



## **GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**2023**

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ACS:</b>	Academic Committee of Senate
<b>ACT:</b>	Advanced Certificate in Teaching
<b>AP:</b>	Admission point
<b>BML:</b>	Bachelor of Management Leadership
<b>CAT:</b>	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
<b>CHE:</b>	Council on Higher Education
<b>CUADS:</b>	Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support
<b>ECS:</b>	Executive Committee of Senate
<b>FAAC:</b>	Faculty Admissions Advisory Committee
<b>FEB:</b>	Faculty Examinations Board
<b>FRAC:</b>	Faculty Readmission Appeals Committee
<b>HCert:</b>	Higher Certificate
<b>HEQSF:</b>	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
<b>NBT:</b>	National Benchmark Test
<b>NC(V):</b>	National Certificate (Vocational)
<b>NPDE:</b>	National Professional Diploma in Education
<b>NSC:</b>	National Senior Certificate
<b>NQF:</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>PQM:</b>	Programme Qualification Mix
<b>RPL:</b>	Recognition of prior learning
<b>SADC:</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SAICA:</b>	South African Institute of Chartered Accountants
<b>SAQA:</b>	South African Qualifications Authority
<b>SLP:</b>	Short Learning Programme
<b>UFS:</b>	University of the Free State
<b>UPP:</b>	University Preparation Programme
<b>URRT:</b>	University Readmissions Review Tribunal
<b>USAf:</b>	Universities South Africa
<b>WIL:</b>	Work-integrated Learning

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# GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS, POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS, BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREES, MASTER'S DEGREES, DOCTORAL DEGREES, HIGHER DOCTORATES, AND RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS/FELLOWS

*(Hereinafter referred to as General Academic Rules)*

## PREAMBLE

### Legal requirements:

The General Academic Rules are promulgated in accordance with the Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997), Chapter 4, Section 32(1)(b), and the Institutional Statute of the University of the Free State (UFS), as published in Government Gazette No. 41399, Notice Number 37 of 26 January 2018, in accordance with Chapter 4, Section 33 of the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997), and read in conjunction with the faculty rules and regulations, as approved.

As determined by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in accordance with section 8(2)(e) of the National Qualifications Framework Act (No. 67 of 2008) (Notice No. 1040 of 2012; Government Gazette No. 36003, Volume 570, 14 December 2012) and published, as directed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in terms of section 27(k)(iv) of the National Qualifications Act, as policy of the Council on Higher Education by SAQA (Notice No. 592, Government Gazette No. 38116, Volume 592, 17 October 2014).

Various policy and procedure documents relevant to the higher education sector in South Africa, from (for instance) the Council on Higher Education (CHE), Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and the HEQSF, have been used as a point of departure or reference. Some directives, definitions, terms or phrases have been quoted directly to retain the meaning. In others, meanings were combined to describe a concept.

Definitions for qualification types have been quoted directly from the HEQSF (Government Gazette No. 38116, Volume 592, 17 October 2014) to retain the intended meaning, purpose, characteristics, minimum admission requirements and progression of the qualification.

When reference is made to the National Senior Certificate (NSC) or the National Certificate (Vocational) NC(V), the following reference is used throughout as defined in the Minister's policies: Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring a NSC, Government Gazette, Vol. 517, No. 31231 of 11 July 2008 and Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a NC(V), published in the Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009.

Copyright of students' scripts (mini-dissertations, dissertations, theses, etc.) vests in the UFS. The UFS encourages the publication of derivative works of such scripts, preferably in subsidy-bearing publications. Copyright (including associated risks and benefits) of derivative works of scripts shall vest in the student. However, the prior approval of the UFS Directorate of Research Development is required in the three cases below:

- (a) Contract research: The publication of derivatives of scripts that were developed as part of contract research conducted by the UFS may be subject to certain contractual conditions.
- (b) Patents: Some scripts may contain patentable or protectable subject matter with potential commercial benefits.
- (c) Legislative requirements: The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (No. 10 of 2004) or the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (No. 51 of 2008) may impose limitations upon the UFS to grant certain rights to students.

No disclosure of marks or student information or discussion of students' performance will be done with parents or other third parties without the prior written permission of the student, in order to protect personal information in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (No. 4 of 2013) (Notice No. 912 of 2013, Government Gazette No. 37067, Volume 581, 26 November 2013).

### **Application:**

The General Academic Rules apply to all students at the UFS (including occasional students). Concessions for part-time students are covered in the faculty rules of the respective faculties.

The General Academic Rules are applied in accordance with the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997), and the Institutional Statute: University of the Free State (Government Gazette No. 41399, Notice Number 37 of 26 January 2018), and the responsibility for implementing such rules is assigned by the Council to the Registrar, except where indicated differently in the rules. The Registrar must regularly, as agreed, report in writing to the Council via the Senate on the implementation of the General Academic Rules.

The Council delegates the implementation of the General Academic Rules to the Senate. As stated in the General Academic Rules, the functionaries must provide the Registrar with a written report on the implementation of the rules in question.

The deans are accountable for the correct interpretation and implementation of these rules. In the event that there is no consensus on the interpretation and implementation of these rules, the deans will request the Registrar to provide a final decision.

The design and implementation of faculty rules are assigned by Council to the faculty boards and their respective deans. As agreed upon, all deans must regularly report in writing to the Council via the Senate on the implementation of faculty rules.

The design and implementation of faculty rules are mentioned in the same Act; referenced as those regarding the Registrar, and are assigned by Council to the faculty boards and their respective deans. As agreed upon, all deans must regularly report in writing to the Council via the Senate on the implementation of faculty rules.

The UFS Council may also enter into agreements with registered and accredited private providers of higher education to offer academic qualifications of the UFS. Where such agreements do exist, reference must be made to them in both admission rules and faculty rules.

### **Status of Regulations:**

UFS policy documents and regulations support and provide guidance regarding the General Academic Rules, and these must be read in conjunction where applicable.

In cases of conflict between the said documents, the General Academic Rules will take precedence.

Where discrepancies in the names of qualifications arose during the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) alignment process and the preceding period, each case will be dealt with on merit.

Faculty rules are supplementary to the General Academic Rules, and where there is a discrepancy between the two sets of rules, the General Academic Rules shall apply.

The rules contained in this document are the rules as approved on the date of publication. The rules are subject to amendments approved after the date of publication.

The financial rules or rules regarding the payment of fees contained in this document should be read in conjunction with the fees yearbook of the UFS, which is updated annually. In the event of a possible discrepancy between the provisions, the decision of the relevant vice-rector will be enforced.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

### Academic advisement<sup>1</sup>

Academic advisement at the UFS is an ongoing and intentional teaching and learning process to support and encourage advisees in aligning and fulfilling their personal, academic and career goals. It is a high-impact practice directed at connecting, empowering, and supporting students to achieve academic success. As a shared responsibility between central advisors, faculty advisors and advisee, advising aims to maximise students' potential by facilitating a conceptual understanding, sharing relevant information, and developing a relationship focused on promoting academic success. The envisaged result is that students have a meaningful academic experience while at the UFS and feel a sense of belonging to the UFS.

### Additional examination

Additional examinations are written after the completion of the compulsory main examination and are subject to approval of a written application to the Examination Administration Division if the student does not automatically qualify.

### Additional modules

Refer to definition of Module.

### Admission point (AP)

A calculated point based on a student's levels of achievement in the Grade 12 examination and which, among others, enables students to gain entry to undergraduate qualification studies.

### Ad hoc examination

An ad hoc examination is scheduled if, owing to extraordinary circumstances, a student could not participate in an additional examination. Ad hoc examinations must be approved by the Programme Director or Head of Academic Department and must be taken prior to the commencement of the next academic semester.

### Advanced Certificate (NQF Exit Level 6, minimum total credits: 120)

The Advanced Certificate is primarily vocational or industry-oriented. It emphasises selected general principles together with more specific procedures and their application and/or technology transfer. The qualification provides students with a sound knowledge base in a particular field or discipline and the ability to apply their knowledge and skills to particular career or professional contexts, while equipping them to undertake more specialised and intensive learning. Programmes leading to this qualification tend to have a strong vocational professional or career focus and students and holders of this qualification are normally prepared to enter a specific niche in the labour market. Advanced Certificate programmes typically include a work-integrated learning (WIL) component.

### Advanced Diploma (NQF Exit Level 7, minimum total credits: 120)

The Advanced Diploma may provide entry-level vocational or professional preparation or specialisation for Bachelor's Degree graduates or diplomates by offering an intensive, focused and applied specialisation that meets the requirements of a specific niche in the labour market. Programmes offering this qualification are particularly suitable for continuing professional development through the inculcation of a deep and systematic understanding of current thinking, practice, theory and methodology in an area of specialisation. This qualification may also be

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<sup>1</sup>

Offered by general advisors (staff who solely serve the purpose of acting as academic advisors, without other teaching responsibilities) and faculty advisors (members of staff in the faculties who act as advisors in addition to other roles and responsibilities).

designed to prepare students for postgraduate study through the deepening of their knowledge and understanding of theories, methodologies and practices in specific academic disciplines and fields, as well as the development of their ability to formulate, undertake and resolve more complex theoretical and practice-related problems and tasks through the selection and use of appropriate methods and techniques.

### **Affiliation with the UFS**

A person who has accepted an honorary appointment or an appointment as a research associate or a person who is currently employed by the UFS or who is actively involved in a research project and/or who was employed at the UFS and has left the employment of the UFS, is considered as having an affiliation with the UFS. The UFS may reconsider this after a period of three (3) years.

### **Appeal**

An appeal is a written application by a student to make a serious, urgent request for a reversal of the decision made by the FEB regarding her/his progression status or academic exclusion. Where the FEB refuses a student permission to renew registration at the UFS for the study programme for which she/he is registered, the excluded student may appeal for admission:

- to register for the same programme based on extraordinary reasons for the non-compliance; or
- to register for another programme of study in the same or another faculty.

### **Applying for admission**

The process through which a person's personal and other data are captured on the UFS's database and which does not yet bestow UFS student status on that applicant.

### **Articulation**

The process of forming possibilities of connection between qualifications and/or part-qualifications to allow for the vertical, lateral and diagonal movement of students through the formal education and training system and its linkages with the world of work.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is the systematic evaluation of a student's ability to demonstrate the achievement of the learning goals intended in a curriculum. The purposes of this process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about a student's achievement are to (a) assist the student's development and improve the process of learning and teaching, and (b) evaluate and certify competence in order to ensure qualification credibility. Assessment can be done at various times throughout a learning programme and a comprehensive assessment plan will include either formative and summative assessment, or alternatively continuous assessment. The point at which the assessment takes place in a programme distinguishes these three types of assessment.

#### **Continuous assessment**

Continuous assessment is a component of assessment that is ongoing and is used to determine a student's achievement during the course of a particular level. It integrates assessment into the teaching and development of a student through ongoing feedback.

#### **Formative assessment**

Formative assessment is a type of assessment used to improve learning and to give feedback to students on progress made. It serves needs intrinsic to the educational process. It comprises a range of formal, non-formal and informal ongoing assessment procedures that are used to focus teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment, or are required for the purpose of a semester mark or predicate, i.e. admission to the summative assessment.

### **Summative assessment**

Summative assessment is formalised assessment that is used to certificate the attainment of a certain level of education. It is used to serve needs extrinsic to the educational process.

Summative assessment takes place after the learning has been completed, i.e. at the end of a quarter, semester or year, and provides information and feedback that sums up the teaching and learning process. The intention behind summative assessment is to validate performance and award grades or marks, and it may be used for the promotion, certification or admission of individual students to higher levels of education.

### **Assessor**

Refer to definition of Internal Assessor.

### **Assigned responsibility for implementation of the General Academic Rules**

The Council may assign responsibility for implementation of the General Academic Rules to a particular office, subject to the latter having to regularly report to the Council on how the said power has been exercised.

### **Awarding of a qualification**

Students obtain a qualification if they have passed every module prescribed for a programme according to the relevant faculty rules and HEQSF requirements for the qualifications, and have successfully completed experiential, service or WIL where applicable.

The results of all final-year students will be audited/verified prior to a student's qualification status being changed from "final year" to complete. The audit will be finalised as soon as reasonably possible after the publication of the final examination results. Confirmation of completion of a qualification will not be provided prior to the audit being finalised. No person shall receive a qualification unless she/he has fulfilled all the requirements prescribed by the faculty and applicable General Academic Rules for the qualification.

### **Bachelor's Degree (NQF Exit Level 7; minimum total credits: 360) or (NQF Exit Level 8; minimum total credits: 480)**

Bachelor's degrees may be structured with an exit at level 7 or 8 of the NQF. The 480-credit Bachelor's Degree at NQF Level 8 has both a higher volume of learning and a greater cognitive demand than the 360-credit degree at Level 7, and should prepare students to be able to undertake Master's-level study by providing them with research capacity in the methodology and research techniques of the discipline. The primary purpose of both the general and the professional Bachelor's Degree is to provide a well-rounded, broad education that equips graduates with the knowledge base, theory and methodology of disciplines and fields of study, and to enable them to demonstrate initiative and responsibility in an academic or professional context. Both the 360- and 480-credit bachelor's degrees may require students to undertake research in a manner that is appropriate to the discipline or field of study in order to prepare them for postgraduate study. The general Bachelor's Degree emphasises general principles and theory as preparation for entry into general employment, or for a postgraduate programme. The professional Bachelor's Degree prepares students for professional training, postgraduate studies or professional practice in a wide range of careers. It therefore emphasises general principles and theory in conjunction with procedural knowledge in order to provide students with a thorough grounding in the knowledge, theory, principles and skills of the profession or career concerned, as well as the ability to apply these to professional or career contexts. The degree programme may contain a component of WIL. Some professionally oriented bachelor's degree programmes are designed in consultation with a professional body and recognised by a professional body as a requirement for a licence to practise that profession.



