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**SA EXAM  
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Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**  
Department of  
**Education**

**NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE  
SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT**

**GRADE 12**

**LIFE ORIENTATION**

**COMMON PROVINCIAL  
SOURCED BASED TASK  
MARKING GUIDELINES  
2026 TERM 1**

**MARKS: 90**





### ACTIVITY 1: STRESS, LIFE PRESSURE AND WELL-BEING (45 MARKS)

- 1.1 **Define the term “stress management”.** (1x2) (2)  
Stress management is...

- the ability of a person to use different/appropriate/suitable/helpful ways (✓) to effectively deal with the pressure they may be experiencing at a given point in time. (✓)
- the process of utilising techniques to reduce the physical/emotional responses to traumatic situations, (✓) helping individuals maintain balance in their daily lives. (✓)
- the implementation of time-management/relaxation exercises/coping mechanisms (✓) to minimise the impact of stressors on daily performance. (✓)
- the proactive approach of identifying triggers for anxiety/tension (✓) and developing personalised solutions/practicing mindfulness/attending therapy to prevent overwhelming feelings to these triggers. (✓)
- adopting healthy habits/regular exercise/adequate sleep/proper nutrition (✓) to strengthen the body's/mind's resilience against tension. (✓)
- the continuous effort to build mental/emotional resilience (✓) through self-care practices/positive thinking/support networks to handle future challenges effectively. (✓)

*Any ONE of the above for TWO marks  
(i.e. ONE mark for statement and ONE mark for  
qualifier/explanation)*

- 1.2 **From the case study, state FOUR causes of stress that the learners are experiencing.** (4x1) (4)

Marks should be awarded as follows:

ONE (✓) mark for each correctly stated cause.

- Academic pressure: All three learners feel pressure to perform well in exams and achieve good results, which increases stress levels. (✓)
- Family and financial responsibilities: Sizwe experiences stress due to his mother being unemployed and the pressure to support his family financially. (✓)





- Uncertainty about the future/career choices: Naledi and Jayden feel anxious and stressed about making the “right” career choice or deciding on their future paths. (✓)
- Social comparisons and expectations: Jayden feels stressed by comparing himself to peers and social media influencers, while also facing high parental expectations. (✓)
- Physical and time cost for Sizwe of walking to and from school every day adds to feeling overwhelmed. (✓)

*Any FOUR of the above for ONE mark each*

1.3 **Identify TWO emotional symptoms of stress seen in the case study.** (2x1) (2)

Anxiety (✓)

Feeling overwhelmed (✓)

Insecurity (✓)

Low mood (✓)

Irritability

Award 1 mark each. (✓)

*Any TWO of the above for ONE mark each*





- 1.4 **Describe THREE healthy coping strategies that ANY of the learners could use to reduce their stress levels.** (3x2) (6)

Marks should be awarded as follows:

TWO (✓✓) marks for a well-explained response.

They could...

- Practise relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or mindfulness (✓) which could calm their mind and body, reducing anxiety and physical symptoms of stress. (✓)
- Break tasks into smaller, manageable goals (✓) which could make their workload feel less overwhelming and improve concentration. (✓)
- Seek career guidance from teachers or career counsellors (✓) which could help reduce uncertainty about future plans and relieve stress related to decision-making. (✓)
- Focus on positive self-talk and remind themselves of their strengths (✓) which could improve confidence and reduce negative thoughts about failure or comparison with others. (✓)

*Any TWO of the above for TWO marks each*

*(i.e. ONE mark for statement and ONE mark for qualifier/explanation)*





1.5 **Discuss THREE possible long-term effects of unmanaged stress on a Grade 12 learner's well-being.** (3x2) (6)

- Poor academic performance: (✓) Learners under stress may struggle to concentrate, remember information, or meet deadlines, (✓) resulting in lower grades and reduced learning outcomes. (✓)
- Physical health problems (headaches, high blood pressure) (✓) Continuous stress can trigger physical symptoms such as tension headaches, fatigue, or elevated blood pressure, (✓) impacting the learner's overall health. (✓)
- Substance abuse (✓) Some learners may turn to alcohol, drugs, or smoking to cope with stress, (✓) which can negatively affect their physical and mental health, as well as social relationships. (✓)
- Burnout (✓) Persistent stress without relief can lead to exhaustion, lack of motivation, and emotional withdrawal, making it difficult for learners to engage in school or personal activities. (✓)
- Sleep disturbances (✓) Stress can disrupt sleep patterns, leading to insomnia or poor-quality sleep, which affects concentration, mood, and overall physical health. (✓)
- Social withdrawal (✓) Learners may isolate themselves from friends, family, or extracurricular activities due to stress, which can harm relationships and reduce emotional support networks. (✓)
- Weakened immune system (✓) Long-term stress can impair the body's immune response, (✓) making learners more susceptible to illnesses like colds or infections. (✓)

