



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
INSTITUTIONAL OFFICE

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## Admissions Policy of the NWU

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# ADMISSIONS POLICY OF THE NWU

## GENERAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

### 1 Preamble

As a pre-eminent university in Africa, driven by the pursuit of knowledge and innovation, with an institutional culture based upon the values the University espouses, the North-West University has adopted this Admission Policy on 20 November 2015 in order to ensure a university environment that advances the objectives of the Higher Education Act (101/1997 as amended) and to be consistent with national directives in regard of the enhancement of access to higher education.

### 2 Policy statement

It is the policy of the North-West University (NWU) to provide a consistent set of guidelines and requirements that, in light of relevant national legislative directives and in relation to Section 78(1) of the Statute, determines admission to the qualifications and their related programmes as offered by the University.

### 3 Policy objectives

The NWU Admission Policy aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 3.1 To provide clear guidelines according to which the NWU could exercise its decision-making powers to admit students to its approved and registered contact and distance qualifications in line with the admission requirements as prescribed in the HEQSF documentation, as well as within the overall national drive towards the advancement of redress, equity and quality in higher education.
- 3.2 It pursues to be aligned to and to be consistent with relevant national legislative directives.
- 3.3 It accepts the National Senior Certificate (NSC) to be the primary gateway to qualifications offered by the NWU, while departing from the premise that an NSC is not to be viewed as a guarantee to be admitted to any qualification, thereby confirming that the NWU retains the right to set specific admission requirements to particular qualifications and their related programmes.
- 3.4 It provides for a framework to enable access to eligible candidates with National Certificates (Vocational) (NC(V)) to certain of the NWU qualifications and their related programmes.
- 3.5 It sets the boundaries to allow for alternative routes of entry that are to be viewed as equivalent to the prescribed standard of the NSC or NC(V), as well as setting stipulations by means of which other forms of prior learning for entry to, or granting advanced standing in, any qualification are to be managed. In this instance, the equivalence will be determined under the guidance of the designated equivalence-setting bodies (*i.e. Umalusi and Universities South Africa's Matriculation Board function*).
- 3.6 It is formulated with due regard to the relevant principles and influences from and on education and training in other sectors.
- 3.7 It provides for a distinction between the general admission requirements to a qualification, and more specific additional admission requirements relevant for admission to a particular programme of a qualification.
- 3.8 It states clearly that faculty-specific admission requirements, as contained in the respective faculty calendars, should be adhered to at all times.

### 4 Rights of the University

- 4.1 The NWU reserves the right to select students before admission to specific qualifications and related programmes, and not to admit applicants if they do not satisfy the selection standards, even where such applicants do meet the minimum admission requirements.

4.2 The NWU reserves the right to set out appropriate measures in the NWU Annual Performance Plan and other relevant policies and rules as a means to further the redress of past inequalities and to ensure that access to the University is broadened.

## 5 Policy authority

The following legislative directives steer the process by means of which prospective students are admitted to qualifications at the North-West University:

- Higher Education Act (101/1997 as amended) – in particular Section 37.
- Government Gazette 31231 (Minimum admission requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate) [*August 2005; Revised May 2008*]
- National Qualification Framework Act (67/2008)
- Government Gazette 31674 (Conditional Exemption Certificates) [*December 2008*]
- Government Gazette 30353 (Higher Education Qualifications Framework) [*October 2009*]
- Government Gazette 32743 (Eligibility of college graduates offering an NC(V) for admission purposes) [*November 2009*]
- Government Gazette 36721 (Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework) [*August 2013*]
- National policy for the recognition of prior learning [*March 2013*]
- Government Gazette 38275 (Credit Accumulation and Transfer Act) [*December 2014*]

## 6 Governance and management of the implementation of the Policy

- 6.1 In accordance with the Higher Education Act (101/1997 as amended) and the NWU Statute (Government Gazette 27872, 5 August 2005) Council and Senate fulfil a governance role in regard of the NWU Admission Policy
- 6.2 The ongoing management of the admission of prospective students to qualifications offered at the University takes place by means of an aligned set of business processes as implemented in a synergised way across the University.