## **Bachelor Honours Degree (NQF Exit Level 8; minimum total credits: 120)**

The Bachelor Honours Degree is a postgraduate specialisation qualification that typically follows a bachelor's degree and serves to consolidate and deepen the student's expertise in a particular discipline, and to develop research capacity in the methodology and techniques of that discipline. This qualification demands a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence. In some cases, a Bachelor Honours Degree carries recognition by an appropriate professional or statutory body. Bachelor Honours Degree programmes must include conducting and reporting research under supervision that is worth at least thirty (30) credits, in the form of a discrete research component that is appropriate to the discipline or field of study.

### **Blended learning**

Blended learning is the provision of structured learning opportunities using a combination of contact, distance and/or Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-supported opportunities to suit different purposes, audiences and contexts.<sup>2</sup> Blended learning provides the student with some control over the time, place and pace of learning and should create an integrated learning experience consisting of face-to-face and online activities.<sup>3</sup>

### **Compulsory module**

Refer to definition of Module.

### **Conferment of a qualification**

The awarded qualification will only be conferred at an official graduation ceremony of the UFS.

### **Continuous assessment**

Refer to definition of Assessment.

### **Credit**

The volume of learning required for a qualification or part-qualification can be specified in terms of the total minimum number of credits required and the minimum number of credits required at its specified exit level in the HEQSF. Credits are a measure of the volume of learning required for a qualification, quantified as the number of notional learning hours required to achieve the learning outcomes specified for the qualification. One credit is equated to 10 notional hours. This includes contact time, structured learning, WIL, self-study and assessment time.

Refer to the definition of **Notional Learning Hours**.

### **Credit accumulation**

The totalling of relevant credits towards the completion of a qualification or a part-qualification.

### **Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)**

CAT is a term that refers to the arrangement whereby the diverse features of both credit accumulation and credit transfer are combined to facilitate lifelong learning and access to the workplace. Credit accumulation refers to the totalling of credits towards the completion of a qualification. Credit transfer refers to the vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Higher Education and Training. (2014). Policy for the Provision of Distance Education in South African Universities in the Context of an Integrated Post-school System.

<sup>3</sup> Christensen, C. M., Horn, M. B., & Staker, H. (2013). Is K-12 Blended Learning Disruptive? An Introduction to the Theory of Hybrids. Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation.

<sup>4</sup> Definition derived from the Policies on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Assessment in Higher Education. Council on Higher Education, 2016. Pretoria.

## Credit transfer

The vertical, horizontal or diagonal relocation of credits towards a qualification or part-qualification at the same or a different level registered on the same or different sub-framework, usually between different programmes, departments or institutions.

## Curriculum

A curriculum is a statement of intended outcomes to be achieved, what knowledge content is to be acquired, which competencies, skills, values and attitudes are to be developed, and the levels of performance that are expected from students. It determines the kind of learning programme to facilitate teaching, learning and assessment prescribed or outlined by an institution for completion of a programme of study leading to a qualification.

## Delegation of the General Academic Rules

Assigned responsibilities can, in writing, be delegated to another official/other officials on condition that the delegate reports to the person to whom the responsibility was assigned by the Council, provided that such delegated powers are not further delegated.

## Deviation

A deviation means that the curriculum or the learning programme or the combination of modules leading to a specific qualification is modified (APDC decision of 3 September 2015).

## Diploma (NQF Exit Level 6; minimum total credits: 240)

The Diploma primarily has a vocational orientation, which includes professional, vocational or industry-specific knowledge that provides a sound understanding of general theoretical principles, as well as a combination of general and specific procedures and their application. The purpose of the Diploma is to develop graduates who can demonstrate focused knowledge and skills in a particular field. Typically, they will have gained experience in applying such knowledge and skills in a workplace context. A depth and specialisation of knowledge, together with practical skills and experience in the workplace, enables successful students to enter a number of career paths and to apply their learning to particular employment contexts from the outset. Diploma programmes typically include an appropriate WIL component. There are two (2) key distinctions between the 240- and 360-credit diploma variants. The latter may provide for up to hundred and twenty (120) credits of workplace-based learning, while the 240-credit variant does not, and the 240-credit variant may only be offered where it leads to a professional designation or occupational role as determined by a professional body.

## Discipline

A specialised and circumscribed field of study.

## Distance education<sup>5</sup>

Distance education is both a collection of teaching and learning methods as well as a mode of provision/delivery. As a collection of methods, distance education transfers and mediates the curriculum without requiring lecturers and students to be in the same place at the same time. Learning is delivered through different techniques, such as written correspondence, telematics and/or the Internet. Distance education methods include structured learning resources and activities for independent study. As a mode of provision, distance education uses the design of a programme to bridge the separation between lecturers and students. The options include a single mode of provision in which all provision takes place in distance mode; a dual mode of provision in which some modules are offered in distance mode, or a mixed mode in which the same modules are offered in both contact and distance modes. In addition, the term 'distance education' refers to

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<sup>5</sup> Policy for the Provision of Distance Education in South African Universities, Government Gazette No. 37811, 7 July 2014, as amended from time to time.

provision in which students spend 30% or less of the stated notional learning hours in undergraduate courses at NQF levels 5 and 6, and 25% or less in courses at NQF Level 7 and initial postgraduate courses at NQF Level 8, in staff-led, face-to-face, campus-based structured learning activities.

### **Doctoral Degree (NQF Exit Level 10; minimum total credits: 360)**

The Doctorate provides training for an academic career. It requires a candidate to undertake research at the most advanced academic levels, culminating in the submission, assessment and acceptance of a thesis. However, candidates may also present academic interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles and papers, and (in certain fields) creative work such as artefacts, compositions, public performances and public exhibitions, in partial fulfilment of the research requirements. Coursework may be required as preparation or value addition to the research, but does not contribute to the credit value of the qualification. The defining characteristic of this qualification is that the candidate is required to demonstrate high-level research capability and to make a significant and original academic contribution at the frontiers of a discipline or field. The work must be of a quality to merit publication. The degree may be earned through pure discipline-based or multidisciplinary research or applied research. A graduate should be able to supervise and evaluate the research of others in the area of specialisation concerned.

### **Doctoral Degree (Professional) (NQF Exit Level 10; minimum total credits: 360)**

The Professional Doctorate provides education and training for a career in the professions and/or industry and is designed around the development of high-level performance and innovation in a professional context. Candidates are required to undertake a combination of coursework and advanced research, leading to the submission, assessment and acceptance of a research component comprising an original thesis or another form of research that is commensurate with the nature of the discipline or field and the specific area of enquiry. The research component should comprise at least 60% of the degree. Professional Doctorates may also include appropriate forms of WIL. The defining characteristic of this qualification is that, in addition to the demonstration of high-level research capability, it requires the ability to integrate theory with practice through the application of theoretical knowledge to highly complex problems in a wide range of professional contexts.

### **Elective module**

Refer to definition of Module.

### **Examination mark**

The combined mark obtained by a student during an examination in a particular examination paper or in the examination papers of a particular module.

### **Examination paper**

A form of assessment consisting of a series of questions – oral and/or in writing – set on a module/modules or parts thereof, which feature during the examination assessment.

### **Examiner**

Refer to definition of Internal Examiner.

### **Exit-level outcomes**

The knowledge, skills and attitudes that a student should have obtained or mastered on completion of a qualification and against which the student is assessed for competence.

### **External assessment**

Refers to external examining and/or external moderation and/or external assessment of standards; assessment conducted by a person or body that is not directly involved in the development and/or delivery of the learning programme and has no affiliation with the UFS, the outcomes of which count towards the achievement of a qualification.

### **External assessor**

A person who has no affiliation with the UFS and who assesses examination scripts or oral examinations and/or practical examinations, dissertations, mini-dissertations and theses. (A person who has accepted an honorary appointment or an appointment as a research associate or a person who is actively involved in a research project and/or who was employed at the UFS and has left the employment of the UFS, is considered as having an affiliation with the UFS. The UFS may reconsider this after a period of three (3) years.)

### **External moderator**

A person who has no affiliation with the UFS and who moderates examination scripts or oral examinations and/or practical examinations, mini-dissertations and theses. The UFS may reconsider this after a period of three (3) years.

### **Faculty Admissions Advisory Committee (FAAC)**

The FAAC is a committee of the faculty that advises the dean in the execution of her/his responsibility for oversight of the annual admissions processes in her/his faculty.

### **Faculty Examinations Board (FEB)**

The FEB is a committee of the faculty that:

- determines the progression status of each student, and
- refuses her/him readmission, or allows her/him to continue and, if so, attaches any probationary conditions to such continuation where a student has failed to meet the minimum admission requirements.

### **Faculty Readmission Appeals Committee (FRAC)**

The FRAC is a committee of the faculty that considers and decides appeals by a student:

- against the decision to exclude her/him; or
- for admission to another programme of study in the same faculty; or
- for admission to another programme of study in another faculty.

### **Final mark**

The calculated mark based on the module mark and the examination mark, rounded to an integer percentage.

### **Financial Appeals Committee**

A financial appeals committee deals with matters pertaining to provisional registration processes, as stipulated in its remit.

### **Formative assessment**

Refer to definition of Assessment.

## **Foundation modules**

Refer to definition of Module.

## **Full-time student**

Refer to definition of Student.

## **General Academic Rules for qualification**

Apart from the statutory rules, the General Academic Rules are also supported and informed by policy documents and regulations and supplemented with faculty rules, which must be read in conjunction.

Where conflicts arise between documents, the General Academic Rules take precedence.

## **Higher Certificate (NQF Exit Level 5; minimum total credits: 120)**

This is an entry-level higher education qualification. The qualification is primarily vocational, with a strong industry-oriented focus. The qualification also serves to provide students with the basic introductory knowledge, cognitive and conceptual tools and practical techniques for higher education studies in their chosen field of study. It emphasises selected general principles, together with more specific procedures and their application. This qualification signifies that the student has attained a basic level of higher education knowledge and competence in a particular field or occupation and is capable of applying such knowledge and competence in an occupation or role in the workplace. The HCCert typically includes a simulated work experience or WIL component.

## **Higher Doctorate**

The Higher Doctorate is an additional type of doctorate, which may be awarded on the basis of a distinguished record of research in the form of published works, creative works and/or other scholarly contributions that are judged by leading international experts to make an exceptional and independent contribution to one or more disciplines or fields of study.

## **Internal Assessor**

The person, affiliated with the UFS, who sets and/or assesses the formative and summative assessment activities<sup>6</sup> for specific qualifications and/or part-qualifications.

## **Internal Examiner**

An internal examiner is a person, affiliated with the UFS, who examines the summative assessment activities.

## **Internal moderator**

A person who is in the UFS's permanent employ and who is responsible for ensuring that the assessment meets the required standard and that its accompanying marking framework and response exemplar are done in accordance with the specified learning outcomes and at the requisite level of competence.

## **International student**

A person who is not a South African citizen and does not have a permanent residence permit. An international student can either be a full-time or part-time student (refer to definition of Student).

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<sup>6</sup> For further requirements refer to the approved Policy on Master's and Doctoral Degrees, as amended from time to time.

## **International examiner**

International examiners should be recognised, independent experts with a list of current research publications in a relevant field which equips them to evaluate the thesis and the candidate. They should have supervised other PhDs successfully, understand the nature of the PhD, be senior in experience to the candidate, and not have been involved in supervisory or significant advisory roles in the candidate's research. An international external examiner should not have been a recent student/staff member within the academic department concerned and would normally be associated with an academic institution, or be an eminent and well-respected specialist in her/his field.

## **Issuing a graduation certificate**

The graduation certificate will be issued at the official graduation ceremony of the UFS. If a graduate does not attend the ceremony, the qualification will be awarded in absentia. A certificate will not be issued to a graduate prior to the qualification having been conferred (even if in absentia) at a graduation ceremony.

## **Joint degrees**

A joint degree results from academic collaboration between two (2) or more institutions, on a jointly defined and entirely shared learning programme leading to a joint degree, requiring that all partner institutions are responsible for the entire programme and not just respective separate parts. The UFS may confer joint degrees at Master's and Doctoral level with foreign (international) universities, on the basis of an agreement concluded at institutional level, including a memorandum of understanding. Joint degrees are normally more applicable to a research degree (Doctoral and Research Master's Degrees).

## **Language of instruction**

Refers to the language of instruction or tuition as offered by the UFS.

## **Learning**

Different types of learning are defined:

### **Formal learning**

Learning that is intentional and planned, takes place in an organised and structured education and training environment and is explicitly designated as such. In higher education, this implies learning programmes that lead to qualifications and part-qualifications registered on the NQF.

### **Informal learning**

Informal learning refers to forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate, but are not institutionalised. It is consequently less organised and structured than either formal or non-formal education. In higher education, informal learning is learning that results from daily activities related to paid or unpaid work, family or community life, or leisure.

### **Non-formal learning**

In higher education, non-formal learning implies institutional, intentional learning activities planned by the university, not explicitly designated as learning, towards the achievement of a qualification or part-qualification; it is often associated with learning that results in improved workplace practice. Characteristically, non-formal learning is an addition, alternative and/or a complement to formal education within the process of lifelong learning of individuals. Continuing education, short courses, adult education, continuous professional development, non-credit-bearing courses and popular education are forms of non-formal learning.

## **Learning outcome**

This refers to the contextually demonstrated final product of the learning process. An exit-level outcome is the learning outcome that the qualifying student has to achieve at the point when she/he exits the programme leading to the particular qualification. Specific learning outcomes refer to the contextually demonstrated knowledge, skills and values that support one or more critical outcomes and represent particularisations of exit-level outcomes.

## **Level descriptor**

A statement describing learning achievement at a particular level of the NQF that provides a broad indication of the types of learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are appropriate to a qualification at that level.

## **Main examination**

Compulsory examinations for students who obtained the required semester mark. The examinations are scheduled twice in an academic year, during the middle and at the end of the year.

## **Mainstream modules**

Refer to definition of Module.

