



education

Department of Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINIMUM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

for

**Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree
Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate**

**Pretoria
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Government Gazette

Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997)

I, Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, Minister of Education, hereby promulgate the policy for the Minimum Admission Requirements for, Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate as set out in the Schedule, in terms of section 3 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997).

The policy will be applicable to all higher education institutions and will be effective from January 2009.

The development of this policy has benefited from extensive discussion and consultation, within and outside of higher education and initiated with the publication of the draft Higher Education Qualifications Framework (2004) and the Policy for the National Senior Certificate. As the National Senior Certificate will replace the Senior Certificate in 2008, it has become necessary for a new policy framework that outlines the entry requirements to higher education.

While this policy outlines the statutory minimum admission to higher education as the National Senior Certificate, the setting of the admission requirements is made in terms of section 74 of the Higher Education Act and section 16(7) of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act by Higher Education South Africa (HESA), being the successor to the South African University Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA) and the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP). HESA has approved the contents of this policy as the statutory minimum entry requirements to higher education requiring a National Senior Certificate, in terms of section 74 of the Higher Education Act.

G. N. M. Pandor

G. N. M. Pandor, MP

Minister of Education

Date 18-08-2005

SCHEDULE

Minimum Admission Requirements For Higher Certificate, Diploma And Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring A National Senior Certificate

1. Introduction

Higher Education Institutions currently provide qualifications in terms of the following policies:

A Qualification Structure for Universities in South Africa – NATED Report 116 (99/02)

General Policy for Technikon Instructional Programmes – NATED Report 150 (97/01)

Formal Technikon Instructional Programmes in the RSA – NATED Report 151 (99/01)

Revised Qualifications Framework for Educators in Schooling, in *Norms and Standards for Educators* (Government Gazette No. 20844, February, 2000)

The Education White Paper 3, *A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education* (1997), proposed a single qualifications framework for higher education. In this regard, a unitary higher education qualifications framework will replace the above policies.

The purpose of this policy is to provide for a policy on the statutory minimum admission requirements in terms of the National Senior Certificate, whose specifications were approved by the Minister of Education in the *National Senior Certificate – A qualification at level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework, Government Gazette, Vol. 481, No. 27819, July 2005*, for undergraduate higher education qualifications and programmes, namely the Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree.

The National Senior Certificate will first be issued in 2008. Students entering higher education in 2009 must therefore meet the requirements of this policy. The policy will be implemented from 1 January 2009.

2. Policy considerations

The Higher Education Act, 1997 ensures that policies of higher education institutions, including admissions policy, must be formulated with due regard for its relationship to and influence on education and training in other sectors. Institutions' admissions requirements, policies and practice are expected to advance the objectives of the Higher Education Act, 1997 and the National Qualifications Framework and must be consistent with the Minister's policies in terms of the Act. In particular, such requirements, policies and practices are expected to advance the objectives of redress, equity and quality in higher education.

Consequentially, this policy outlines the statutory minimum or threshold norms for admission to the undergraduate Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree programmes. Such norms will apply to all public and private higher education institutions.

While this policy outlines the statutory minimum admission to higher education as the National Senior Certificate, the setting of the admission requirements is made in terms of section 74 of the Higher Education Act and section 16(7) of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act by Higher Education South Africa (HESA), being the successor to the South African University Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA) and the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP). In this regard, I am hereby recognising HESA as the body to set the minimum admission requirements for the Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate.

Although the National Senior Certificate is the primary gateway between school and higher education, it does not guarantee a learner's admission to any programme of study in higher education. Within the context of this policy, the right of higher education institutions to set specific admission requirements to particular programmes is confirmed in terms of section 37 of the Higher Education Act.

Many adult learners who have not achieved a National Senior Certificate or equivalent qualification can benefit from higher education. In keeping with the objectives of the National Qualifications Framework the Ministry of Education supports wider and more diverse access to higher education and fairer progression pathways within the system.

As at present, institutional admission policies must allow for alternative routes of entry that are equivalent to the National Senior Certificate standard, including the assessment of an adult learner's capacity to benefit from a particular programme by the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or other means. This document does not otherwise prescribe such alternative routes.

3. Recognised National Curriculum Statement Subjects

The subjects listed in the appendix to this document are recognised National Senior Certificate subjects for the purpose of this policy. All recognised subjects have a credit value of 20, except Life Orientation (10).

The common basis of admission to a Higher Certificate, Diploma or Bachelor's Degree is the achievement of a National Senior Certificate according to the rules of subject combination prescribed in the policy for the *National Senior Certificate – A qualification at level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework, Government Gazette, Vol. 481, No. 27819, July 2005.*

Qualifications in higher education are designed to have high social and economic value to the country. They also represent significant learning achievement, but all qualifications are not alike. They make different intellectual demands and reflect different intellectual achievements on an increasing scale of difficulty, and this is

reflected in the different requirements for admission to the Higher Certificate, the Diploma and the Bachelor's Degree, in terms of the National Senior Certificate.

The minimum admission requirements for the Bachelor's Degree are therefore particularly distinctive. They balance a number of important considerations. The bar must be set high enough to fairly reflect the cognitive demands that will be made on degree students but not to undermine the important objectives of equity and wider access. Higher education institutions admit applicants who are likely to succeed in degree studies, given good teaching, good facilities and appropriate academic and other support, so the admission requirements must as far as possible predict student success in the programmes for which they are enrolled. In turn this means that the National Senior Certificate curriculum followed by aspiring degree candidates must equip them to meet the demands of degree studies.

The National Senior Certificate has to cater for the minority who aspire to degree study as well as those who will enter vocational higher or further education programmes or the world of work. Some subjects are designed to serve all those purposes and some are designed especially for learners who aspire to enter vocational preparation or employment.

