

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Table of Contents

Purpose	2
Scope	2
Guidelines	2
1. Operating principles	2
2. Roles and responsibilities.....	3
2.1. Business Operations.....	3
2.2. Education Consultants.....	4
2.3. Curriculum Advisors	4
2.4. Supervisors	4
2.5. Markers.....	5
3. Confidentiality and security	5
4. External marking procedures.....	5
4.1. Marker and Supervisor Training.....	5
4.2. Marking Schedule	6
4.3. Marking Guidelines	6
4.4. Issues Management.....	7
4.5. Marking Reports.....	8
5. Marking and supervision process for Stage 2 investigations	8
5.1. Markers 1 and 2	8
5.2. Markers 1 and 2 and Supervisor.....	8
5.3. Final Integrity Check.....	9
Definitions.....	9
References.....	10
Appendix 1 – Workstation Setup Guidelines	11
Appendix 2 – ICAC*: Summary of Reporting Obligations.....	12
Appendix 3 – Requirements for Assessment Panel Members.....	13
Appendix 4 – Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Form.....	14
Appendix 5 – SACE Board Panel Appointment	16

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Purpose

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.

Scope

At Stage 2, external assessment can take one of two forms: investigations and examinations. These procedures are for external assessors, appointed by the SACE Board, who are marking Stage 2 external investigations as the second marker.

The term 'investigation' includes a range of external assessment types such as creative presentations; performances; practical skills; portfolios; product and documentation; language study; in-depth study; and analyses.

Guidelines

Investigations are double marked, first by the teacher and then by a SACE-trained external assessor. The purposes of external marking are to:

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

1. Operating principles

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

Principles	Description
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.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Principles	Description
Independence 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.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. Business Operations

The Business Operations unit of the SACE Board is responsible for:

- ▼ appointing an assessment panel for external marking, consisting of:
 - 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)
- ▼ requiring 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 Assessment Panel Members (see Appendix 3) and the Code of Conduct Declaration (see Appendix 4)
 - declare any potential conflicts of interest (see Appendix 4)
- ▼ monitoring the completion of the Online Investigation Marker and Online Investigation Supervisor Training in PLATO
- ▼ monitoring completion of the Calibration Activities in PLATO
- ▼ determining the start and end dates for marking and managing the progress of marking
- ▼ monitoring adherence to the marking schedule
- ▼ ensuring 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
- ▼ referring potential breaches of rules to Education Services at the SACE Board.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



2.2. Education Consultants

Education Consultants at the SACE Board are responsible for:

- ▶ delivering training to markers and supervisors
- ▶ requiring all assessment panel members to:
 - ensure the security of student results, information, and materials
 - maintain confidentiality throughout and after the marking process in accordance with the Requirements for Assessment Panel Members and the Code of Conduct Declaration
 - declare any potential conflicts of interest
- ▶ advising markers about work health and safety, using PLATO (see Appendix 1)
- ▶ advising markers about the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), using PLATO (see Appendix 2)
- ▶ responding to markers' queries and the outcomes of their calibration scripts, to support reliability
- ▶ overseeing the quality assurance processes undertaken after marking.

2.3. Curriculum Advisors

Curriculum Advisors are responsible for preparing the benchmarking materials accessed through PLATO, and the calibration scripts used as part of the marking process.

2.4. Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

- ▶ completing the Investigation Marker and Supervisor Training in PLATO
- ▶ supporting the planning of the marker meeting
- ▶ leading the subject-specific section of the marker meeting
- ▶ participating in the marking process
- ▶ marking investigations that are identified as having marks that are out of tolerance
- ▶ identifying marking tasks that may be useful as calibration or benchmarking samples for next year
- ▶ completing the justification comment box for each student identified and assessed through the supervision process.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



2.5. Markers

Markers are responsible for:

- ▶ completing the Online Investigation Marker Training and Calibration Activities in PLATO
- ▶ attending a marker meeting
- ▶ monitoring their marking progress using the online status indicator
- ▶ following specified marking procedures and guidelines
- ▶ advising the SACE Board of any concerns about individual investigations, using the appropriate online procedure
- ▶ submitting a marking report via the survey link provided to them by askSACE@sa.gov.au.