## **Master's Degree (NQF Exit Level 9; minimum total credits: 180)**

The general Master's Degree provides education and training to researchers who can contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level.

There are two (2) variants of the general Master's Degree: a research Master's Degree by dissertation, or a research Master's Degree by coursework and dissertation. Both variants must include a significant research component in the form of a discrete research project.

The requirements for the successful completion of a general Master's Degree are as follows – Master's Degree by dissertation: a single advanced research project, culminating in the production and acceptance of a dissertation or other forms of research, as indicated below; Master's Degree by coursework and mini-dissertation: a coursework programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, and in some cases demonstration of the ability to relate knowledge to a range of contexts for professional practice. In addition, this variant of a general Master's degree must contain a research project comprising a minimum of sixty (60) credits at NQF Level 9, culminating in the acceptance of a mini-dissertation or other forms of research, as indicated below.

Master's Degree graduates in general must be able to reflect critically on theory and its application. They must be able to deal with complex issues, both systematically and creatively, design and critically appraise research, make sound judgements using data and information at their disposal and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences, demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks with a theoretical underpinning and continue to advance their knowledge, understanding and skills. The research component or components of a general Master's Degree should be commensurate with the characteristics of the discipline and field, as well as the purpose of the programme, and in addition to a dissertation or treatise may take the form of a technical report, one or more creative performances or works, or a series of interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or other research-equivalent outputs.

## **Master's Degree (Professional) (NQF Exit Level 9; minimum total credits: 180)**

The professional Master's Degree provides education and training to graduates who can contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level, such that they are prepared for advanced and specialised professional employment. In some cases, a professional Master's Degree may be designed in consultation with a professional body or fulfil all or part of the requirements for professional registration or recognition, and may include appropriate forms of WIL. The requirements for the successful completion of the professional Master's Degree are as follows: successful completion of a coursework programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, as well as demonstration of the ability to relate knowledge to the resolution of complex problems in appropriate areas of professional practice. In addition, a professional Master's Degree must include an independent study component that comprises at least a quarter of the total credits, which must be at NQF Level 9, consisting of either a single research or technical project or a series of smaller projects demonstrating innovation or professional expertise. Master's graduates must be able to deal with complex issues, both systematically and creatively, design and critically appraise analytical writing, make sound judgements using data and information at their disposal and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences, demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks with a professional orientation, and continue to advance their knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to a particular profession.

### **Module<sup>7</sup>**

A module is an independently defined learning unit that is designed to result in a specific set of learning outcomes and is a component of a programme. The following types of modules are defined:

#### **Additional modules**

Modules taken supplementary to the minimum number of credits required for a particular qualification.

#### **Compulsory modules**

These are modules that must be taken to be able to progress with a programme or to be eligible for awarding of a qualification. They contain the essential parts of the programme and are therefore compulsory to enable the learning outcomes for the programme to be met.

#### **Elective modules**

Elective modules support achievement of the programme learning outcomes and form part of the approved programme specification. A list of possible elective modules is stated for each programme and students can choose modules from this list.

#### **Foundation modules**

Development modules in mainstream programmes and extended curriculum programmes.

#### **Mainstream modules**

All the modules in a mainstream learning programme.

#### **Service modules**

A service module refers to a module presented in a particular faculty that is required for qualifications from other faculties.

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<sup>7</sup>

The words "module" and "course" are used as equivalent terms throughout this document.



### **Module mark/Predicate/Semester mark**

The calculated mark, rounded to an integer percentage, of a student's written, oral and/or practical work in a particular module, which is calculated in a way set out in the module guide and entitles the student to take an examination, provided that this mark is equal to or higher than the mark determined by the faculty. Only on attainment of the minimum laid-down mark will the student be granted admission to an examination.

### **National Qualifications Framework (NQF)**

The comprehensive system, approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, for the classification, coordination, registration and publication of articulated and quality-assured national qualifications and part-qualifications. The South African NQF is a single integrated system comprising three coordinated qualifications sub-frameworks for: General and Further Education and Training; Higher Education; and Trades and Occupations.

### **National Senior Certificate (NSC) and the National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V))**

The NSC is a 130-credit certificate at level 4 of the NQF awarded to persons who comply with the policy requirements of the National Senior Certificate. The NSC is awarded for the achievement of the exit-level learning outcomes stipulated in the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10 to 12 (General). The NC(V) is a qualification with 120 to 140 minimum credits at levels 2, 3 or 5 on the NQF that will be awarded to students who comply with the national policy requirements of the NC(V). The NC(V) comprises both internal and external components of assessment and is quality assured by Umalusi. The NSC or the NC(V) is the minimum entry requirement to a higher education institution and is defined in the Minister's policies: Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring a NSC, Government Gazette, Vol. 751, No. 32131 of 11 July 2008 and Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a NC(V), published in the Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009.

### **Notional learning hours**

The agreed estimate of the learning time that it would take an average student to meet the defined learning outcomes; it includes consideration of contact time, research, completion of assignments, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, individual learning and assessment. Ten (10) notional hours equate to one (1) credit. Refer to the definitions of a credit, credit accumulation and credit transfer.

### **NQF level**

One of the series of levels of learning achievement arranged in ascending order from one (1) to ten (10) according to which the NQF is organised and to which qualification types are linked.

### **Occasional student**

Refer to definition of Student.

### **Period of study**

The period of study for full-time students and part-time students differs. Refer to the definition of Student.

### **Postdoctoral research fellowship/fellows<sup>8</sup>**

A postdoctoral research fellowship is either awarded to a host academic staff member (host academic) via a UFS research subcommittee or by an outside funding agency as part of a larger research grant; or it is awarded to a recent doctoral graduate by the relevant academic department, or as a result of an application for funding to an external funding body.

### **Postgraduate Diploma (NQF Level 8; minimum total credits: 120)**

A Postgraduate Diploma is generally multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary in nature, but may serve to strengthen and deepen the student's knowledge in a particular discipline or profession. The primary purpose of the qualification is to enable working professionals to undertake advanced reflection and development by means of a systematic survey of current thinking, practice and research methods in an area of specialisation. This qualification demands a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, as well as the ability to relate knowledge to a range of contexts in order to undertake professional or highly skilled work. A sustained research project is not required, but the qualification may include conducting and reporting research under supervision. In some cases, a Postgraduate Diploma carries recognition by an appropriate professional or statutory body.

### **Postgraduate research output<sup>9</sup>**

Research output is textual output where research is understood as an original, systematic investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge and understanding. Peer review of research is a fundamental prerequisite of all recognised outputs, and is the mechanism for ensuring and thus enhancing quality.

Bachelor Honours Degree programmes must include conducting and reporting research under supervision, worth at least thirty (30) credits, in the form of a discrete research component that is appropriate to the discipline or field of study and must be at NQF Level 8.

The module that forms part of the requirements for a Bachelor Honours Degree and represents the research component entails writing a research report equal to thirty (30) credits.

The module representing the research component of the requirements for a Master's Degree by coursework and mini-dissertation entails writing a coursework Master's mini-dissertation. It contains a justifiable argument that is based on research of limited scope, counts 50% of the achievement mark, and is equal to sixty (60) credits.

A Master's Degree by research dissertation entails, inter alia, writing a Master's Degree research dissertation with a minimum total credits of hundred and eighty (180) at NQF Exit Level 9, containing a justifiable argument that does not necessarily make an original contribution. It counts 100% of the achievement mark, equal to hundred and eighty (180) credits.

The requirements for the successful completion of a general Master's Degree are as follows:

- Master's Degree by dissertation: a single advanced research project that culminates in the production and acceptance of a dissertation or other forms of research as indicated below, or that results or may result in an academic publication.
- Master's Degree by coursework and mini-dissertation: a coursework programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, and in some cases demonstration of the ability to relate knowledge to a range of contexts for professional practice. In addition, this variant of a general Master's Degree must contain a research project comprising a minimum of sixty (60) credits at NQF Exit Level 9, culminating in the acceptance of a mini-dissertation or other forms of research.

<sup>8</sup> Information to compile definition derived from Draft UFS Policy on Postdoctoral Research Fellowships/Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

<sup>9</sup> The research output of postgraduate students is described in the UFS Policy on Master's and Doctoral Studies, as amended from time to time.

The research component or components of a general Master's Degree should be commensurate with the characteristics of the discipline and field as well as the purpose of the programme, and in addition to a dissertation or treatise may take the form of a technical report, one (1) or more creative performances or works, or a series of interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or other research-equivalent outputs.

This degree requires a minimum of one (1) year's full-time study.

The requirements for the successful completion of the Master's Degree (Professional) are as follows:

Successful completion of a coursework programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, as well as demonstration of the ability to relate knowledge to the resolution of complex problems in appropriate areas of professional practice. In addition, a Master's Degree (Professional) must include an independent study component that comprises at least a quarter of the total credits, which must be at NQF Exit Level 9, consisting of either a single research or technical project or a series of smaller projects demonstrating innovation or professional expertise.

A doctoral thesis is a component of a Doctoral Degree equal to three hundred and sixty (360) credits. It must demonstrate that the candidate has made a specific contribution to the enhancement of knowledge in the chosen field (adding to the knowledge base) while providing evidence of independent critical ability, and which ought, either in part or in its entirety, to be published in a suitable journal or book.

A Doctoral Degree requires a candidate to undertake research at the most advanced academic levels, culminating in the submission, assessment and acceptance of a thesis. However, candidates may also present academic interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles and papers and, in certain fields, creative work such as artefacts, compositions, public performances and public exhibitions, in partial fulfilment of the research requirements. Coursework may be required as preparation or value addition to the research, but does not contribute to the credit value of the qualification. The defining characteristic of this qualification is that the candidate is required to demonstrate high-level research capability and to make a significant and original academic contribution at the frontiers of a discipline or field. The work must be of a quality to satisfy peer review and merit publication. The degree may be earned through pure discipline-based, multidisciplinary or applied research. This degree requires a minimum of two (2) years' full-time study, usually after completing a Master's Degree. A graduate should be able to supervise and evaluate the research of others in the area of specialisation concerned. An additional type of doctorate, the Higher Doctorate Degree, may be awarded on the basis of a distinguished record of research in the form of published works, creative works and/or other scholarly contributions that are judged by leading international experts to make an exceptional and independent contribution to one or more disciplines or fields of study.

## **Part-time student**

Refer to the definition of Student.

## **Programme**

The structure within which is indicated the cumulative learning that a student has to complete successfully so as to master the exit-level outcomes of a qualification. This structure comprises a related combination of modules/learning units, expressed in outcomes-based format and having an academic and/or professional/career-oriented focus. Students may, on the strength of prior learning, enter a programme at different levels.

A programme is a purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that leads to a qualification. Programmes may be discipline-based, professional, career-focused, transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary in nature. A programme has recognised entry and exit points. All higher education programmes and qualifications must have a core component and may have a fundamental and/or elective component, depending on the purpose of the programme or the qualification. The credit allocation for core, fundamental and elective learning will depend on the purpose of the programme or qualification. The internal organisation of programmes is otherwise not prescribed by this document.

## **Progression**

The means by which individuals are permitted to move through NQF levels by accumulating appropriate combinations of credits.

## **Promotion**

The continuous assessment and/or the summative assessment conducted in a decentralised fashion during the course of the module term, whereby the student passes without having to take a further examination – provided that the student has obtained at least 70% and has participated in all of the scheduled assessments in the module, covering all the module content.

## **Publishable manuscript**

A “publishable article” is a manuscript that is ready for submission for publication in an academic journal or similar scholarly publication. This means that the content of the manuscript has been supervised extensively and that the text has been edited and formatted according to the specifications of the particular publication. It also implies that the manuscript must function autonomously as a self-contained entity (i.e. it is not contingent on a preceding “chapter” or specific “introduction”). However, the candidate must be in a position to motivate the links between the “autonomous” interrelated publishable manuscripts at the end of the assessment process. “Publishable” further implies that the manuscript has not yet been circulated for the usually required double-blind peer review process that accredited academic publications subscribe to in their normal functioning. This implies that there is no guarantee that the submitted manuscript will be accepted for publication yet.

## **Published article**

A published article is an article that has been submitted and accepted for publication in an academic journal. The author can provide a letter from the editor confirming acceptance for publication in the scholarly publication.

## **Qualification**

In an outcomes-based approach, a qualification refers to the certification of the achieved learning outcomes of either an undergraduate or a postgraduate programme, expressed in terms of an accumulation of credits at specific levels. A qualification represents a student's demonstrated achievement in a planned and purposeful combination of learning outcomes that are aimed at equipping students with applied competence and a platform for further learning.

## **Recognition**

A recognition means that a module(s) already passed is/are recognised in subsequent study years, or for another learning programme. The content, volume (credits) and NQF level should be equivalent, taking into consideration that previous deviations and recognitions can be considered only once. In addition, the 50/50 rule as well as the 25% at the exit level should be adhered to (refer to General Academic Rules) according to the APDC decision of 3 September 2015.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

RPL means the principles and processes through which the prior informal and/or non-formal learning, knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purposes of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development. RPL can provide exemption.

RPL is rooted within the context of lifelong learning and the need to redress inequities of the past, as it provides alternative routes of access to higher education. It is the process through which non-formal and/or informal learning are measured, evaluated and “translated” into their perceived formal equivalents for recognition across different contexts. Its intended outcome is the recognition of such prior learning for the purposes of alternative access and admission to higher education learning programmes, or for advancement within qualification programmes.

## Registration<sup>10</sup>

Registration is a contractual agreement annually entered into by the UFS and the person registering, which is subject to prescribed procedures and by virtue of which she/he is granted student status. An effective registration of a student for a qualification is a condition where a student meets all criteria set by the institution to register for an approved qualification. The conditions for registration are determined by the institution.

## Residential student

A student who makes use of the UFS's campus accommodation.