For these reasons learners who aspire to degree study will be expected to perform satisfactorily in at least four subjects chosen from a designated list of recognised National Senior Certificate subjects. The list comprises NSC subjects that, when chosen as part of a complete National Senior Certificate programme, are expected to prepare learners well for the demands of first time degree studies.

The designated list will remain in place for three years from the commencement of the policy, during which time Umalusi and the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education, working together with the Department of Education and higher education institutions, will be requested to undertake an evaluation of its suitability and influence. The matter will then be reviewed in the light of the evidence.

All recognised NSC subjects, whether they are on the designated list or not, have value in their own right. Many different combinations of designated and other recognised NSC subjects will suit candidates for the varieties of Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree programmes. A heavy onus will rest on the higher education community to decide what those subject combinations are in respect of particular programmes and make them widely known so that provincial departments of education, parents, school principals and career guidance teachers are in a position to give the best possible advice to learners who aspire to enter higher education.

4. Minimum requirements for admission to the Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree

Higher Certificate

The minimum admission requirement is a National Senior Certificate (NSC) as certified by the Council for General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi).

Institutional and programme needs may require appropriate combinations of recognised NSC subjects and levels of achievement. For example, an institution may determine that a Higher Certificate in Architectural Design requires in addition to the NSC a specified level of attainment in Design and an associated recognised subject.¹

Diploma

The minimum admission requirement is a National Senior Certificate (NSC) as certified by Umalusi with an achievement rating of 3 (Moderate Achievement, 40-49%) or better in four recognised NSC 20-credit subjects.

Institutional and programme needs may require appropriate combinations of recognised FETC subjects and levels of achievement. For example, a Diploma in Datametrics might require a pass at a prescribed level in Mathematics or Information Technology.

Bachelor's Degree

The minimum admission requirement is a National Senior Certificate (NSC) as certified by Umalusi with an achievement rating of 4 (Adequate Achievement, 50-59%) or better in four subjects chosen from the following recognised 20-credit NSC subjects (which will be known as the designated subject list):

- Accounting
- Agricultural Sciences
- Business Studies
- Dramatic Arts
- Economics
- Engineering Graphics and Design
- Geography
- History
- Consumer Studies
- Information Technology
- Languages (one language of learning and teaching at a higher education institution and two other recognised language subjects)
- Life Sciences
- Mathematics
- Mathematical Literacy

¹ The examples given in this document are for purposes of illustration only and are not prescriptive in any way.

- Music
- Physical Sciences
- Religion Studies
- Visual Arts

Satisfactory Achievement in four designated NSC subjects provides the primary basis for admission to a Bachelor's Degree programme. An institution is entitled to specify an appropriate level of subject achievement for a particular programme. For example, admission requirements for a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art or Music might include a specified level of achievement in the corresponding recognised NSC subjects. Similarly, an institution will be entitled to specify subject requirements for a particular programme. For example, Mathematics and Physical Sciences might be considered as requirements for admission to a Bachelor's Degree in Science.

APPENDIX

RECOGNISED NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE SUBJECTS

Subject to this policy the following National Senior Certificate subjects are recognised for entry into the Higher Certificate, Diploma or Bachelor's Degree. Each of the listed subjects has a credit value of 20 except Life Orientation (10).

GROUP A

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AT HOME AND FIRST ADDITIONAL LEVEL

Afrikaans Home Language
Afrikaans First Additional Language
English Home Language
English First Additional Language
IsiNdebele Home Language
IsiNdebele First Additional Language
IsiXhosa Home Language
IsiXhosa First Additional Language
IsiZulu Home Language
IsiZulu First Additional Language
Sepedi Home Language
Sepedi First Additional Language
Sesotho Home Language
Sesotho First Additional Language
Setswana Home Language
Setswana First Additional Language
SiSwati Home Language
SiSwati First Additional Language
Tshivenda Home Language
Tshivenda First Additional Language
Xitsonga Home Language
Xitsonga First Additional Language

MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Mathematical Literacy
Mathematics

HUMAN AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Life Orientation

GROUP B

AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Management Practices
Agricultural Science
Agricultural Technology

CULTURE AND ARTS

Dance Studies
Design
Dramatic Arts
Music
Visual Arts

BUSINESS, COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Accounting
Business Studies
Economics

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AT SECOND ADDITIONAL LEVEL, AND NON-OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Afrikaans Second Additional Language
English Second Additional Language
IsiNdebele Second Additional Language
IsiXhosa Second Additional Language
IsiZulu Second Additional Language
Sepedi Second Additional Language
Sesotho Second Additional Language
Setswana Second Additional Language
SiSwati Second Additional Language
Tshivenda Second Additional Language
Xitsonga Second Additional Language
Arabic Second Additional Language
French Second Additional Language
German Home Language
German Second Additional Language
Gujarati Home Language
Gujarati First Additional Language
Gujarati Second Additional Language
Hebrew Second Additional Language
Hindi Home Language
Hindi First Additional Language
Hindi Second Additional Language
Italian Second Additional Language
Latin Second Additional Language

Portuguese Home Language
Portuguese First Additional Language
Portuguese Second Additional Language
Spanish Second Additional Language
Tamil Home Language
Tamil First Additional Language
Tamil Second Additional Language
Telugu Home Language
Telugu First Additional Language
Telugu Second Additional Language
Urdu Home Language
Urdu First Additional Language
Urdu Second Additional Language

ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

Civil Technology
Electrical Technology
Mechanical Technology
Engineering Graphics and Design

HUMAN AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Geography
History
Religion Studies

PHYSICAL, MATHEMATICAL, COMPUTER AND LIFE SCIENCES

Computer Applications Technology
Information Technology
Life Sciences
Physical Sciences

SERVICES

Consumer Studies
Hospitality Studies
Tourism