



COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST · Edition 2026

Audit-ready, every term.

A practical, item-by-item compliance prep guide for South African educational institutions — SA-SAMS, LURITS, DHET, QCTO, POPIA.

SA-SAMS

LURITS

DHET / HEMIS

QCTO

POPIA

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Built in South Africa · 2026

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

Compliance is a habit, not an event.

This is the same checklist eduSYMS uses with new institutions in week one. Work through it once, wire the gaps into the platform, and most submissions stop being events at all — they become a by-product of how operations already run.

10

FRAMEWORKS COVERED

48

AUDIT-READY DATA POINTS

4

TERMLY CADENCE CHECKS

1

SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH

WHY IT MATTERS

Most compliance crises are data-quality crises in disguise.

When SA-SAMS or HEMIS submissions go wrong, it's almost never because the framework changed last week — it's because the underlying records were never structured properly to begin with. Fix the data layer once and submissions become routine.

WHAT YOU'LL WORK THROUGH

Six chapters, in order:

1. Records & data quality
2. Reporting & submissions
3. Audit & inspection readiness
4. POPIA & data protection
5. Submission cadence calendar
6. Quick-take recap

Get the data layer right.

Compliance lives or dies in the records layer. Inspectors don't audit your processes — they audit your data. Fix this and the rest of the checklist starts to feel like a formality.

- 1 Centralise learner & staff master records**
One canonical record per person — no duplicate spreadsheets. Every system that needs identity data should read from this single source, not maintain its own copy.
- 2 Generate and validate LURITS IDs at enrolment**
Capture the right fields (full names, ID/passport, DoB, gender) at enrolment so LURITS can be issued or validated immediately — not chased a month before submission.
- 3 Capture attendance daily, by class period**
Per-period digital registers replace paper rolls. Late entries, leaves, and exemptions get logged with reason codes so attendance ratios stand up to inspection.
- 4 Lock down assessment & moderation trails**
Every mark traces to an assessor, a date, and a moderator sign-off. Year-end statements are then a report against the trail, not a reconstruction from emails.
- 5 Maintain finance ledgers tied to learner records**
Fees, NSFAS allocations, bursaries, and refunds reconcile against the same learner records — no side-spreadsheets, no manual reconciliations at year-end.
- 6 Document staff qualifications & vetting**
SACE registration for educators, criminal-record checks, role-based access — all evidenced and renewable from one staff record.

Submission-ready, not submission-week.

If submissions feel like a fire drill, the workflow is wrong. These are the reporting workflows every SA institution should have running before the deadline calendar starts mattering.

- 1 SA-SAMS termly submission workflow**

Termly enrolment, attendance, and assessment data exports map directly to the SA-SAMS schema. Pre-export validation catches the 'missing learner' and 'mismatched ID' errors before they reach the district.
- 2 LURITS validation & lifecycle tracking**

New learners issued LURITS at enrolment; transfers, exits, and re-admissions tracked across years. The validation report runs continuously — not on submission day.
- 3 DHET / HEMIS reporting (TVET & Universities)**

Headcount, FTE, programme registration, and graduation outputs aligned to the HEMIS data dictionary. Faculty-level dashboards mirror what the central submission shows.
- 4 QCTO MIS exports (SDPs)**

Cohort enrolment, assessment results, certification recommendations — packaged in the QCTO MIS format, pre-validated against learner master records.
- 5 NLRD packaging**

Generated from live operational data, not built by hand against a template. The NLRD export is a view, not a project.
- 6 CHE accreditation & programme submissions**

Programme inventory, faculty CVs, governance evidence held in one place — referenced into accreditation submissions rather than reassembled each cycle.

What inspectors actually ask for.

An auditor's checklist is not a mystery. The same six things come up every time — get them visible and exportable from one place and inspections stop being disruptive.