## Revocation of qualification

The Council, in consultation with the Senate and after compliance with the prescripts of the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997), as amended, may withdraw and revoke any qualification (degree, diploma or certificate) that was awarded, if it is found to have been awarded:

- on the basis of a material error on the part of the UFS (must take place within a maximum of two (2) years of conferment of such qualification); or
- as a result of a fraudulent or dishonest act in connection with the obtaining of such qualification.

## Service Module

Refer to the definition of Module.

## Short Course / Short Learning Programme (SLP)

Short Learning Programmes are purposeful, flexible and just-in-time programmes designed for specific educational purposes such as enhancing and/or refreshing participants' knowledge and skills in a specific professional area for purposes of personal or continuing professional development. SLPs are offered outside the jurisdiction of the formal Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF), and may thus not necessarily lead to awarding of formal HEQSF qualifications.

## Special assessment

Special assessment is an assessment that can be awarded by the faculty only to those students in a continuous assessment (CASS) module, if these modules are approved as CASS modules in the official UFS course catalogue, the format of which allows for the setting of a single assessment that covers all the module outcomes and provides a valid, fair assessment of the competencies required to pass the module. The final format of the special assessment will be determined by the faculty and the mark obtained will be the final mark for the module (replacing all other marks).

A student could qualify for a special assessment in a continuous assessment module if:

- The format and nature of the module, as well as the faculty structures, allow for such an assessment.
- The student is registered in her/his final academic semester.
- The student is registered, in the current academic year, for the module in which she/he needs a special assessment.
- The module in question is the only outstanding module to obtain the qualification.
- After passing that single module, the student would obtain a qualification without prolonging her/his studies for another academic semester or year.
- The student has participated in all the assessments and obtained a minimum final module mark of 45%.

<sup>10</sup> "Registration" and "enrolment" are equivalent terminologies and will apply throughout this document, except when reference is made to the registration of research titles.

## Special examination

A special examination is an examination that students automatically qualify for if:

- the student is registered in her/his final academic semester;
- this module in which the examination is needed is the only outstanding module to obtain the qualification, whether or not the examination was failed in the main mid-year or main end-of-year or any of the additional examination periods;
- the student is registered, in the current academic year, for the module in which she/he needs a special examination and has obtained a predicate;
- writing the examination (including alternative modes of assessment)<sup>11</sup> and passing would contribute to obtaining the qualification without prolonging her/his studies for another academic semester or year;
- after passing that single module, the student will obtain a qualification.

## Student

A person who enrolled as a student at the UFS on a full-time or part-time basis, through contact or distance mode of learning, and who:

- has met the applicable admission/selection requirements set by the UFS;
- is registered for a module that is included in the curriculum of at least one (1) qualification that has been approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training;
- actively participates in a module, as defined above, before or on the census day determined by the institution; and
- is considered to be a full-time student if she/he is registered for a full academic curriculum as defined in the faculty rules in each year of study, i.e. an average of thirty (30) weeks of forty (40) hours each for Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's Degree and Bachelor (Honours) Degree qualification types. In the case of a full-time Master's and doctoral student, forty-five (45) weeks of forty (40) hours each will be assumed.<sup>12</sup>
- as a scholarship holder registered on a full-time basis for the degree, may not hold full-time salaried employment during the tenure of the bursary, but will be allowed to undertake a maximum of twelve (12) hours of teaching, research, tutorials, assistance or demonstration duties per week on average during the year of study, and may be remunerated for her/his services, provided that she/he is reimbursed at the normal UFS tariff for services rendered<sup>13</sup>.
- A student who is registered for fewer than the annual full curriculum requirements in terms of credits would normally be regarded as a part-time student, e.g. if a person is employed while she/he is studying and cannot afford to do a full-time curriculum<sup>14</sup>.
- An occasional student is a student who satisfies the prerequisites for modules of a formally approved qualification offered by the UFS and who is effectively registered for an approved module, but who is not registered for the approved qualification that the modules form a part of.

The HEMIS prescriptions define active participation as having:

- submitted module assignments; or
- attended lectures, seminars, tutorials or practicals; or
- attended class tests; or
- raised study-related queries with a lecturer; or
- made use of a learning centre.

The periods of study of full-time and part-time Master's and doctoral students are defined in the Policy on Master's and Doctoral Studies, as follows:

<sup>11</sup> Modules for scripts and dissertations will be excluded.

<sup>12</sup> Hours derived from a definition of full-time students by the CHE.

<sup>13</sup> Information derived from a definition of full-time students by the National Research Foundation.

<sup>14</sup> Hours derived from a definition of full-time students by the CHE.

- For full-time students, the minimum period of enrolment is usually one (1) year for a Master's Degree, and two (2) years for a doctoral degree. Students are generally expected to complete their studies within three (3) years for a Master's Degree and within four (4) years for a doctoral degree.
- For part-time students, the minimum period of enrolment is usually two (2) years for a Master's Degree, and four (4) years for a doctoral degree. Part-time students are generally expected to complete their studies within four (4) years for a Master's Degree and within six (6) years for a doctoral degree.

### **Summative assessment**

Refer to definition of Assessment.

### **University Readmissions Review Tribunal (URRT)**

The URRT is a Committee of Senate that reviews the decisions of the FRAC and considers a student's submission and any response from the FRAC to make a decision, either to:

- confirm the FRAC decision; or
- set aside the decision of the FRAC and refer the case back for consideration by the original FRAC; or
- set aside the decision and reach a new decision.

### **Weighted average**

A weighted average percentage differs from an average percentage in that a weighted average returns a number that depends on the variables of both value and weight, e.g. a student obtained a 70% semester mark and a 50% examination mark; then the final average mark is 60%  $(70 + 50)/2 = 60\%$  (average).

If the assessment module indicates a ratio of 40 to 60, that is a 40% contribution from the semester mark while the examination mark contributes 60% to the final mark, the calculation takes a different form:

70% Semester (40% = 0,4)

50% Examination (60% = 0,6)

$0,4 \times 70\% + 0,6 \times 50\% = 58$  Final (weighted average).

### **Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)**

WIL is an umbrella term to describe curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns and culminate in a qualification or part-qualification. WIL refers to learning that is incorporated into the curriculum of qualifications of a vocational and professionally-oriented nature at all levels of the HEQSF, with the purpose of integrating theory and practice. WIL as a structured part of a qualification must be appropriate to the purpose of the qualification, the volume of the learning allocated to the WIL, the cognitive demands of the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria of the appropriate level descriptors of the qualification. The institutions which offer programmes requiring credits for workplace-based learning as a form of WIL must be able to place students in appropriate workplaces and must ensure that the workplace learning is properly structured, supervised and assessed.

## GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

[illegible]

## GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES FOR UNDERGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

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## GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

### A1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- (a) Students are responsible for being well-informed as regards General Academic Rules and faculty rules and complying with the said rules.
- (b) A registered or prospective student is not exempted from the General and faculty rules merely on the basis of having been misinformed as regards the content of such rules. The Registrar may, however, grant exemption on the strength of a comprehensive, written justification.
- (c) Upon registering, a student undertakes to abide by the General Rules and faculty rules, as amended from time to time.
- (d) All agreements between a student and the UFS as regards admission and/or registration and/or campus accommodation are deemed to have been entered into in Bloemfontein, irrespective of where any of the parties actually signed the agreement.
- (e) If the minimum prescribed number of students have not registered for a module, the UFS reserves the right not to offer that particular module.
- (f) Appeals by students against decisions of the FEB to refuse readmission will be considered by the FRAC. A student may submit a request for a review to the URRT in the following instances:
  - (i) where there was a material procedural irregularity; or
  - (ii) where the FRAC did not have, or failed to consider, material new evidence in support of the appeal.
- (g) The decision of the Registrar with regard to the interpretation of the General Academic Rules is final.
- (h) Except where the contrary may be apparent from the context, the singular also implies the plural and vice versa.

### A2 RESULTS STATEMENTS, ACADEMIC RECORDS, STUDY RECORDS, CERTIFIED STATEMENTS, CERTIFICATES OF CONDUCT AND CERTIFIED EXAMINATION TIMETABLES

- (a) The Registrar issues official documentation, such as examination results, academic records, study records, certificates of conduct, statements and examination timetables.
- (b) Official academic records, transcripts and/or certificates of conduct will only be issued to students when the overdue amounts on their accounts are less than two thousand rand (R2000).
- (c) In the event of a pending disciplinary case (e.g. academic misconduct, etc.) the marks for the module in question will be withheld until the case has been finalised. All the other marks of the student will be released.

**A3 REQUESTS ON THE BASIS OF EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

- (a) Exceptional cases that have been justified in writing (with supporting documentation) must be referred to the faculty board, which will make a recommendation to the ECS to make a ruling regarding the request.
- (b) The ECS may condone any breach of the General Academic Rules if it is satisfied that such a breach was due to an act of the UFS, and that the student concerned, not having contributed to such act, would suffer undue hardship should the rule in question be applied.

**A4 DISCIPLINE**

- (a) The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for enforcing discipline.
- (b) The rules applicable to discipline are set out in Annexure B to this document.

**A5 MODULE AND VENUE TIMETABLE AND EXAMINATION TIMETABLE**

- (a) A module and venue timetable is drawn up annually and published on a date determined by the Senate.
- (b) Examination timetables that take into account the modules for which students have registered are drawn up and published twice a year, for the mid-year examinations and for the end-of-year examinations.
- (c) All modules scheduled for examination purposes are scheduled in the official examination venues, with the exception of off-campus modules.

**A6 RESIDENCE IN CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION**

- (a) The designated vice-rector is responsible for enforcing the rules that apply to residence in campus accommodation.
- (b) A person who wishes to study at the UFS for the very first time, a student who has interrupted her/his studies for at least one (1) academic year, and a student who is already studying at the UFS must – on the prescribed form and before a date annually determined by the UFS – apply for residence in campus accommodation.
- (c) A student in residence must annually – on the prescribed form and before a date annually determined by the UFS – reapply to take up residence in campus accommodation.
- (d) The UFS accepts no responsibility for the loss of or damage to occupants' personal belongings.
- (e) For the purposes of inspections, repairs and cleaning, the UFS reserves the right of access to any room with due regard for the occupant's right to privacy.

**A7 FEES PAYABLE**

- (a) The designated vice-rector is responsible for enforcing the rules in respect of the fees payable.

- (b) The responsibility of keeping the UFS informed regarding her/his correct contact details lies with the student.
- (c) Tuition fees and fees payable for campus accommodation are calculated per semester and are payable on the following dates, irrespective of whether an account statement has been received:

Payment dates for **South African** students:

**First semester:** all fees for the first semester are payable on/before **31 March**.  
**Second semester:** all fees for the second semester are payable on/before **31 August**.

Payment dates for **international** students:

**First semester:** all fees for the first semester are payable on/before **31 March**.  
**Second semester:** all fees for the second semester are payable on/before **30 June**, regardless of any other date which may appear on account statements.

If payments are not made by the due dates:

- interest at the prime bank rates + 2% will be levied on all accounts in arrears;
- all academic records for the contractual period of payment default will be withheld; and
- international students with fees outstanding on **1 July** will not be allowed to continue with their second-semester studies.

- (d) Except where a rule dictates otherwise, all other fees are payable not later than the end of the month following the month in which, according to the account statement, the transaction was concluded.
- (e) Failure to settle an account on the appointed dates entitles the UFS – regardless of the exercising of any other right – to levy interest on the amounts owed at the maximum rates allowed for in the National Credit Act (No. 34 of 2005).
- (f) If a student neglects to settle her/his account, the UFS may also – apart from any other rights – hand over the account for collection, which will result in collection fees being levied.
- (g) If – in respect of the payment of an account – a student is in arrears for more than the prescribed amount, this can result in a situation where examination scripts are not marked or where examination results are not disclosed and/or where official documentation (for example study records and certificates of conduct) is not issued.
- (h) Fees must be paid in full, irrespective of whether
- (i) services are disrupted by strikes, student boycotts, civil unrest or any other disruptions on any of the campuses or at any of the centres, or due to any other circumstances beyond the UFS's control;
  - (ii) a student is not allowed to continue her/his studies in consequence of the enforcement of any institutional rule.
- (i) An international student must
- (i) before registration, pay a non-refundable administrative levy;
  - (ii) produce evidence that she/he has the necessary funds to pay the monies that are owed, and to do so on the dates that such fees are due;

- (iii) pay the stipulated module price plus 50%.
- (iv) Students from countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are exempted from the stipulation regarding the additional 50%.

(j) **Prescribed debt**

- (i) A student who has previously registered at the UFS and failed to pay outstanding fees will not be allowed to register unless fees for the year are paid in advance. This includes students whose debt has prescribed. Should a student be of the opinion that sufficient reason exists for the granting of exemption from this requirement, such a student may appeal in writing to the Senior Director of Finance, University of the Free State, PO Box 339, Bloemfontein, 9300.
- (ii) An academic record / qualification certificate / certificate of conduct of a student previously registered at the UFS who failed to pay outstanding fees, will not be issued unless the amount equal to the amount written off is paid.
- (iii) After three years, the right of a student who was previously registered at the UFS and failed to claim credit balances, will prescribe.

- (k) Financial support in the form of bursaries and loans is available to qualifying students, and must be applied for annually before the relevant closing dates. For more information, visit [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za).

**A8 INFORMATION COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- (a) The designated vice-rector is responsible for enforcing the rules in respect of information communication and information technology.
- (b) The policies as applicable to information communication and information technology are available on the UFS's website, and it is the student's responsibility to acquaint herself/himself with the said policies. The misuse of the UFS's information systems can result in disciplinary action against a student.