## 7 Recognition of prior learning and credit accumulation transfer

- 7.1 Recognition of prior learning<sup>1</sup> involves principles and processes as contained in faculty calendars and approved by Senate. These principles and processes aim to make visible, to mediate and to assess prior learning and skills of prospective students. The aim hereof is not only to provide alternative routes of access and admission to qualifications, but also to establish clear and unambiguous measures to allocate credits towards the recognition of prior learning.
- 7.2 The focus of the process according to which the recognition of prior learning is managed at the NWU is on providing measures by means of which the knowledge and skills that have been acquired by prospective students through experience are made visible.
- 7.3 Prior learning is made explicit through valid, reliable and equitable assessment methods that make visible the evidence needed to demonstrate the required knowledge and skills to be admitted to a particular programme.
- 7.4 Faculty calendars contain the principles and processes according to which advanced standing for the sake of admission to particular programmes is managed.
- 7.5 In regard of credit transfer, a clear and unambiguous process exists in all faculties (and is approved by Senate) by means of which credible methods are established as a way to manage supplementary work by prospective students.

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<sup>1</sup> This paragraph is to be read in conjunction with the NWU Policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning (8P/8.4.3, 2007)

## **8 Scope of application of the NWU Admission Policy**

The NWU Admission Policy provides boundary admission conditions and rules in regard of the following types of qualifications that are part of the officially approved PQM of the NWU and to which prospective students might seek admission.

Owing to capacity constraints, requirements by professional and statutory bodies and other reasons, the NWU reserves the right to select candidates for admission to certain qualifications. This implies that in certain instances prospective students who comply with the minimum requirements may not be admitted to the qualifications in question. These and other reasons such as the high demand from students for admission to particular fields of study, allows the University to select students on the basis of their academic achievements for admission to these fields.

### **8.1 Undergraduate qualifications**

#### **8.1.1 Advanced Certificate**

*(NQF Exit level=6; Minimum total credits=120; Minimum credits at level 6=120)*

To qualify for admission to an advanced certificate, an applicant must, subject to faculty-specific requirements specified in the faculty calendar, be in possession of:

8.1.1.1 A higher certificate in the appropriate field

#### **8.1.2 Diploma**

*(NQF Exit level=6; Minimum total credits=240 or 360; Minimum credits at level 6=120)*

To qualify for admission to a diploma, an applicant must, subject to faculty-specific requirements as specified in the faculty calendar, be in possession of:

8.1.2.1 A National Senior Certificate (NSC) with endorsement for diploma studies and with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement as per Government Gazette 31231 (2008), OR

8.1.2.2 A National Certificate (Vocational) [NC(V)] exit level 4 issued by the Council for General and Further Education and Training, and with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement as per Government Gazette 32743. The prescribed achievement in the NC(V) is at least 50% in three fundamental subjects including the language of learning and teaching of the Higher Education Institution, and at least 60% in the three compulsory vocational subjects from the recognised list; OR

8.1.2.3 A higher certificate or advanced certificate in a cognate field, recognised by Senate as equivalent.

#### **8.1.3 Advanced Diploma**

*(NQF Exit level=7; Minimum total credits=120; Minimum credits at level 7=120)*

To qualify for admission to a diploma, an applicant must, subject to faculty-specific requirements as specified in the faculty calendar, be in possession of:

8.1.3.1 An appropriate diploma or bachelor's degree.

#### **8.1.4 Bachelor's Degree**

*(NQF Exit level=7; Minimum total credits=360; Minimum credits at level 7=120)*

*(NQF Exit level=8; Minimum total credits=480; Minimum credits at level 8=120)*

To qualify for admission to a bachelor's degree, an applicant must, subject to faculty-specific requirements as specified in the faculty calendar, be in possession of:

8.1.4.1 A National Senior Certificate with endorsement for Bachelor's studies and with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement as per Government Gazette 31231 (2008), OR

8.1.4.2 A National Certificate (Vocational) Level 4 issued by the Council for General and Further Education and Training, and with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement as per Government Gazette 32743. The prescribed achievement in the NC(V) is at least 60% in three

fundamental subjects including the language of learning and teaching of the Higher Education Institution, and at least 70% in four compulsory vocational subjects from the recognised list; OR