WITHOUT A SYSTEM

- ✗ Reconstruct attendance from paper registers under deadline
- ✗ Email chains stand in for sign-off trails
- ✗ Year-end marks rebuilt from teacher spreadsheets
- ✗ POPIA consent assumed but never evidenced
- ✗ Inspector visits trigger week-long scrambles

WITH EDUSYMS

- ✓ Daily attendance with reason codes — exportable per-class
- ✓ Assessor + moderator sign-off chain on every mark
- ✓ Year-end statements regenerated from live data
- ✓ POPIA consent captured at enrolment, audit-logged
- ✓ Inspector view: read-only filtered dashboard, ready in seconds

WATCH OUT FOR

The top three audit findings in SA institutions

(1) Attendance registers don't reconcile across paper, period, and term. (2) LURITS IDs missing on transfers in or out. (3) Assessor sign-off can't be evidenced for a sample of marks. All three vanish when the data layer is right.

Consent, minimisation, audit logs.

POPIA isn't a separate workstream — it's how a well-run institution should already operate. These are the four pillars that need to be evidenced if the Information Regulator comes calling.

- 1 Lawful basis & consent at source**
Every personal data field captured has a documented lawful basis. Where consent is the basis, it's captured at enrolment, dated, and revocable — with the audit log to prove it.
- 2 Data minimisation in practice**
Forms ask for what's needed for the stated purpose, no more. Fields used for one process are not silently re-purposed for another without re-consent.
- 3 Role-based access & access logs**
Who-saw-what is loggable. A teacher sees their class, a bursar sees finance, a principal sees the school — and an inspector can be given read-only scoped access without exposing other learners' data.
- 4 Subject access & deletion workflows**
When a parent asks 'what do you hold on my child?', a single export answers it. Right-to-erasure requests follow a documented retention-aware workflow, not an email chain.
- 5 Information Officer designated and trained**
POPIA mandates a registered Information Officer per organisation — this person is named, contactable, and trained on incident response timelines (72 hours for material breaches).
- 6 Cross-border transfer controls**
If any data leaves SA — backups, third-party tools, processors — there is documented justification and contractual safeguards. eduSYMS data is SA-resident by default.

The submission calendar at a glance.

Cadence varies by framework — but the underlying data should already be live. These are the rhythms compliant institutions plan their year around.

DAILY

Attendance · register exceptions · POPIA consent capture

WEEKLY

Assessment marks entry · moderation queue · finance reconciliation

MONTHLY

Fee statements · NSFAS reconciliation (TVET) · staff time-and-attendance

PER TERM

SA-SAMS export · LURITS validation · attendance ratios · learner movement

PER COHORT

QCTO MIS submission (SDPs) · assessor & moderator sign-off · PoE archive

ANNUALLY

HEMIS / CHE submissions · DBE returns · POPIA review · access-rights audit

ON CHANGE

Transfer-in / transfer-out · staff changes · programme additions · governance updates

THE EDUSYMS SHORTCUT

Cadence becomes by-product when data is live.

Daily and weekly checks already happen as part of normal operations. Termly and annual submissions become a one-click export rather than a project. That's the operational shift this checklist is really driving towards.

Quick-take: nine moves that pay off forever.

If this checklist looks long, here's the short version. Land these nine and the rest follow on autopilot.

- 1 One canonical learner record**
Eliminate parallel spreadsheets. Every system reads from one identity store.
- 2 Daily digital attendance**
Per-period registers with reason codes — not paper rolls reconciled at term-end.
- 3 LURITS at enrolment**
Issue or validate the moment a learner is admitted, not the week before submission.
- 4 Live finance ledgers**
Fees, NSFAS, bursaries reconciled continuously — never as a year-end clean-up.
- 5 Assessor sign-off chains**
Marks trace to an assessor, a date, a moderator. Year-end statements regenerate.
- 6 POPIA consent at source**
Captured on enrolment, audit-logged, revocable, evidenced for the Regulator.
- 7 Role-based access logs**
Who-saw-what is queryable. Inspector access is scoped and read-only.
- 8 Submission-ready exports**
SA-SAMS / HEMIS / QCTO MIS / NLRD — generated from live data, not rebuilt.
- 9 Calendar built around live data**
Daily and weekly habits make termly and annual submissions trivial.

Skip the build phase.

eduSYMS arrives with this checklist already operationalised. Book a 30-minute walkthrough — we'll map it to your institution and your framework mix.

edusyms.com/book-demo

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