**A9 QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATES, DEAN'S MEDALS AND SENATE MEDALS**

- (a) Qualification certificates, Dean's Medals and Senate Medals<sup>15</sup> are only awarded at a graduation and/or diploma ceremony, or subsequently posted to the student.
- (b) A student is only allowed to participate in the next graduation and/or diploma ceremony if all results have been received in accordance with the due dates determined by the Senate.
- (c) The Registrar reserves the right not to present a qualification certificate to a student, unless
  - (i) all monies owed to the UFS have been paid, all the results of modules passed at other institutions of higher education have been submitted and all books still owed to the library have been returned;
  - (ii) all other requirements have been met;

<sup>15</sup> Postgraduate Diplomas are not eligible for Dean's Medals and Senate Medals. Dean's Medals are not awarded for Doctoral Degrees or Higher Doctorates.

- (iii) properly bound copies of the document submitted for assessment (Master's Degree research dissertation, doctoral thesis, and Higher Doctorate) have been received by the Registrar on the date determined by the Senate (copies for the mentor(s) and submission of the research on Kovsky Scholar, or alternatively one (1) CD-ROM for the library), where applicable;
  - (iv) a student intending to submit a dissertation/thesis that corresponds to a commission of her/his employer has disclosed her/his intention to the UFS and her/his employer on registration or as soon as possible after she/he becomes aware of the commission, after which the UFS and the employer shall then negotiate copyright ownership and confidentiality related to the student's dissertation/thesis, where applicable; and
  - (v) the student is in good standing with the UFS. Students with pending disciplinary matters are not in good standing with the UFS and will therefore not receive their degree, diploma or other certificates, notwithstanding having met all the academic requirements therefor, pending the outcome of the disciplinary matters.
- (d) A student will only receive a Certificate of Good Conduct from the UFS if the student is in good standing with the UFS. Students with pending or finalised disciplinary matters, where students were found guilty of misconduct in accordance with UFS rules, policies and procedures, are not in good standing with the UFS and therefore do not qualify to receive a Certificate of Good Conduct from the UFS. Students with outstanding monies in excess of the maximum amount prescribed by the Council are also not in good standing with the UFS, and therefore do not qualify to receive a Certificate of Good Conduct from the UFS.
- (e) The Council, in consultation with the Senate and after compliance with the prescripts of the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997), as amended, may withdraw and revoke any qualification (degree, diploma or certificate) that was awarded, if it is found to have been awarded:
  - (i) on the basis of a material error on the part of the UFS (must take place within a maximum of two (2) years of conferment of such qualification); or
  - (ii) as a result of a fraudulent or dishonest act in connection with the obtaining of such qualification.
- (f) A qualification can be awarded in absentia.
- (g) Should a candidate be absent from the whole or a part of the final assessment for a qualification due to any serious permanent disabling circumstances, occurring within such assessment period, the ECS may award the qualification after receiving proof of such disabling circumstances and sufficient evidence of the candidate's attainments.
- (h) In cases where an original qualification certificate has been lost or damaged, the Registrar will only issue an appropriate certificate pertaining to the obtaining of the qualification upon receipt of a written request, once the necessary monies have been paid and if the application is accompanied by the following documents and contains the following particulars:
  - (i) an affidavit explaining the request;
  - (ii) an indication as to which surname appeared on the certificate originally issued – in the case of an application from a married person;
  - (iii) a certified copy of an identity document or passport.

- (i) If the name of the student to whom the qualification was awarded changes, the Registrar may issue an appropriate certificate, provided that the necessary documentation furnishing proof of the change is submitted.
- (j) In each of the faculties, Dean's Medals are awarded:
  - (i) in each of the three-, four- and five-year Bachelor's Degrees in a faculty to students who obtained the highest weighted average percentages over all the study years in the three- (including students in extended programmes, but excluding their developmental modules), four- and five-year Bachelor's Degrees, provided that
    - (aa) the qualification was awarded with distinction and that a weighted average of at least 80% (not rounded to the next integer) was obtained, calculated in respect of the minimum number of modules prescribed for the qualification in question (excluding the developmental modules of the extended programmes and UFS101);
    - (bb) no module was failed or repeated in an additional examination, except for the purposes of improving a final mark. The result of discontinuation of a module(s) will not be taken into account for the awarding of a Dean's Medal, and
    - (cc) the qualification was completed in the minimum residential period stipulated in the UFS PQM.
  - (ii) to a registered Master's Degree student who has obtained the highest weighted average percentage over all the study years, provided that
    - (aa) the qualification was awarded with distinction and a weighted average of at least 80% (not rounded to the next integer) has been obtained, based on the minimum number of modules prescribed for the qualification in question; and
    - (bb) no module was failed or repeated in an additional examination. The result of a discontinuation of a module(s) will not be taken into account for the awarding of a Dean's Medal;
- (k) A Senate Medal and Prize are awarded to a student who received a Dean's Medal with the highest weighted average percentage of all the faculties.

#### **A10 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

- (a) In the absence of a written agreement entered into between the UFS and the student, which attests to the contrary being true, ownership of intellectual property that has been developed by a student in the course of and/or in connection with her/his studies at the UFS, will in all respects reside in the UFS.
- (b) No action mentioned in section 6 of the Copyright Act (No. 98 of 1978) – nor any action claiming that any publication or part thereof constituted part of a research essay, a Bachelor Honours research report, a Master's Degree research dissertation, interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or a coursework Master's Degree dissertation or publishable manuscript/published article, or a thesis, interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or mini-thesis in respect of which a qualification was awarded by the UFS – may be taken by the author, except with the relevant dean's prior written authorisation, and subject to recommendation by the academic head of department.
- (c) In cases where research results can potentially be commercialised, the dean must grant written permission beforehand, subsequent to consultation with the designated Director: Research Commercialisation and with written notification to the Registrar, to record the said permission on the student's record.

## **GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES FOR UNDERGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS**

**HIGHER CERTIFICATES – NQF EXIT LEVEL 5;  
 ADVANCED CERTIFICATES – NQF EXIT LEVEL 6;  
 DIPLOMAS – NQF EXIT LEVEL 6; ADVANCED DIPLOMAS – NQF EXIT LEVEL 7;  
 GENERAL BACHELOR'S DEGREES – NQF EXIT LEVEL 7 OR 8;  
 PROFESSIONAL BACHELOR'S DEGREES – NQF EXIT LEVEL 7 OR 8**

### **APPLICATION, SELECTION AND ADMISSION: UNDERGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **A11 APPLYING FOR ADMISSION**

- (a) A prospective first-time entering student wishing to study at the UFS must apply for admission online or on the prescribed application form and submit this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the date annually determined by the UFS.
- (b) A student who previously discontinued her/his studies for at least one (1) academic year, or has been academically excluded, must apply for readmission online or on the prescribed application form and submit this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the date annually determined by the UFS.
- (c) A person's application must comply with UFS and faculty-specific admission/readmission requirements.
- (d) The applications of students from other institutions of higher education must include a certificate of conduct, as well as an academic record, to be considered for admission. Students who have been excluded at those institutions will only be considered for admission to the UFS by the Dean in consultation with the FAAC, on the strength of justified, written submissions.
- (e) Each application for admission to the UFS by international applicants and other applicants who did not pass the NSC examination, must be accompanied by a letter from the Universities South Africa (USAf) Matriculation Board, in which it is certified that the requirements for a conditional exemption have been met. The admission requirements pertaining to the discipline-specific and qualification-specific prerequisites of the UFS should be met in addition to the letter from the USAf Matriculation Board. No international student will graduate without a USAf certificate of conditional exemption. Applicants without a Senior Certificate and older than forty-five (45) years of age can only be admitted through the RPL process, and will not obtain admission based on the letter of conditional exemption from the USAf Matriculation Board only.
- (f) It remains the responsibility of the applicant to ensure correct capturing of all academic data. The UFS takes no responsibility if a student does not receive a final or conditional offer due to incorrect academic data or missing information. The UFS reserves the right not to process incomplete applications received, or to initiate follow-up communication to retrieve missing information.
- (g) The Registrar considers applications (including undergraduate international applications) received after the closing date only in exceptional cases. Only applications submitted online or delivered to the office of Student Academic Services are deemed received.

**A12                    ADMISSION OR READMISSION TO THE UFS AND TO AN ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION**

- (a) The NSC or the NC(V) with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement in the applicant's possession determines her/his admission status in respect of a specific qualification.<sup>16</sup>
- (b) All senior students not compliant with the progression rules, or senior students receiving early notification for possible academic exclusion, will be blocked for registration.
- (c) No person shall be provisionally admitted to any qualification whatsoever on the basis of examination scripts that have yet to be marked or additional examinations that have yet to be written.
- (d) The Registrar allows a person to participate in the registration process, provided that she/he has been accepted by the UFS to follow a specific academic programme and that she/he complies with the admission and/or readmission requirements, both in respect of that specific qualification and the module(s) and/or the prerequisite(s) of the module.
- (e) An offer by the UFS is subject to fulfilment of the conditions determined by the UFS, and availability of space in the programme during the registration period. The UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer should the processed academic results be erroneous or fraudulent. Should a student engage in conduct which the UFS, in its sole and unfettered discretion, deems undesirable, the UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer.
- (f) Approval by the Senate and Council is required for the amendment of admission rules.

**A12.1                Admission to a Bachelor's Degree and professionally-oriented Bachelor's Degree (NQF Exit Levels 7 and 8)**

- (a) To be admitted to a Bachelor's Degree or a professionally-oriented Bachelor's Degree, a person must at least:
  - (i) be in possession of an NSC with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement that has been certified with an applicable endorsement by Umalusi; or
  - (ii) be in possession of an NC(V)<sup>17</sup> with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement; and
  - (iii) other than in extraordinary circumstances, take the NBT(s); and
  - (iv) attain the required minimum AP; and
  - (v) have an achievement level of no less than 4 (50%–59%) for the school-leaving examination in English Home Language or English First Additional Language, with the exception of programmes offered by faculties in which the language of instruction/tuition is a language other than English, in which case the Faculty Rule Book will provide the admission requirements; and

<sup>16</sup> Please refer to General Rule A10.8(a) for admission on the basis of RPL in the case of applicants who do not comply with the admission requirements.

<sup>17</sup> Admission will be granted on condition that the requisite level of competence has been attained and all the requirements of the relevant faculty have been met.



- (vi) comply with the specific rules for admission to the relevant qualification, including the selection rules set out in the relevant faculty rules;
- (vii) alternatively, an HCert or an Advanced Certificate or Diploma in a cognate field may satisfy the minimum admission requirements for the programme and the module.

**A12.2 Admission to a Diploma or Advanced Diploma (NQF Exit Levels 6 and 7 respectively)**

- (a) To be admitted to a Diploma, a person must at least:
- (i) be in possession of an NSC with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement that has been certified with an applicable endorsement by Umalusi; or
  - (ii) be in possession of an NC(V)<sup>18</sup> with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement; and
  - (iii) other than in extraordinary circumstances, take the NBT(s); and
  - (iv) have an achievement level of no less than 4 (50%–59%) for the school-leaving examination in English or Afrikaans (kindly refer to footnote no. 17); and
  - (v) comply with the specific rules for admission to the relevant qualification, including the selection rules set out in the relevant faculty rules.
  - (vi) An HCert or Advanced Certificate in a cognate field will satisfy the minimum requirement for admission, subject to the dean's approval.
- (b) To be admitted to an Advanced Diploma, a person must be in possession of an applicable Diploma or a Bachelor's Degree.

**A12.3 Admission to a Higher Certificate or Advanced Certificate (NQF Exit Levels 5 and 6 respectively)**

- (a) To be admitted to an HCert, a person must at least:
- (i) be in possession of an NSC with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement that has been certified with an applicable endorsement by Umalusi; or
  - (ii) be in possession of an NC(V)<sup>19</sup> with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement; and
  - (iii) other than in extraordinary circumstances, take the NBT(s); and
  - (iv) attain the required minimum AP; and
  - (v) have an achievement level of no less than 4 (50%–59%) for the school-leaving examination in English or Afrikaans (kindly refer to footnote no. 17); and

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<sup>18</sup> Admission will be granted on condition that the requisite level of competence has been attained and all the requirements of the relevant faculty have been met.

<sup>19</sup> Admission will be granted on condition that the requisite level of competence has been attained and all the requirements of the relevant faculty have been met.

- (vi) comply with the specific rules for admission to the relevant qualification, including the selection rules set out in the relevant faculty rules.
- (b) To be admitted to an Advanced Certificate, a person must be in possession of an applicable HCert or an equivalent qualification.

#### **A12.4 Admission to occasional studies**

- (a) To be admitted to occasional studies, a person must
  - (i) be in possession of an NSC with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement that has been certified by Umalusi with an applicable endorsement for admission to degree studies; or
  - (ii) be in possession of an NC(V)<sup>20</sup> with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement; and
  - (iii) have attained the required AP; and
  - (iv) for modules in programmes with additional selection requirements, also obtain written permission from the dean of the faculty in which the module is offered, in consultation with the Registrar; and
  - (v) have obtained an achievement level of no less than 4 (50%– 59%) for the school-leaving examination in English or Afrikaans (kindly refer to footnote no. 17).
- (b) Admission to specific modules is subject to compulsory achievement levels in specified Grade 12 subjects, and also to additional prerequisites as specified by the various faculty boards and as contained in the faculty rules.
- (c)
  - (i) Permission to deviate from the above requirements, except those that are not related to the certified NSC or NC(V), may be granted by the dean of the faculty in which the module is offered, with written notification to the Registrar.
  - (ii) Where a person has already obtained a qualification, she/he may apply for exemption from the rules in respect of prerequisites.
- (d) If the admission rules in respect of the specific qualification to which the module applies have not been adhered to, credits will later only be considered through a process of RPL.

#### **A12.5 Admission to modules**

- (a) Compulsory admission requirements apply in respect of admission to specific modules, such as an AP, achievement levels in specified Grade 12 subjects and additional prerequisites as determined by the faculty board and contained in the faculty rules.
- (b) Deviations from the rules regarding prerequisites can be approved by the dean of the faculty in which the module is offered, subject to recommendation by the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar.

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<sup>20</sup> Admission will be granted on condition that the requisite level of competence has been attained and all the requirements of the relevant faculty have been met.