3. 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:

- ▶ 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.

4. External marking procedures

4.1. Marker and Supervisor Training

All markers and supervisors must complete:

- ▶ the Calibration Activities in PLATO
- ▶ the Online Investigation Marker Training in PLATO.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Supervisors must also complete the Online Investigation Supervisor Training in PLATO.

The courses they need to complete can be accessed from their “My Learning” tab in PLATO.

Markers refer to the benchmarking pieces and the benchmarking decisions in Schools Online throughout the marking period.

4.2. Marking Schedule

Markers and supervisors will get a minimum and a maximum quota for marking.

Marking should be done progressively throughout the marking period.

Markers and Supervisors must advise askSACE@sa.gov.au if there is a problem, such as illness, that may affect their ability to complete their minimum quota or meet their due date.

Supervisors need to monitor the online marking system for scripts allocated to supervision throughout the marking period. Supervision is additional to their marking allocation.

4.3. Marking Guidelines

4.3.1. Marking

Investigations must be marked with reference to the performance standards and in accordance with the marking guidelines. The relevant assessment design criteria and specific features are 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.

4.3.2. Monitoring Reliability

Calibration scripts are used in the 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 reliable and consistent marking.

- ▶ 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 the same mark too many times, or too many very low marks. This is usually unexpected. Where necessary, have a break and recalibrate using the benchmarks, calibration scripts, and the performance standards.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



4.4. Issues Management

4.4.1. Word Count

When the marker identifies an obviously excessive word count, they 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 must not be considered when making the assessment decision, as indicated in the *SACE Board Word Count – Policy*.

Markers can seek additional advice from the SACE Board.

4.4.2. 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 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.

Markers and supervisors are not responsible for raising concerns about potential breaches of rules regarding students' use of artificial intelligence. The teacher's submission of an investigation for marking is confirmation that, in the teacher's judgment, the investigation is the student's own work.

4.4.3. 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, they must notify the SACE Board using the issues field on the online marking system.

4.4.4. Marks Out of Tolerance

Supervisors mark investigations that are identified as having marks that are out of tolerance. Supervisors read the entire response and record a comment for each of their assessment decisions in the justification comment box.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



4.5. Marking Reports

Markers are required to submit a marking report to the SACE Board as soon as they finish marking, via the survey link provided to them by 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.

5. 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.

5.1. 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.

5.2. Markers 1 and 2 and Supervisor

1. Where the difference in marks provided by Marker 1 and Marker 2 exceeds the tolerance, investigations are identified for supervision.
2. The supervisor marks investigations that are identified. If the supervisor's mark is within tolerance of the marks provided by either Marker 1 or Marker 2, the supervisor's mark replaces whichever is further from it.
3. 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.
4. The supervisor completes the justification comment box for each student identified and assessed through the supervision process.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



5.3. Final Integrity Check

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

Definitions

Term	Definition
Benchmarking	The process of selecting and using student assessment materials to illustrate performance standards at different levels. It also involves using these materials to train markers and ensure 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.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Term	Definition
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.

References

Legislation

Government of South Australia 2010, *Public Sector (Honesty and Accountability) Act 1995*, viewed 6 May 2026, [https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/lz/path=/c/a/public%20sector%20\(honesty%20and%20accountability\)%20act%201995](https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/lz/path=/c/a/public%20sector%20(honesty%20and%20accountability)%20act%201995)

Directive documents

Office of the Commissioner for the Public Sector Employment 2022, *Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector*, Government of South Australia, viewed 6 May 2026, <https://www.publicsector.sa.gov.au/hr-and-policy/code-of-ethics>

SACE Board documents

SACE Board Code of Conduct

Document control

Document No	OPS-GDL-XXX	Version	X.0	Reference	
Approval	Head, Business Operations	Issued	May 2026	Next Review	May 2029

The online version of this document is the current version. This document is 'Uncontrolled if Downloaded or Printed'.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Appendix 1 – Workstation Setup Guidelines

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:

- ▶ your thighs are not compressed by the front edge of chair
- ▶ your upper leg is approximately horizontal or angled slightly upwards with feet on the floor or a footrest
- ▶ there is sufficient clearance between your thigh and the lower edge of desk
- ▶ there is sufficient clearance between the front edge of your chair and your lower legs (calves).