*Any THREE of the above for TWO marks each*





1.6 **Explain FOUR ways in which learners can balance academic responsibilities with personal well-being.** (4x2) (8)

- Seeking support: (✓) Learners can ask for help from teachers, family, or peers when struggling with schoolwork or personal challenges. (✓)
- Practising mindfulness or relaxation Techniques: (✓) Activities like meditation, deep breathing, or yoga can help reduce stress and improve focus. (✓)
- Limiting distraction/ Time managements: (✓) Reducing time on social media, games, or other distractions allows learners to study efficiently and still have free time for themselves. (✓)
- Engaging in hobbies and interests: (✓) Participating in hobbies, sports, or creative activities helps learners recharge mentally and emotionally. (✓)
- Setting realistic goals: (✓) Learners can break tasks into manageable steps, preventing overwhelm and allowing a balance between academics and personal life. (✓)
- Maintaining social connections: (✓) Spending time with friends and family can boost emotional well-being while providing a healthy break from academic pressures. (✓)
- Reflecting and self-monitoring: (✓) Regularly reviewing progress and well-being helps learners adjust their routines to stay balanced. (✓)

*Any FOUR of the above for TWO marks each*





1.7 Analyse how peer pressure and social media could increase intra- (2x3) (6)  
personal stress among people.

- Feeling pressured to conform to friends' expectations: (✓)  
Young people may act against their own values to fit in (✓),  
which causes stress. (✓)
- Overcommitting to activities to fit in with peers: (✓) Taking  
on too many tasks to gain approval (✓) can lead to anxiety  
and exhaustion. (✓)
- Experiencing anxiety when refusing peer requests or  
opinions: (✓) Saying "no" can make learners worry about  
rejection or conflict (✓), increasing emotional strain. (✓)
- Feeling inadequate when comparing oneself to friends'  
achievements: (✓) Seeing peers succeed can lower self-  
confidence (✓) and create pressure to catch up. (✓)
- Low self-esteem due to unrealistic social media portrayals:  
(✓) Comparing oneself to curated images of success or  
beauty online (✓) can reduce self-worth. (✓)
- Trying to match the appearance, lifestyle, or success seen  
online: (✓) Attempting to imitate social media highlights (✓)  
can increase stress and anxiety. (✓)
- Increased worry about popularity, acceptance, or social  
status: (✓) Constant concern about what others think (✓)  
can lead to mental fatigue. (✓)
- Emotional strain from constantly seeking approval:  
(✓) Trying to please peers or followers (✓) adds pressure  
and tension. (✓)
- Experiencing burnout from trying to meet multiple social  
and academic demands: (✓) Balancing schoolwork with  
social expectations (✓) can overwhelm learners. (✓)
- Heightened fear of missing out (FOMO) on social  
experiences: (✓) Feeling that one is left out (✓) can trigger  
anxiety and stress. (✓)

*Any TWO of the above for THREE marks each*





- 1.8 **Critically discuss TWO constructive ways learners can communicate their feelings to adults (teachers/parents/guardians) when feeling overwhelmed by the pressure and expectations placed on learners.** (2x4) (8)

They could ...

- practice active listening skills (✓) by focusing on understanding the adult's perspective without interrupting, (✓) which could allow them to express empathy/validation to help de-escalate emotions (✓) and in doing so, create a more constructive environment for resolving the conflict. (✓)
- use "I" statements to express their own emotional needs (✓) in a manner that doesn't blame the adult for how they are feeling, (✓) which can prevent the adult from feeling attacked (✓) and in doing so, promote a more open/non-defensive response that is receptive to their needs. (✓)
- take a moment to calm down before responding (✓) by stepping away if possible/counting to 10/taking a deep breath, (✓) which can provide them with the opportunity to order their thoughts/express their emotions in a thoughtful manner (✓) and this could allow for a more composed/rational discussion with the adult. (✓)
- calmly express their reasons behind their emotions (✓) by using a gentle tone/polite language (✓) which could help convey their feelings without appearing confrontational (✓) and in doing so, create a respectful atmosphere that encourages understanding from the adult. (✓)
- express appreciation for any positive aspects of the adult's efforts towards making them feel safe/valued/appreciated in the past (✓) by acknowledging helpful behaviours before mentioning their concerns (✓) which could show respect and appreciation despite any frustration they may be feeling (✓) and in doing so, encourage the adult to receive their feedback about their emotions constructively. (✓)
- communicate their emotions as logically/honestly as possible (✓) by staying focused on specific aspects of the situation that triggered their emotions (✓) which could help them share their concerns in a less personal/offending/challenging manner (✓) and in doing so, lead to a more productive conversation around the situation itself. (✓)