- 8.1.4.3 A Senior Certificate with complete or conditional matriculation endorsement/exemption as contained in Government Gazette 31674 (2008); OR
- 8.1.4.4 An applicant in possession of a matriculation exemption certificate but who obtained two (2) points less than the required minimum points on the Admission Point Score system, may be admitted to the University by passing an admissions test as approved by Senate, provided that the general admission requirements are otherwise satisfied; OR
- 8.1.4.5 Certificates of conditional exemption<sup>2</sup> may be issued to applicants who comply with the following requirements as explained in Government Gazette 31674 (2008):
- 8.1.4.5.1 Certificate of conditional exemption to an applicant who, in an examination for the senior certificate of the Council, met the requirements as contained in paragraph 24<sup>3</sup>.
  - 8.1.4.5.2 Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of a combination of subjects passed in technical and other examinations, and as explained in paragraph 25.
  - 8.1.4.5.3 Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of passing the examinations of examining bodies mentioned in Annexure I, and as explained in paragraph 26.
  - 8.1.4.5.4 Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of Advanced Subsidiary and Ordinary level examinations conducted by examining bodies mentioned in Annexure I or HIGCSE and IGCSE level examinations of Cambridge International Examination and/or the Namibian Ministry of Education in collaboration with Cambridge International Examination and/or the Higher and Ordinary Level examinations of the Namibian Ministry of Education, and as explained in paragraph 27.
  - 8.1.4.5.5 Certificate of conditional exemption to applicants from foreign countries as listed in Annexure II, and as explained in paragraph 28.
  - 8.1.4.5.6 Certificate of conditional exemption to immigrants, as explained in paragraph 29.
  - 8.1.4.5.7 Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of mature age, as explained in paragraph 30.
  - 8.1.4.5.8 Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of a certificate issued by the senate of a university, as explained in paragraph 31.

### 8.1.3 Admission Point Score (APS) system

In addition to the above admission requirements for undergraduate studies, admission to undergraduate qualifications and their programmes is also subject to faculty-specific admission requirements as specified in the respective faculty calendars (e.g. NSC subject requirements at a certain level of achievement). For selection purposes, an APS system that assigns points to performance in subjects is utilised by the University

**Table 1: Calculating the Admission Point Score (APS)**

10 NSC rating	11 APS Score
12 8(90-100%)	13 8
14 7(80-89%)	15 7
16 6(70-79%)	17 6
18 5(60-69%)	19 5
20 4(50-59%)	21 4
22 3(40-49%)	23 3
24 2(30-39%)	25 2
26 1 (0-29%)	27 1

<sup>2</sup> A certificate issued by the Committee of Principals in terms of the provisions of Sections 7(1)(e) and (3) of the HE Act (as amended), admitting a candidate to bachelor's degree study at a South African university, subject to specified conditions and for a specific period. [See Table 3 for detail information]

<sup>3</sup> All references to paragraphs are to the relevant Government Gazette 31674

The computation of the Admission Point Score takes place in the following way:

- The results of six (6) NSC subjects are used to determine the APS.
- While achievement in Life Orientation (LO) is not utilised in computing the APS, a minimum achievement at Level 3 in LO is required to obtain an NSC. An achievement at level 5 and higher in LO will be regarded as a recommendation for admission in boundary cases and to certain programmes.
- A prospective student who achieves two APS points less than required for admission to a specific qualification may, at the discretion of Senate, be admitted conditionally to study at the NWU.
- A prospective student who obtains discretionary exemption may be admitted to certain qualifications or related programmes on certain conditions.

#### 8.1.4 General admission requirements to undergraduate qualifications

The NWU has the right to apply the following minimum requirements in order to give consideration to the application of a prospective student: -

**Table 2: Minimum admission requirements as per NSC requirements**

<p><b>*NSC requirements</b></p> <p>An achievement of "3" (40-49%) in three subjects (one of which is an official language at Home Language level) and a "2" (30-39%) in three other subjects, provided that a portfolio of evidence in the school-based assessment (CASS) component is submitted in the (seventh) subject failed.</p>
<p><b>** Diploma requirements:</b></p> <p>A NSC certified by Umalusi with an achievement of at least "3" (40-49%) in at least four recognised 20-credit subjects.</p>
<p><b>***B degree requirements:</b></p> <p>A National Senior Certificate (NSC) certified by Umalusi with an achievement of "4" (50-59%) or better in at least four 20-credit subjects that are on the list of designated subjects</p>

#### Compulsory subjects – Group A (Also designated subjects)

1. Two official languages (an achievement of "4" in the language of education at HL or FAL level).
2. Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy.
3. Life Orientation (not taken in account for APS purposes and not a designated subject).