Desk

- ▶ All equipment, pens, paper, folders etc., should be within easy reach without the need to twist your body or stretch when seated.
- ▶ Underneath the desk should be clear of obstructions so that your knees and feet have clear space.
- ▶ Cords and cables should be secured out of the way.

Monitor

When your head is in a neutral upright position, the top of monitor should be in line with your eyes. Adjust your monitor so that when you are looking at the screen:

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

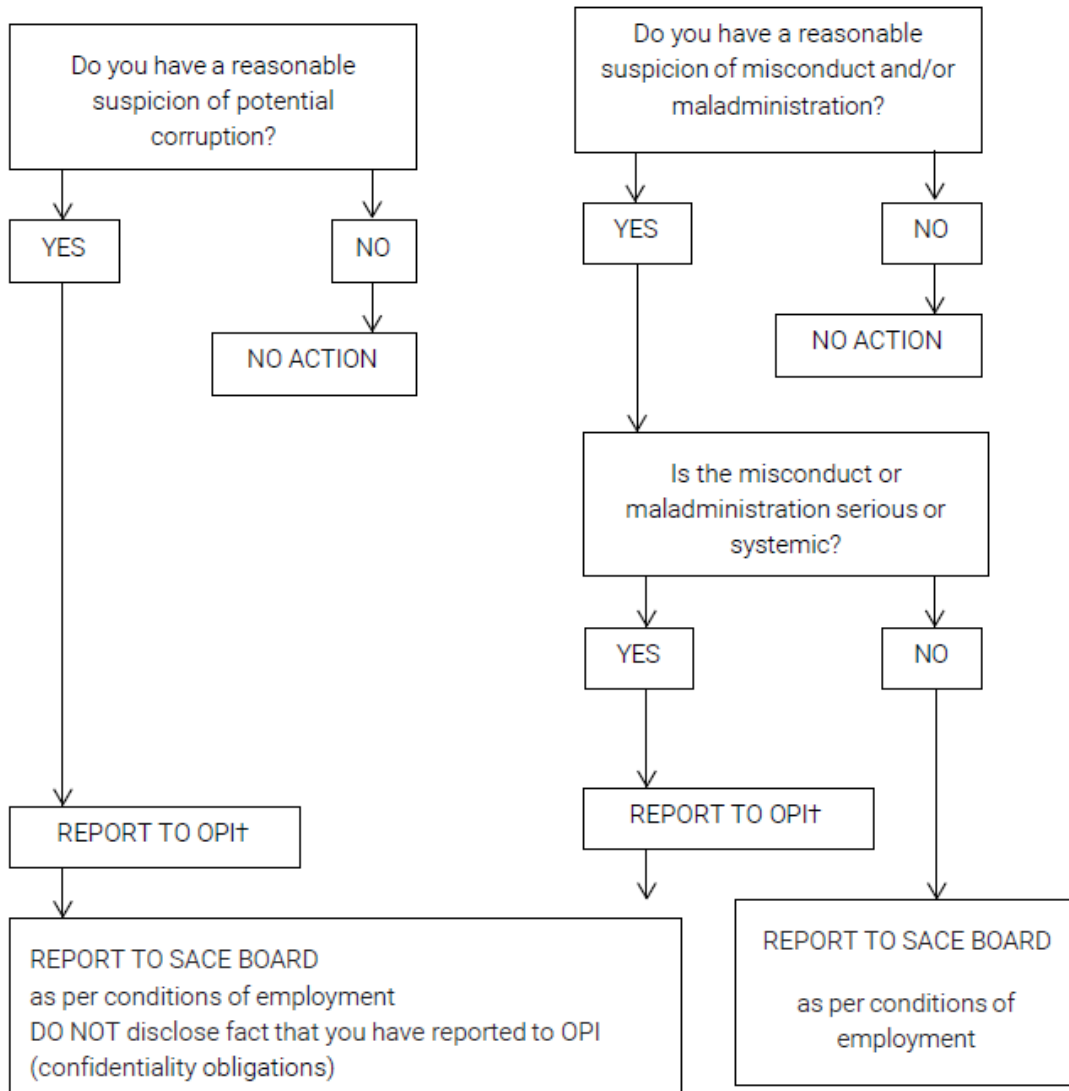
Work and rest rates

Try to alternate different tasks with working at the computer.