- acknowledge the teacher's perspective (✓) by showing that they understand the adult's intentions before expressing their own feelings (✓) which could balance their feedback in a respectful way (✓) and in doing so, reduce any defensiveness that could negatively impact collaborative problem-solving. (✓)
- take responsibility for their own emotional response (✓) by reflecting on how the situation personally triggered them (✓) which could demonstrate self-awareness within the confrontation situations (✓) and in doing so, encourage the adult to consider their perspective thoughtfully/empathetically. (✓)
- show empathy for the teacher's viewpoint (✓) by indicating any potential misunderstandings they might have had (✓) which could demonstrate a willingness to validate the teacher's feelings on the situation as well (✓) and in doing so, could create a more balanced conversation that facilitates resolution. (✓)
- express their emotions through positive body language (✓) such as maintaining eye contact/ensuring they have a calm posture (✓) which could reinforce that they are trying to express their feelings in a gentle manner (✓) and in doing so, they may convey sincerity to make the adult feel more comfortable with the conflict situation. (✓)

*Any TWO of the above for FOUR marks each*

*(i.e. To be awarded the full FOUR marks for the CRITICAL DISCUSSION, candidates must: give a statement, (✓) elaborate on the statement, (✓) qualify the statement (✓) and give an outcome (✓))*

1.9

Recommend ONE strategy that Grade 12 learners can use to emotionally prepare for life after matric. Also explain how it improves the overall well-being.

(1x3) (3)

- Goal Setting: (✓) Learners can set realistic short-term and long-term goals (✓) for studies, career, and personal life. (✓)





- **Seeking Guidance and Mentorship:** (✓) Consulting teachers, career counsellors, or mentors (✓) helps learners make informed decisions about careers or further studies. (✓)
- **Developing time management skills:** (✓) Learning to prioritise tasks and manage time effectively (✓) prevents overwhelm, improves productivity, and creates balance between academics and personal well-being. (✓)
- **Practising mindfulness and relaxation techniques:** (✓) Activities like meditation, deep breathing, or journaling help learners (✓) manage stress, regulate emotions, and maintain mental clarity. (✓)
- **Building a Support Network:** (✓) Maintaining strong relationships (✓) with family, friends, and peers provides emotional support during transitions, reducing feelings of isolation and stress. (✓)
- **Exploring Interests and Hobbies:** (✓) Engaging in creative, physical, or social activities (✓) allows learners to unwind, develop self-identity, and maintain emotional well-being during stressful periods. (✓)

*Any ONE of the above for THREE marks each*

**SUBTOTAL: 45**





| QUESTIONS         | VERBS AND CONTEXTS | MARK TOTALS | COGNITIVE LEVEL |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Activity 1</b> |                    |             |                 |
| 1.1               | Define             | 2           | Lower           |
| 1.2               | State              | 4           | Lower           |
| 1.3               | Identify           | 2           | Lower           |
| 1.4               | Describe           | 6           | Lower           |
| 1.5               | Discuss            | 6           | Middle          |
| 1.6               | Explain            | 8           | Middle          |
| 1.7               | Analyse            | 6           | Higher          |
| 1.8               | Critically discuss | 8           | Higher          |
| 1.9               | Recommend          | 3           | Higher          |
|                   |                    | <b>45</b>   |                 |
| <b>Activity 2</b> |                    |             |                 |
| 2.1               | Define             | 2           | Lower           |
| 2.2               | State              | 3           | Lower           |
| 2.3               | Mention            | 4           | Lower           |
| 2.4               | Describe           | 4           | Lower           |
| 2.5               | Explain            | 8           | Middle          |
| 2.6               | Discuss            | 8           | Middle          |
| 2.7               | Critically discuss | 4           | Higher          |
| 2.8               | Evaluate           | 8           | Higher          |
| 2.9               | Recommend          | 4           | Higher          |
|                   |                    | <b>45</b>   |                 |

