances identified in the examination system by reading the entire response, and recording the re-mark.

Supervisors must complete training on the supervision of the double-marking process.

Double-marking Supervision- resolving Tolerances

Marker 1 and Marker 2 independently mark allocated batches of randomised scripts and return them to the SACE Board. The mark given by Marker 1 is not known to Marker 2, and vice versa. The supervision is generated using the marks from Marker 1 and Marker 2.

Supervisors must re-mark all and only those scripts or questions that have been identified in the examination system.

Steps in resolving Tolerances

1. Supervisors re-mark only those examination scripts that have been identified in the examination system.
2. The examination system will identify the examinations scripts where the grand total mark for Marker 1 and the grand total mark for Marker 2 are outside of the set tolerance for the subject.
3. The grand total marks for Marker 1 and Marker 2 will be shown to the supervisor.
4. The supervisor's grand total mark replaces the grand total mark of either Marker 1 or Marker 2, whichever of those marks is further from the supervisor's mark.
5. In cases where the supervisor's grand total mark is equidistant from the grand total marks of Marker 1 and Marker 2, then the supervisor's mark replaces the marks of both Marker 1 and Marker 2.
6. If the supervisors mark does not resolve the tolerance issue, the supervisor will need to reconsider the script and provide a mark that will resolve the tolerance.

NOTES

APPENDIX 1



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.

APPENDIX 2



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 2021 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: ___/___/___

Ref: A707706



APPENDIX 3

Manual Handling

Manual Handling is any activity involving the use of muscular force or effort to:

lift push pull hold
restrain carry move lower

SMART Manual Handling



Size up the load

Ask for help or use a trolley if the load is too heavy or large



Move in close

Keep the load as close to your body as possible



Always bend your knees

Relieves the pressure on your hamstrings



Raise your legs

Use your leg muscles so you are not putting strain on your back



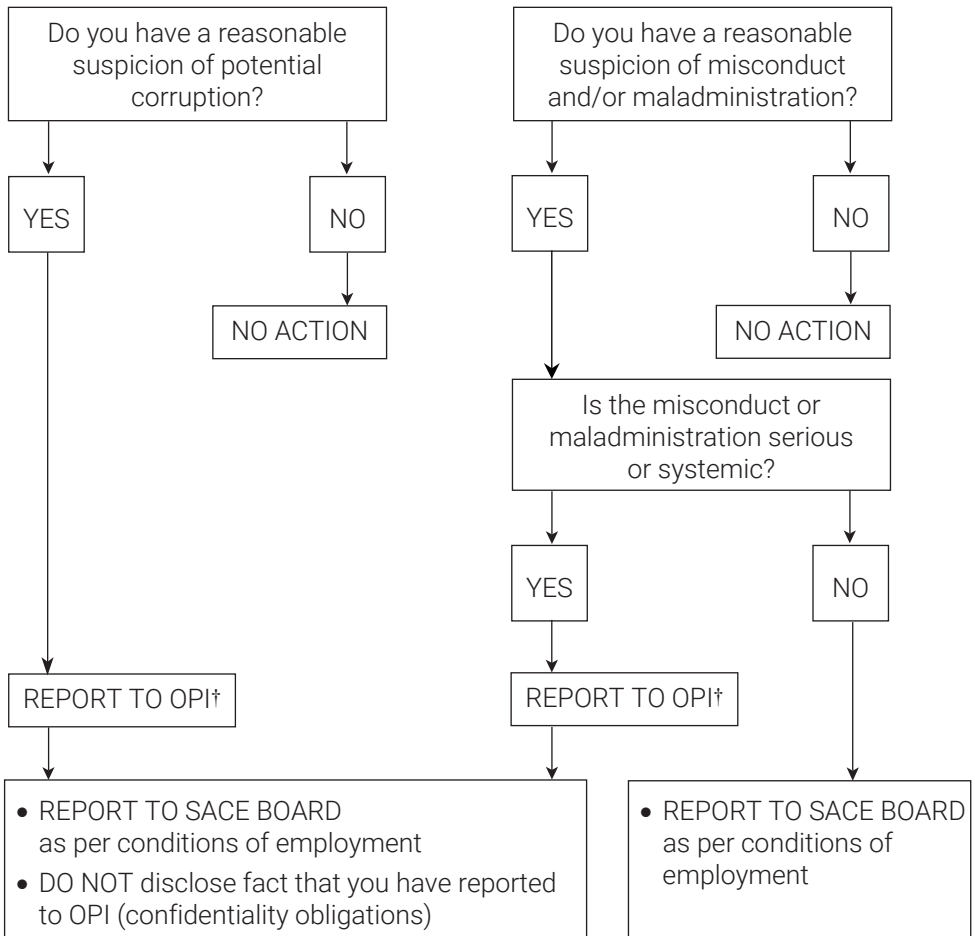
Turn using your feet

Avoid twisting at the waist and through your back

Take your time!

APPENDIX 4

ICAC*: summary of reporting obligations



*ICAC – Independent Commission Against Corruption

†OPI – Office for Public Integrity