- ▶ If it is not possible to vary tasks, take 10-minute breaks from using the computer every hour (or 5 minutes every half hour) (breaks should not be accumulated); get up and walk around or do some stretches or exercises at your desk.
- ▶ Rest your eyes frequently by viewing something at a long distance (more than 3 metres), for example, look across the room or out of a window.

Source: adapted from 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



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, and not comment about their work to schools or 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 do not label them as a SACE Board examination paper. Setters and veters 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 with access to privileged information
- take utmost care with the assessment materials provided by students, for example, 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.

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Appendix 4 – Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Form

This form is sent to panellists with their appointment letter.

SACE BOARD
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Form

Panelist Information

Given Name * <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	Family Name * <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
SACE Board ID: * <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	Teacher Registration ID: <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
Your SACE Board ID appears on your panel appointment form.	
Workplace * <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	
Home email * <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	Work email * <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>

Potential Conflict of Interest Declaration

The public sector Code of Ethics states "Employees will disclose in writing to their Chief Executive or agency head any actual or potential conflicts of interest at the earliest available opportunity". It is therefore SACE Board policy that potential conflicts of interest are identified. This policy applies to all SACE Board staff, including contract staff, as well as Board members, panel and committee members.

A conflict should be declared if you have regular contact with a family member, friend or associate as defined in the [Public Sector \(Honesty and Accountability\) Act 1995](#) who is undertaking SACE subjects at Stage 1 or Stage 2. When determining whether to complete this declaration, use a broad definition.

Do you have any conflicts of interest? *

Yes
 No

If a "yes" is selected student details must be provided below.

Student Name	Registration Number (if known)	School student attends (if known)	Relationship to the student
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>

Stage 2 Investigations Marking – Guidelines



Code of Conduct Declaration

I declare that:

- the personal details I have provided are correct.
- I have not been in receipt of a South Australian Government Voluntary Separation Package within the last 3 years. I will notify the SACE Board immediately should this change.
- I have read and agree to be bound by both the SACE Board of SA's [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector \(2022\)](#). I note that these documents are updated periodically and that the detail may change.
- I have declared any potential/actual conflict of interest and will advise the SACE Board 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 arriving 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.

I declare the information I have provided on this form are complete and will ensure to notify the SACE Board of any changes *

To ensure your continued involvement, please return the required form to SACE Panels by the specified deadline. Unfortunately, we won't be able to issue any work or payment until the completed form is received.

If the form isn't returned on time, it may affect your position on the panel. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and thank you for your valuable contribution.

Signature *

Date *

Draw signature | Type signature


[Clear](#)

Submit

[Save and Complete Later](#)

Appendix 5 – SACE Board Panel Appointment

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



SACE BOARD PANEL FORM

The SACE Board acknowledges the important role Panel Members play in supporting students to reach their full potential and thrive. Recommended Panel Members are placed in our employment pool for 12 months. Being placed in the pool does not constitute an offer of employment. As an opportunity arises and the SACE Board seeks to engage you, you will be contacted with details of training requirements and employment arrangements.

Please confirm you have checked your details and update if required

DECLARATION	
I confirm that I can undertake the work relating to Stage 1 and Stage 2 Quality Assurance and Assessment Panels as required during the period of 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023	
Last name: <FamilyName2>	First name: <GivenName2>
Signature:	Date:
PERSONAL DETAILS	
Last name: <FamilyName4>	First name(s): <GivenName4>
Previous first or last name (if you've been engaged by the SACE Board previously using a different name):	
Date of birth:	Mobile no: <MobilePhone>
Address: <Address 1> <Address 2>	
Suburb: <Suburb>	Postcode: <Postcode>
Postal address: (if different from above)	
Postcode:	
Email address: <Preferred Email address>	
Employer: (School, private, etc.)	
Name of school: <School Name>	
BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS	
Bank/financial institution:	
Account name (in full):	
Branch name:	
BSB number: _ _ _ - _ _ _	Account number:

<<IDNO>>

Ref: A1144770, V1, last updated 8 Feb 2023