#### Designated subjects (Obtain a "4" (50-59%) in at least four of these subjects)

Accounting	Information Technology
Agricultural Sciences	Languages (Only one additional language (3rd) over and above the two compulsory languages in Group A may be offered as a designated subject for university admission)
Business Studies	Life Sciences
Consumer Studies	Mathematical Literacy
Dramatic Arts	Mathematics
Economics	Music
Engineering Graphics and Design	
Physical Sciences	
Geography	Religion Studies
History	Visual Arts

#### 28 Recognised subjects (Maximum two of these subjects)

Agricultural Management Practices	Agricultural Technology
Dance studies	**Languages (Official languages within 2nd Additional and non-official languages <a href="#">list</a> )
Design	Civil Technology
Mechanical Technology	Computer Applications Technology
Electrical Technology	Hospitality Studies
Tourism	

*List of official languages		** List of non-official languages	
Afrikaans	Sesotho	Arabic	French
English	Sepedi	German (HL)	Gujurati (HL)
IsiNdebele	Setswana	Hebrew	Hindi (HL)
IsiZulu	Xitsonga	Italian	Latin

SiSwati	Tshivenda	Portuguese (HL)	Spanish
IsiXhosa		Tamil (HL)	Telegu (HL)
		Urdu (HL)	
<p>Only one language from each of the following language groups may be offered:</p> <p>a) IsiNdebele, SiSwati, IsiXhosa or IsiZulu</p> <p>b) Sepedi, Sesotho or Setswana</p>			

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## 8.2 Postgraduate qualifications

### 8.2.1 Postgraduate diploma

*(NQF Exit level=8. Minimum total credits=120; Minimum credits at level 8=120)*

To qualify for admission to a postgraduate diploma, a prospective student needs to be in possession of an appropriate bachelor's degree (exit level 7) or an appropriate advanced diploma (exit level 7); or the equivalent of these as approved by Senate. In addition, a prospective student must comply with all other requirements as prescribed in the rules of the faculty offering the qualification, and as contained in the faculty calendar.

### 8.2.2 Honours Degree

*(NQF Exit level=8. Minimum total credits=120; Minimum credits at level 8=120)*

To qualify for admission to an honours qualification, a prospective student needs to be in possession of an appropriate bachelor's degree (level 7) or an appropriate advanced diploma (level 7); or the equivalent of these as approved by Senate. In addition, a prospective student must comply with all other requirements as prescribed in the rules of the faculty offering the qualification, and as contained in the faculty calendar.

A faculty may refuse admission to a particular qualification in instances where the standard of competence demonstrated by a prospective student in previous achievements in the qualification(s) in which the student wishes to pursue further study, does not comply with the faculty-specific requirements.

### 8.2.3 Master's Degree<sup>4</sup>

*(NQF Exit level=9. Minimum total credits=180; Minimum credits at level 9=120)*

To qualify for admission to a master's programme, a student must be in possession of a relevant honours degree or a relevant postgraduate diploma at level 8 in an appropriate field, or the equivalent of these as approved by Senate. In addition, a prospective student must comply with all other requirements as prescribed in the rules of the faculty offering the qualification, and as contained in the faculty calendar.

Under circumstances as explained in the faculty calendar after approval by Senate, a prospective student with a four-year undergraduate degree at exit level 8 may be considered for admission to a cognate Master's Degree

A faculty may refuse admission to a particular qualification in instances where the standard of competence demonstrated by a prospective student in previous achievements in the modules or specialisation of qualification(s) in which the student wishes to pursue further study, does not comply with the requirements.

### 8.2.4 Doctoral Degree<sup>5</sup>

*(NQF Exit level=10. Minimum total credits=360; Minimum credits at level 10=360)*

To qualify for admission to a Doctoral degree, a prospective student must be in possession of an appropriate Master's degree or its equivalent as approved by Senate, and as contained in the faculty calendar.

Admission to all doctoral degrees offered by the University shall be subject to approval by the relevant

<sup>4</sup> The requirements are applicable to the following Master's programmes: Research Master's; Taught Master's; Professional Master's

<sup>5</sup> The requirements are applicable to both the Research Doctoral and Professional Doctoral programmes.

Faculty on the recommendation of the concerned research director in consultation with the concerned school director. In light hereof, it is expected of prospective doctoral students to consult with the concerned research director on their intended research proposals and the nature of their supervision prior to admission being sought to a doctoral qualification (see the NWU Manual for Master's and Doctoral Studies). In addition, a prospective student must comply with all other requirements as prescribed in the rules of the faculty offering the qualification, and as contained in the faculty calendar.

A faculty may refuse admission to a particular curriculum in instances where the standard of competence demonstrated by a prospective student in previous achievements in the qualification(s) in which the student wishes to pursue further study, does not comply with the requirements.