**A12.6 Admission on the basis of RPL**

- (a) A person who does not qualify for admission to an academic qualification can, in accordance with the following guidelines, apply for admission in terms of a process of RPL:
  - (i) A person in possession of an NSC (as from 2008) or a School-leaving Certificate (prior to 2008), with at least five (5) years' applicable work experience, including formal and non-formal learning. The relevance of the work experience will be determined by the programme director.
  - (ii) A person who is forty-five (45) years old or older, with more than fifteen (15) years' applicable work experience including formal and non-formal learning, regardless of whether she/he has a Senior Certificate or not, can apply for RPL. The relevance of the work experience will be determined by the programme director.
- (b) Through a process of RPL, permission can also be granted to a student for admission to a module that is subject to a prerequisite and/or exemption granted in respect of specific assessments.
- (c) Final approval and sign-off for admission to an academic qualification and/or a module(s) is granted by the dean of the appropriate faculty, upon recommendation by the RPL office after submission and recommendation by the head of department following the completion of the evaluation process. Written notification must be given to the Registrar's office to capture the outcome on the student record.
- (d) Not more than 10% of students in a programme should be admitted through RPL. In special circumstances, the programme director may submit a motivation to the dean to exceed the specified number of students.

**A12.7 National Benchmark Tests (NBTs) and UFSS1504**

- (a) Responsibility for the implementation of these rules resides in the designated vice-rector.
- (b) A qualification is not awarded unless the mandatory development modules have been passed.
- (c) Students must register for development modules in the first academic year and if these have not been passed, they must be repeated in the second academic year.
- (d) All students have to take the National Benchmark Tests (NBTs) in English or Afrikaans.
- (e) It is compulsory that a prospective student registering for an undergraduate entry-level qualification take the Academic and Quantitative Literacy Test prior to registering, and the student must have done so within the last three (3) years prior to registration.
- (f) A prospective student registering for a qualification in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences or the Faculty of Health Sciences or the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, or a student registering for Mathematics as a module in one of the other faculties, must normally also take the Mathematics test.

- (g) If the stipulated requirements of the NBTs have not been met or the results of the tests cannot be submitted, registration for the applicable language and/or Mathematics development modules is compulsory, except in the Faculty of Health Sciences, where the stipulated requirements form part of the selection process, and the Faculty of the Humanities, where the requirements for the registration of the applicable language development module will be implemented as indicated in the faculty rule book.
- (h) Taking the NBTs is not required in respect of the following:
- (i) if a qualification has already been obtained from this or another institution of higher education;
  - (ii) where admission has been granted on the basis of a Senate resolution and psychometric tests have been taken at the Student Counselling and Development Division; and
  - (iii) qualifications that are offered via blended learning, and distance learning.
- (i) The UFSS1504 module is a compulsory module for all students registering for a first qualification at the University, and a qualification cannot be obtained from the University if UFSS1504 has not been completed successfully. Mainstream students register for UFSS1504 in their first academic year. Students in the extended programmes, who have passed SCLL1504 or SCNS1504, or SCLL1414 and SCLL1524, register for UFSS1522 in the second academic year and receive recognition for UFSS1512. UFSS1512 and UFSS1522 is equivalent to UFSS1504. This rule stands, except where otherwise stipulated in the relevant faculty's rules, and subject to the requirements, stipulations and conditions approved by the Senate.

**A12.8 Progression rule in respect of undergraduate students (applicable to all programmes as from 2014), excluding access and distance learning programmes**<sup>21 22</sup>

- (a) With due allowance for the module requirements, students are required to attain the following minimum achievements in each study programme, for which the prescribed module combinations for each academic year have been stipulated in the curriculum. Unless a faculty determines a higher requirement for progression, which is published in the faculty's rule book, these progression rules will apply.<sup>23</sup>  
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The progression requirements for three-year qualifications are as follows:

- (i) In the first year of all registration for a qualification of all three-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to pass 48 credits (equivalent to three (3) 16-credit modules), to be allowed to start with the second year's study.
- (ii) By the end of the second year of registration for a qualification of all three-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 112 credits (equivalent to seven (7) 16-credit modules) of their qualification, to be allowed to start with the third year's study.

<sup>21</sup> If students interrupted their studies for one year or longer, they have to reapply. The student's application will be considered together with the applications of other students, and the student's academic performance will be taken into account.

<sup>22</sup> HCerts for access and Open Distance Learning programmes are excluded from this rule. Students in these programmes have to comply with programme-specific requirements (including but not limited to progression rules) laid down by the UFS.

<sup>23</sup> There might be exceptions in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

<sup>24</sup> The faculties may include or exclude UFSS1504 with regard to these calculations, in accordance with their faculty rules.

- (iii) By the end of the third year of registration for a qualification of all three-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 224 credits (equivalent to fourteen (14) 16-credit modules) of their qualification, to be allowed to start with the fourth year's study.
  - (iv) By the end of the fourth year of registration for a qualification of all three-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 288 credits (equivalent to eighteen (18) 16-credit modules) of their qualification, to be allowed to start with the fifth year's study.
  - (v) By the end of the fifth year of registration for a qualification of all three-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to complete their qualification.
  - (vi) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in their first year of registration and who, in terms of Rule A7, applied before the relevant due date as stipulated in Rule A7(b) for enrolment in another undergraduate programme or degree, will, upon admission to the other undergraduate programme or degree, be allowed to enrol in the other undergraduate programme or degree in their second year of registration. They will not be allowed to continue in the programme or degree in which they are registered in their first year. If they do not gain admission to the other programme or degree, they will be excluded from registering at the UFS for a second year.
  - (vii) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in years of registration other than the first year of registration, will be excluded from registering at the UFS in subsequent years.
  - (viii) The FAAC can consider a deviation from (vii) and grant admission based on past academic performance in the NSC and previous post-NSC results.
- (b) The progression requirements for four-year professional and four-year extended qualifications are as follows:
- (i) In the first year of registration for a qualification of all four-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to pass 48 credits (equivalent to three (3) 16-credit modules), to be allowed to start with the second year's study.
  - (ii) By the end of the second year of registration for a qualification of all four-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 112 credits (equivalent to seven (7) 16-credit modules) of their qualification, to be allowed to start with the third year's study.
  - (iii) By the end of the third year of registration for a qualification of all four-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 192 credits (equivalent to twelve (12) 16-credit modules) of their qualification, to be allowed to start with the fourth year's study.
  - (iv) By the end of the fourth year of registration for a qualification of all four-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 320 credits (equivalent to twenty (20) 16-credit modules) of their qualification, to be allowed to start with the fifth year's study.
  - (v) By the end of the fifth year of registration for a qualification of all four-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 384 credits (equivalent to twenty-four (24) 16-credit modules) of their qualification, to be allowed to start with the sixth year's study.

- (vi) By the end of the sixth year of registration for a qualification of all four-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to complete their qualification.
  - (vii) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in their first year of registration and who, in terms of Rule A7, applied before the relevant due date as stipulated in Rule A7(b) for enrolment in another undergraduate programme or degree, will upon admission to the other undergraduate programme or degree, be allowed to enrol in the other undergraduate programme or degree in their second year of registration. They will not be allowed to continue in the programme or degree in which they are registered in their first year. If they do not gain admission to the other programme or degree, they will be excluded from registering at the UFS for a second year.
  - (viii) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in years of registration other than the first year of registration, will be excluded from registering at the UFS in subsequent years.
  - (ix) The FAAC can consider a deviation from (viii) and grant admission based on past academic performance in the NSC and previous post-NSC results.
- (c) The progression requirements for five-year qualifications are the following:
- (i) In the first year of registration for a qualification of all five-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to pass 48 credits (equivalent to three (3) 16-credit modules) to be allowed to start with the second year's study.
  - (ii) By the end of the second year of registration for a qualification of all five-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 112 credits (equivalent to seven (7) 16-credit modules) of their qualification to be allowed to start with the third year's study.
  - (iii) By the end of the third year of registration for a qualification of all five-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 224 credits (equivalent to fourteen (14) 16-credit modules) of their qualification to be allowed to start with the fourth year's study.
  - (iv) By the end of the fourth year of registration for a qualification of all five-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 336 credits (equivalent to twenty-one (21) 16-credit modules) of their qualification to be allowed to start with the fifth year's study.
  - (v) By the end of the fifth year of registration for a qualification of all five-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 432 credits (equivalent to twenty-seven (27) 16-credit modules) of their qualification to be allowed to start with the sixth year's study.
  - (vi) By the end of the sixth year of registration for a qualification of all five-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to have passed 528 credits (equivalent to thirty-three (33) 16-credit modules) of their qualification to be allowed to start with the seventh year's study.

- (vii) By the end of the seventh year of registration for a qualification of all five-year undergraduate programmes, students are required to complete their qualification.
  - (viii) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in their first year of registration and who, in terms of Rule A7, applied before the relevant due date as stipulated in Rule A7(b) for enrolment in another undergraduate programme or degree, will (upon admission to the other undergraduate programme or degree) be allowed to enrol in the other undergraduate programme or degree in their second year of registration. They will not be allowed to continue in the programme or degree in which they are registered in their first year. If they do not gain admission to the other programme or degree, they will be excluded from registering at the UFS for a second year.
  - (ix) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in years of registration other than the first year of registration, will be excluded from registering at the UFS in subsequent years.
  - (x) The FAAC can consider a deviation from (viii) and grant admission based on past academic performance in the NSC and previous post-NSC results.
- (d) The progression requirements for students enrolled in three-year qualifications who switch to another programme or qualification in terms of Rule A7 are as follows:
- (i) By the end of the second year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the first year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to have passed 80 credits (equivalent to five (5) 16-credit modules) of her/his qualification, to be allowed to start with the third year's study.
  - (ii) By the end of the third year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the second year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to have passed 160 credits (equivalent to ten (10) 16-credit modules) of her/his qualification, to be allowed to start with the fourth year's study.
  - (iii) By the end of the fourth year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the third year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to have passed 288 credits (equivalent to eighteen (18) 16-credit modules) of her/his qualification, to be allowed to start with the fifth year's study.
  - (iv) By the end of the fifth year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the fourth year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to complete her/his qualification.
  - (v) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in years of registration other than the first year of registration at the UFS, will be excluded from registering at the UFS in subsequent years.
  - (vi) The FAAC can consider a deviation from (v) and grant admission based on past academic performance in the NSC and previous post-NSC results.

- (e) The progression requirements for students enrolled in four-year professional and four-year extended qualifications who switch to another programme or degree in terms of Rule A16 are as follows:
- (i) By the end of the second year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the first year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to have passed 80 credits (equivalent to five (5) 16-credit modules) of her/his qualification, to be allowed to start with the third year's study.
  - (ii) By the end of the third year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the second year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to have passed 160 credits (equivalent to ten (10) 16-credit modules) of her/his qualification, to be allowed to start with the fourth year's study.
  - (iii) By the end of the fourth year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the third year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to have passed 256 credits (equivalent to sixteen (16) 16-credit modules) of her/his qualification, to be allowed to start with the fifth year's study.
  - (iv) By the end of the fifth year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the fourth year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to have passed 352 credits (equivalent to twenty-two (22) 16-credit modules) of her/his qualification, to be allowed to start with the sixth year's study.
  - (v) By the end of the sixth year of registration as undergraduate student, which is the fifth year of registration for a qualification different to that for which the student was registered in her/his first year, a student is required to complete her/his qualification.
  - (vi) Students who fall short of the required number of credits in years of registration other than the first year of registration, will be excluded from registering at the UFS in subsequent years.
  - (vii) The FAAC can consider a deviation from (vi) and grant admission based on past academic performance in the NSC and previous post-NSC results.

## **REGISTRATION: UNDERGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS**

### **A13 SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO REGISTER AS A STUDENT**

- (a) A student
- (i) who registers at the UFS for the first time must, before a date annually determined by the Senate, send a certified copy of the NSC/NC(V) or a certified copy of the notification of the examination result to the UFS;
  - (ii) who previously studied at another institution of higher education must, not later than during the UFS's registration process, also submit an



official academic record and a certificate of conduct from the previous institution(s) of higher education.

- (b) Certified copies must also be available during the registration process.
- (c) An international student who is not a South African citizen and who is not in possession of a permanent residence permit, must
  - (i) submit to the Office for International Affairs a study permit issued in favour of the UFS by the South African Department of Home Affairs;
  - (ii) comply with all the requirements of the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002) and with the regulations issued in accordance with the said Act.

#### **A14 DURATION OF STUDY AND COMPILING A CURRICULUM**

- (a) Except in cases where the Council (via the Senate) implements new rules with immediate effect, a student may, for an undergraduate qualification, only register at the UFS for the minimum period allowed for that qualification plus an additional two (2) years, with the second period following directly after the first, and must complete her/his studies for that particular qualification in accordance with the rules applicable at the time of registration.
- (b) Should the student interrupt her/his studies, the General Academic Rules and the faculty rules applicable to the time of the registration after interruption will apply<sup>25</sup>.
- (c) If a student interrupts her/his studies for reasons other than a lack of academic progress, the maximum period of study will continue to be counted from the year of return, and the continuous revised relevance of a module will be taken into account. The student will not be permitted to register in the same programme in which she/he was previously registered if there has been a change in the programme or if the module has been revised for the purpose of continued relevance. The student must then register for a new qualification/programme and recognition must be given where it is valid.
- (d) A student from another institution of higher education who switches to another qualification remains subject to both the General Academic Rules and the faculty rules that happen to apply at the time of the new registration, except with the dean's approval in respect of faculty rules and with written notification to the Registrar.
- (e) A student must compile and distribute a curriculum over a period not shorter than that determined by the Senate, in accordance with the module and venue timetable, the examination timetable, the module prerequisites and the prescribed sequence and composition of modules as required for specific study years.
- (f)
  - (i) Depending on a student's academic achievements, the dean may, on the recommendation of the programme director, grant approval to a student to register for additional modules up to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
  - (iii) The dean may grant approval for a deviation from the approved curriculum to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits, on the condition that:

<sup>25</sup>

Unless a shorter period was indicated by the faculty in the faculty rule book.