## CERTIFICATES OF CONDITIONAL EXEMPTION AS PER GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 31674

**Table 3: Conditional exemption**

<b>Type of certificate of conditional exemption to be issued to persons intending to enrolling for B degrees at a SA university</b>	<b>Pre-requisites to be complied with by candidates qualifying for conditional exemption certificates</b>
Certificate of conditional exemption to an applicant who, in an examination for the senior certificate of the Council, met the requirements as contained in paragraph 24:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At one and same sitting for FT and two for PT, sat in examinations in not less than 6 subjects chosen in accordance with paragraphs 3(a) and 3(a) and 4 in the instance of immigrants.</li> <li>○ Passed in at least 5 subjects, obtained an aggregate of 950 marks.</li> <li>○ Lacks only one of certain requirements for as SC with matriculation endorsement: *a pass in a language; *a pass in a subject that involves grouping requirements; *pass in Maths or Nat Sciences; * pass in one of two subjects on HG; *20% subminimum in 6<sup>th</sup> subject.</li> </ul>
Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of a combination of subjects passed in technical and other examinations (paragraph 25):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Person who passed in a combination of technical and other N5 standard or SC language subjects, and who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Passed 4 technical and other N5 standard subjects incl Maths and other subject with HG deemed equivalent</li> <li>○ Passed in both languages but did not obtain pass in Maths or other subject with HG equivalence as one of the four subjects</li> <li>○ Passed in both languages but did not obtain pass in one of the four subjects at N5 standard</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of passing the examinations of examining bodies mentioned in Annexure I (paragraph 26).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Person who obtained a pass towards qualification mentioned in Annex 1 of four ordinary level and advanced level subjects, provided that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The pass is in 5 different subjects, one of which is an advanced level subject and in which requirements have been met</li> <li>○ Passed in at least two approved advanced level subjects and subject from each of two of the three groups</li> <li>○ Passed in at least two approved advanced level subjects and in a subject from each of the three prescribed groups, but lacks a pass in a 5<sup>th</sup> subject as required.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of Advanced Subsidiary and Ordinary level examinations conducted by examining bodies mentioned in Annexure I (see relevant Government Gazette), or HIGCSE and IGCSE level examinations of Cambridge International Examination and/or the Namibian Ministry of Education in collaboration with Cambridge International Examination and/or the Higher and Ordinary Level examinations of the Namibian Ministry of Education (paragraph 27).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Person who offered a minimum of 4 advanced subsidiary and or HIGCSE and/or higher level subjects and one ordinary or IGCSE level subject in an examination conducted by examining bodies mentioned in Annex 1 and/or Namibian Ministry of Education in collaboration with Cambridge and who lacks one of the mentioned criteria.</li> </ul>
Certificate of conditional exemption to applicants from foreign countries as listed in Annexure II (paragraph 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Holding a certificate entitling the candidate unconditional admission to a degree or equivalent qualification at a foreign institution as approved by the Committee of Principals, in the country where the candidate has obtained the qualification. Proviso: that admission to such a foreign institution on grounds of mature age or any other special condition shall not be regarded as unconditional admission to degree studies.</li> </ul>
Certificate of conditional exemption to immigrants (paragraph 29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At one and same sitting for FT and two for PT, sat in examinations and passed a university language of instruction under certain circumstances as explained in para 29.</li> </ul>

<p>Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of mature age (paragraph 30)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A statement from senate stating that the applicant, in the view of senate, may reasonably be expected to complete the curriculum, provided that the applicant has <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ attained the age of 23 before or during the year of enrolment for a B degree with the minimum prescribed full-time of three years, for which a matriculation endorsement or certificate of exemption is a prerequisite.</li> <li>○ before the date of validity of the certificate to be issued, passed with at least 40% in at least 4 higher grade/standard grade subjects, at least three of which shall have been passed simultaneously, and one of which shall be a recognised subject on the higher grade.</li> <li>○ Further, 40% achievement in an official language, Second Language HG; and offering other subjects that would satisfy Principals' Committee.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Certificate issued after statement of senate's recommendation that candidate has reasonable expectation to complete curriculum. Proviso: applicant has attained age of 45 before or during year in which admission is sought to a B degree to be completed in the minimum prescribed full-time duration of three years.</li> </ul>
<p>Certificate of conditional exemption by virtue of a certificate issued by the senate of a university (paragraph 31)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Certificate issued to someone who, in the opinion of senate, has demonstrated in a selection process approved by that senate that (s)he is suitable for admission to B studies, which certificate would only be valid for that university.</li> <li>○ Where proof is given that a full credit of instructional offering (one year) has been completed, a certificate of full exemption will be issued, dated on the first date of the month of the period of academic residence in which the first degree credit was obtained.</li> <li>○ Where senate of second university requests, in respect of the student transferring there, the certificate of first university will be amended to be valid for admission to second university.</li> </ul>

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