- (aa) the replacement module(s) or credits are offered at the same HEQF level as the original module(s) or credits, or at a higher level;
- (bb) the credit load of the replacement module(s) is equal to or higher than the original module(s) and the minimum total number of programme credits is attained, providing that content relevancy was considered as well;
- (cc) the coherence in the curriculum was maintained, i.e. that the set of modules built on one another cumulatively to achieve the purpose and outcome of the programme;
- (dd) the structure of the deviated curriculum still offers clear majors at higher NQF levels, e.g. a minor cannot serve as a substitute for a major;
- (ee) progression in terms of cognitive complexity is taken into account and the content of the deviating or recognised module allows for vertical articulation;
- (ff) no deviation may be approved for the major or specialisation module(s) or credits of the qualification;
- (gg) no deviation may be approved at the highest HEQF level of the qualification;
- (hh) a deviation and/or recognition for a specific module may be approved only once, and
- (ii) previous deviations and recognitions are considered when making a decision.

## **A15 STUDENT REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION**

### **A15.1 Registration**

- (a) All student registrations are done in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS.
- (b) Before a person's term of study commences, she/he must annually, during the first registration opportunity, register for both semesters (if applicable) for the period as prescribed by the Senate, and must pay the required fees.
- (c) Academic credit is earned only in respect of modules registered for in compliance with the correct module code(s) as indicated in the faculty rules, and for which passes have been obtained.
- (d) Registration for modules at the beginning of the year in respect of the second semester is conditional and remains subject to the rules that apply to modules with specific prerequisites and as set out in the rules of the faculties in question.
- (e) A person cannot simultaneously register for more than one (1) qualification
  - (i) at this institution, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing and with the approval of the Registrar, on the recommendation of the dean(s);

- (ii) or another institution of higher education, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing and with the approval of the dean(s) in question and of the other institution of higher education, taking into account the specific admission requirements and with written notification to the Registrar, as well as the other institution of higher education.
- (f) The UFS grants no registration with retroactive effect.
- (g) Conditional registration is granted by the UFS only if the Registrar approves such registration. Financial and academic motivations for conditional registration can be considered.
- (h) If the dean of a faculty grants approval to a person to register for a qualification or a module at a time other than the registration opportunity approved by the Senate, a fee will be levied for late registration.
- (i) If a person has not fully settled her/his account in respect of the previous year, a subsequent registration cannot take place.

#### **A15.2 Re-registration**

To be able to re-register for a qualification, a student must meet the readmission requirements and her/his UFS account for the previous year(s) must have been settled in full.

#### **A15.3 Cancellation of registration of module(s) by a student**

- (a) Notification of the cancellation of a registration must be processed electronically or be given in writing.
- (b) The date on which the cancellation was submitted electronically, or the written notification is received, is taken to be the date of the cancellation of the registration.
- (c) Notification of the cancellation may be given during the specified period in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. In order to receive financial credit, specific due dates apply.
- (d) Cancellation of a module(s) after due dates could imply that a student
  - (i) is not granted readmission to a module; and
  - (ii) is liable for the tuition fees for the module.
- (e) Cancellation of all modules by due dates:
  - (i) A student who cancels all her/his modules before 31 March will be held liable for the minimum cost charges.
  - (ii) The minimum cost will also be charged if a student registers for the first time in July and cancels all her/his second-semester modules before 15 August.

#### **A15.4 Cancellation of a student's registration by the UFS**

- (a) A student's registration at the UFS may be cancelled if she/he is found guilty in terms of the rules that pertain with regard to disciplinary action against students.

- (b) A student's registration for a specific qualification may also be cancelled if the relevant dean deems this to be in the interests of the UFS and/or the student, provided that
- (i) prior to a final decision being taken,
    - (aa) the dean of the relevant faculty informs the student in writing of the intention, and also of the reasons for doing so;
    - (bb) the student – upon receiving written notification of the proposed cancellation – is given an opportunity to address written representations to the dean of the relevant faculty not to proceed with the proposed action.
  - (ii) The dean, upon receipt of the written representations from the student, may decide
    - (aa) not to pursue the matter; or
    - (bb) to have the student's registration for the qualification cancelled, with written notification to the ECS and to the student.

**A16 SWITCHING QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR MODULES AND/OR INSTRUCTIONAL MODES AND/OR MIGRATING TO ANOTHER UFS CAMPUS/CENTRE**

- (a) A prospective student who wishes to change the qualification for which she/he has applied, must use the online platform to do so.
- (b) A student who, in her/his first year of enrolment in an undergraduate programme or degree, wishes to enrol for a different programme or degree in the following year, can apply to do so before (i) the closing date for application for the relevant selection programme, or (ii) in the case of all other programmes, the last day of class in the second semester of the first year of registration. To be considered for admission, such a student should comply with the minimum admission criteria of the new programme or degree to which she/he wants to change, and such application will be dealt with by the admission committees in the different faculties.
- (c) The first year of registration counts towards the n+2 maximum residential period that students are allowed to complete their studies, even if they are admitted to a different programme or degree at the beginning of their second year of registration. Therefore, a student who gains admission to a different programme or degree at the beginning of the second year of registration must complete that programme in the remaining residential period (which is four years in the case of a three-year degree, five years in the case of a four-year extended degree, five years in the case of a professional four-year degree, and six years in the case of a five-year degree). Such students are subject to progression rules to ensure compliance with the maximum residential period rule. Refer to Rule A10.9 for detail on the progression rules.
- (d) The FAAC can consider a deviation from (b) only if the student is in good academic standing and will be able to obtain her/his degree within the maximum residential period.
- (e) Modules completed in the first year of registration can be recognised towards the different qualification once the student is admitted. Such recognition must be sought and granted no later than the beginning of the second year of study.

- (f) Students who interrupted their studies by one or more years are subject to the following stipulations:
- (i) If modules completed are recognised upon readmission, the years that those students were previously registered for their undergraduate qualification will count towards their maximum residential period.
  - (ii) The years during which the student was non-active and not registered do not count towards the maximum residential period.
  - (iii) Should all modules previously completed have run out of their five-year shelf life, none of the previous study years will count towards the student's maximum residential period and the student's application will be treated as a new application. The FAAC reserves the right not to grant admission based on past academic performance in the NSC and previous post-NSC results.
- (g) In the case of a module switch, note that the responsibility lies with the student to catch up work that has already been dealt with, and she/he can neither lay claim to any additional help from the lecturer nor expect to be accommodated in respect of notes, assignments, practicals and assessments that have been missed.
- (h) A prospective or registered student who migrates from one campus/centre of the UFS to another campus/centre of the UFS must apply on the prescribed form and obtain the necessary approval from the dean.

## **A17 CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER**

- (a) The dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department with notification to the Registrar, may grant a person exemption from or recognition of credits earned through formal learning in a prior qualification or in a partially completed qualification – whether obtained here or elsewhere – with a view to taking another qualification, provided that:
- (i) No more than 50% of the credits may be transferred from the completed qualification(s) to another qualification, subject to the provision that:
    - (aa) at least 50% of the credits for the new qualification had been earned at the UFS during the preceding five years; and
    - (bb) a maximum of 25% of the credits accrued at the highest NQF level in the previously completed qualification(s) be acknowledged for another qualification<sup>26</sup>.
  - (ii) As regards a discontinued qualification, all the applicable credits may be granted for the new qualification, except in respect of a student from another institution of higher education, in which case no more than 50% of the credits required to obtain the qualification may be recognised from those modules completed at the other institution. In the latter case, there is a restriction of a maximum of 25% of credits required and earned at the highest NQF level.
  - (iii) If credits have been granted based on a discontinued qualification, the registration period for the prior qualification and that for the new

<sup>26</sup> Except if specific national qualification requirements stipulate that more than 25% at the highest NQF level must be acknowledged.

qualification must at least coincide with the maximum period prescribed for the new qualification at the UFS.

- (iv) A person from another institution of higher education has to register at the UFS for at least two (2) academic years (four (4) semesters), depending on the duration of a specific programme or as otherwise stipulated by the faculty rules.
- (v) Credits from a completed or a discontinued qualification may be transferred to another qualification only once. Transfers from the extended programmes do not constitute a change in qualification.
- (b) Credit for a module on the basis of an RPL process will be determined by faculty rules<sup>27</sup>.
- (c) Recognition is granted on the basis of formal learning at the same NQF level, with a context relevance of at least 50%. The credits for notional learning hours granted by a previous university will not be recorded as a direct equivalent. An evaluation will be done by the faculty to determine whether recognition will be granted for a particular module, especially if that module has a different credit value within the relevant qualification at the UFS.
- (d) Exemptions are granted on the basis of non-formal learning in accordance with RPL guidelines, with a minimum relevance of at least 50%. The application of a person in respect of recognition of or exemption from modules after her/his studies have been interrupted, is considered in terms of the policy applicable to RPL.
- (e) At NQF Level 4, no credit is given for any learning acquired during the course of a school career. Exemption can, however, be granted in respect of learning in the course of a post-Grade 12 school year.
- (f) Exemption from a computer literacy (CSIL) module is granted on the basis of non-formal learning or of learning at a level lower than NQF Level 5, which has a relevance of at least 70%, on the strength of the NQF Level 5 assessment at the beginning of the semester in question. The student must demonstrate by means of an NQF Level 5 skills test that she/he possesses sufficient knowledge (pass mark 70%).

## ASSESSMENT: UNDERGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

### A18 ASSESSMENT RULES

#### A18.1 Attendance of teaching opportunities

- (a) Compulsory attendance of teaching opportunities in a module, as prescribed by the faculty board in which the specific module is offered and indicated in the module guide or its addendum, is one of the prerequisites for admission to the examination.
- (b) Apology for non-attendance of teaching opportunities on account of unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by supporting documentation and presented to the lecturer in question at the next available teaching opportunity in the module.

<sup>27</sup> When granting academic credit, differentiation should be made between formal, informal and non-formal learning. CAT transfer and RPL should not be included in the sum of the credits for the qualification a student obtained.

**A18.2 Module mark**

- (a) To gain admission to the examination in a module, a module mark of at least 40% is required, except where the relevant faculty requires a module mark of more than 40% as the minimum for admission to the examination.
- (b) A module mark is set out in the module guide or its addendum and is the result of the formative assessments, which are conducted in a decentralised fashion during the course of the module term.
- (c) A module mark that has been obtained in a module is valid only for the next examination applicable to the module in question.
- (d) Except where the dean of the faculty in which the relevant module is offered (in consultation with the particular lecturer) decides otherwise, a student must, in order to gain admission to the examination in a module, meet all the prescribed subminimum and assignment requirements, and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments as set out in the relevant module guide or its addendum.

**A18.3 Examinations as summative assessment**

- (a) Two (2) examinations are scheduled per semester:
  - (i) a main mid-year examination and an additional mid-year examination in respect of the first-semester modules; and
  - (ii) a main end-of-year examination and an additional end-of-year examination in respect of the second-semester modules and year modules, except in the case of the following:
    - (aa) exceptions as indicated in the faculty rules;
    - (bb) where a system of continuous assessment is followed in respect of practical examinations;
    - (cc) where a system of continuous assessment with summative assessment is followed.
- (b) Once admission to the examination has been granted, participation in the main mid-year examination and the main end-of-year examination is compulsory.
- (c) A student who, as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances, is unable to take the main mid-year examination or the main end-of-year examination, may, within the period allowed for this purpose and using the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination during the relevant additional mid-year examination or additional end-of-year examination, except as regards the following:
  - (i) a student who was admitted to the scheduled main examination in a given semester and obtained an examination mark of at least 30% and a final mark of at least 45% for the module; or
  - (ii) a student who was admitted to the scheduled main examination in a given semester and obtained a final mark of at least 50%, yet failed to obtain the required subminimum of 40% in the examination.
- (d) A student who, as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances, is unable to participate in either the main or additional examinations, could be considered to write an ad hoc examination.

- (e) A student who wrongfully participates in a main examination or an additional examination will receive no recognition for such an examination, and she/he will be deemed not to have participated in the examination.
- (f) A student who has passed a module but wishes to improve the final mark – provided that a final mark of at least 60% has been obtained – must, within the time allowed and on the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination/assessment opportunity. Departments, with the approval of the dean, will decide how the final marks for these modules will be determined, depending on the nature and approach of the additional examination/assessment opportunity.
  - (i) A student in her/his final academic semester who – upon completion of the main end-of-year examination or the main mid-year examination – must prolong her/his studies to obtain the qualification subsequent to failing a single module during the main mid-year examination or the main end-of-year examination, depending on which semester applies, or
  - (ii) a student in her/his final academic semester who has to prolong her/his studies after having qualified for and participated in the additional examination of the semester in question and who, subsequent to completing the additional examination, still needs only one (1) module to obtain the qualification, irrespective of whether the said module was failed during either the main or the additional examination,

automatically qualifies for a special examination, which normally takes place before the commencement of the next semester.
- (g) A student in her/his final academic semester who has failed to comply with the prerequisites regarding admission to an examination will not be considered for participation in a special examination, irrespective of the fact that the student needs only one (1) module to obtain the qualification.
- (h) A student who was promoted in a module but who wishes to improve the final mark – provided that a final mark of at least 70% was obtained – must apply for an additional examination within the specified time and on the prescribed form.
  - (i) A student in her/his final year with a final mark between 50% and 59%, who wishes to improve her/his final mark in a module with the sole purpose of gaining admission to a subsequent postgraduate qualification (Bachelor Honours or a Master's Degree, but not a Doctoral Degree) must, via the academic head of department and with the dean's approval, within the specified time, apply for admission to the additional examination. The mark obtained in the additional examination is recorded on the student's study record together with a note indicating that the student obtained this mark in an additional examination, with the proviso that only the highest mark obtained will be reflected on the student's study record.
  - (ii) A student who wishes to improve her/his final mark in a module with the sole purpose of gaining admission to a subsequent postgraduate qualification (Bachelor Honours or a Master's Degree, but not a Doctoral Degree) and who has failed to gain admission to an additional examination may, in the following year, repeat the module(s) after having registered for non-degree purposes, and may again take an examination in the said module after a new module mark has been obtained. The mark(s) will be recorded on the student's study record.



**A18.4 Pass requirements, passing with distinction, promotion and continuous assessment**

- (a) To pass a module, a final mark of at least 50% must be obtained.
- (b) The calculation of the final mark is set out in the module guide in accordance with the following:
  - (i) A module mark of at least 40% must be taken into account.
  - (ii) A subminimum of at least 40% applies in respect of the examination mark.
  - (iii) Where more than one (1) paper is written in a module, a subminimum of no less than 40% should be obtained per paper, which may also apply in cases where a paper comprises more than one (1) section.
  - (iv) The weight assigned to the examination mark must be no less than 40% and no more than 60%, provided that regarding distance learning students, the weight assigned to the examination mark must be no less than 70% and no more than 80%.
- (c) Where a module comprises a research essay, the mark awarded is taken as the final mark.
- (d) Where a system of promotion applies, the information appears in the module guide and a student passes the module if a module mark of at least 70% has been obtained and the student has participated in all the scheduled assessments. Condonation to obtain a mark of 70% is not allowed.
- (e) If a student does not obtain the required module mark to pass in terms of the promotion system, the assessment rules apply.
- (f) In order to pass a module with distinction, a student must obtain a final mark of at least 75% or a promotion mark of at least 75%, and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments.
- (g) Where a system of continuous assessment applies, a student passes when a final mark of at least 50% has been obtained and she/he has participated in all the assessments, unless otherwise stated in the module guide.
- (h) Where a student has been granted admission to a module on the basis of RPL and has been exempted from specific assessments in the module, the final mark is based on the examination mark.
- (i) Results received after the submission date published in the UFS calendar for a particular graduation and/or diploma ceremony will not be taken into account for that ceremony but will be held over until the following graduation and/or diploma ceremony.

**A18.5 Examiners, assessors and moderators**

Examiners, assessors and moderators who have been appointed by the relevant academic head of department in accordance with the Quality Assurance Policy conduct module examinations, and their appointment is subject to approval by the faculty board.

**A18.6 Oral assessment**

An oral assessment may, with the approval of the academic head of department, be conducted instead of a written assessment, provided that

- (a) the assessment is conducted during an officially scheduled examination period;
- (b) the oral assessment for each module is at least half an hour per student;
- (c) besides the assessor(s), at least the academic head of department or a senior lecturer appointed by her/him is also present;
- (d) a digital recording is made of the oral assessment;
- (e) oral assessments are conducted only at a campus of the UFS, except where the dean grants permission for other centres to be used.

**A18.7 Assignments, portfolios and/or research essays**

- (a) Guidelines for the submission of assignments, portfolios and/or research essays are set out in the module guide. In the event where the assignment, portfolio and/or research essay is used for final assessment, the submission must take place during the officially scheduled examination period.
- (b) An apology for non-submission of assignments arising from unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by corroborative documentation and offered to the relevant lecturer as soon as possible, but not later than the next lecture opportunity that can be attended in the module, or as stipulated by the relevant faculty.

**A18.8 Plagiarism**

Any matters relating to plagiarism will be dealt with in terms of the institutional rules and policies of the UFS.

**A18.9 Centres at which examinations are conducted**

- (a) A student takes the written examination on the campus or at the centre at which the module was offered, except if indicated to the contrary by the Examination Administration Division.<sup>28</sup>
- (b) Blended learning students may take written examinations at any of the centres or campuses designated by the UFS.
- (c) Additional examinations are only written at UFS campuses.

**A18.10 Additional time during examinations**

The Registrar may grant a student additional time for assessments on the basis of a written application, accompanied by a medical certificate or on the recommendation of Student Counselling and Development, in collaboration with the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS).

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<sup>28</sup> Compact Learning students in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences can write their undergraduate modules at specific external venues. A student for the Advanced Diploma in Estate and Trust Administration takes an examination at any of the centres approved by the Director of the School of Financial Planning Law.

**A18.11 Errors as regards the examination timetable, tests and assignments**

A student is not entitled to any exceptions or concessions if she/he has erred in respect of the examination timetable and/or the scheduled test timetable, or the submission of assignments.

**A18.12 Results in respect of examinations, tests, assignments and research essays**

- (a) A faculty or a department must make provisional examination results of the main and additional examinations available to students within seven (7) working days after an examination as scheduled in the examination timetable.
- (b) Provisional examination results can be accessed electronically on the UFS website.
- (c) Students are responsible for obtaining their results before the additional examination. The academic results of students whose accounts are in arrears by more than two thousand rand (R2000,00) will not be made available to the students. However, results indicating reassessment or special examinations that are to be written in the relevant additional examination sitting, will be visible on the study record irrespective of outstanding payments.
- (d) A student may discuss the results of an examination, test or assignment with the lecturer and/or the academic head of department (irrespective of a student's account being in arrears, but on condition that particulars regarding the results are not divulged).
- (e) The discussion must take place within five (5) working days after the provisional results have been announced. A student has the right to address a justified written appeal to the dean, with notification to the academic head of department. Such an appeal must be lodged within two (2) working days after discussion with the academic head of department.
- (f) For the purposes of the above-mentioned discussion, the student has the right of access to her/his script in the presence of the academic head of department or lecturer.
- (g) If, owing to extraordinary circumstances, an examination result and/or feedback regarding an application in respect of an additional examination is not available one (1) week before the date of the additional examination, a further ad hoc examination may be scheduled with the approval of the academic head of department, with written notification to the dean, the Registrar and the Examination Administration Division, provided that
  - (i) as regards first-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination must take place before the second semester commences;
  - (ii) as regards year modules and second-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination must take place before the new academic year commences;
  - (iii) all examination results in respect of first-semester modules have been published prior to commencement of the second semester;
  - (iv) all examination results in respect of year modules and second-semester modules have been announced and entered on the computer network prior to commencement of the new academic year;

- (v) any examination result that is received after the above-mentioned dates be sent to the Registrar by the academic head of department – on the basis of written justification of the circumstances, with the approval of the dean and with notification to the examination committee.
- (h) If a student qualifies for an additional examination or has been admitted to such and the module comprises more than one (1) paper, the examination in both papers must be written during the additional examination in question.
- (i) No disclosure of marks or student information or discussion of students' performance will be done with parents or other third parties without the prior written permission of the student, in order to protect personal information.

#### **A18.13 Requirements in respect of examinations**

- (a) Only registered students who have gained admission to examinations may participate in examinations.
- (b) A student who disregards the Practice Directives in respect of examinations and examination venues will be dealt with in terms of the rules applicable to disciplinary procedures, which may result in expulsion.
- (c) Tests are subject to the same principles as examinations.
- (d) Departments that use a system of continuous assessment may not schedule assessments during official examinations.

#### **A18.14 Special Assessment for Continuous Assessment Modules**

Students in their final academic semester who have to prolong their studies to obtain the qualification subsequent to failing a single continuous assessment module, who participated in all the assessments and obtained a final module mark of 45%, can be awarded a special assessment of which the final format will be determined by the faculty.

#### **A19 QUALIFICATION WITH DISTINCTION**

- (a) Except where faculty rules stipulate additional requirements, a qualification is awarded with distinction if a student meets the following requirements:
  - (i) obtained a weighted average of at least 75% (rounded to the next integer, that is 74,5% to 75%), based on the minimum number of modules prescribed for the qualification in question. The marks of developmental modules will be excluded when calculating marks for awarding the qualification with distinction; and
  - (ii) completed the qualification in the minimum period; and
  - (iii) did not fail or repeat any module during an additional examination, except for the purpose of improving a final mark. The result of a discontinuation of a module(s) will not be taken into account for the calculation of a qualification with distinction.
- (b) With the approval of the dean, in consultation with the Registrar, the restriction regarding the minimum period can be revoked on the basis of a written justification of the circumstances, provided that such approval be obtained before the qualification is awarded at a graduation and/or diploma ceremony.

- (c) Where exemption from or recognition of a module(s) from a previously discontinued qualification is granted, the registration period in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be a semester/year in respect of the new qualification.
- (d) Exemptions or recognitions from a completed qualification(s) are taken as additional residential years in respect of the new, completed qualification.
- (e) Where a module has been repeated in an additional examination to improve the final mark, the highest final mark that has been obtained in the module is used for applying the rule in connection with a pass with distinction.
- (f) Where exemption from or recognition of an occasional module(s) from a previous year is granted, every year in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be an additional residential year in respect of the new qualification.
- (g) Where a final-year student qualified for a special examination and the mark obtained in the special examination complies with the requirements for a distinction, the mark of the special examination will be taken into account.

## **GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES FOR POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS**

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### POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS

#### APPLICATION, SELECTION AND ADMISSION: POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS

##### A20 APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

- (a) A prospective first-time entering student wishing to study at the UFS must apply for admission online or on the prescribed application form and accompany this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the date annually determined by the UFS.
- (b) A student who previously discontinued her/his studies for at least one (1) academic year, or has been academically excluded, must apply for readmission to the university online or on the prescribed application form and submit this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the university application closing date annually determined by the UFS.
- (c) A student registered at the UFS who wishes to continue with her/his studies in the next year after a qualification has been obtained, must – on the prescribed form and within the period scheduled for that purpose – apply for admission. A person's application must comply with UFS and faculty-specific admission/readmission requirements.
- (d) The applications of students from other institutions of higher education must include a certificate of conduct, as well as an academic record, to be considered for admission. Students who have been excluded at other institutions will only be considered for admission to the UFS by the dean in consultation with the FAAC, on the strength of justified, written submissions.
- (e) It remains the responsibility of the applicant to ensure correct capturing of all academic data. The UFS takes no responsibility if a student does not receive a final or conditional offer due to incorrect academic data or missing information. The UFS reserves the right not to process incomplete applications received, or to initiate follow-up communication to retrieve missing information.
- (f) The Registrar considers applications (including postgraduate international applications) received after the closing date only in exceptional cases. Only applications submitted online or delivered to the Student Academic Services office are deemed received.

##### A21 ADMISSION OR READMISSION TO THE UFS AND TO AN ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION

###### A21.1 Admission

- (a) To be admitted to a Postgraduate Diploma, a person must be in possession of an appropriate Bachelor's Degree (NQF Level 7 or NQF Level 8) or an appropriate Advanced Diploma (NQF Level 7).

- (b) A person may also be admitted
- (i) with the dean's permission, on the recommendation of the relevant programme director and/or the academic head of department, or the relevant head of the school, or the director of the centre at which the qualification is offered, and in consultation with the Registrar on the strength of a qualification that they consider to be equivalent to the qualification that was stipulated as an admission requirement; or
  - (ii) with the approval of the dean of the faculty, on the recommendation of the programme director in question and/or the academic head of department or the relevant head of the school or the director of the centre on the strength of a standard of proficiency – determined by means of RPL – that is sufficient for the purposes of the study.
- (c) A person is admitted to an interdisciplinary postgraduate diploma subject to a justified written application for admission from the dean of the faculty in which the previous qualification was obtained, provided that the relevant dean, after consultation with the dean(s) of the other faculty(ies), recommends the application to the ECS.
- (d)
- (i) In addition to the above-mentioned requirements that pertain in respect of admission, the dean, on the recommendation of the programme director and/or the academic head of department or the relevant head of the school or the director of the centre, and with written notification to the Registrar, may require a person to complete certain additional modules before admission, or before the qualification is awarded.
  - (ii) If the modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (e)
- (i) In exceptional cases, the dean – on the recommendation of the programme director and/or the academic head of department or the relevant head of the school or the director of the centre, and with written notification to the Registrar – may admit a student to a single module(s) other than those that are prescribed, provided that it/these are deemed complementary to the specific programme of study and that the student possesses sufficient knowledge of the discipline to warrant admission to the module(s).
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (f) The responsibility to see to it that a person satisfies the necessary admission requirements lies with the relevant programme director and/or the academic head of department, or the head of the school, or the director of the centre at which the qualification is offered, or the dean.
- (g) An offer by the UFS is subject to fulfilment of the conditions determined by the UFS, and availability of space in the programme during the registration period. The UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer should the processed academic results be erroneous or fraudulent. Should a student engage in conduct which the UFS, in its sole and unfettered discretion, deems undesirable, the UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer.

**A21.2      Readmission on the strength of academic progress**

- (a) On the basis of exceptional merit<sup>29</sup>, a student who has not yet completed the qualification after the minimum period allowed for completing the qualification in question plus one (1) year (calculated from the date of first registration for the qualification) may be admitted for one (1) additional year. Such admission is subject to the dean's approval, on the recommendation of the programme director and/or the academic head of department or the head of the school or the director of the centre, and the Registrar being notified in writing – provided that the stipulations in respect of adaptation to new rules have been taken into account.
- (b) A student who has already registered twice for a particular module (question paper/practical work) and who still fails to comply with the pass requirements, will only be granted one (1) further opportunity to re-register for the module on the basis of exceptional merit – with the approval of the dean of the faculty in which the module is offered, on the recommendation of the academic head of department and/or the programme director and with written notification to the Registrar, except in the case of a service module, where both the deans of the faculties involved will have to grant approval.

**REGISTRATION: POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS****A22      SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO REGISTER AS A STUDENT**

- (a) A student
  - (i) who registers at the UFS for the first time must forward to the UFS, before a date annually determined by Senate, a certified copy of the qualification(s) in respect of which admission was granted;
  - (ii) who previously studied at another institution of higher education must submit an official academic record and a certificate of conduct from the previous institution(s) of higher education during the application process.
- (b) Certified copies must also be available during the registration process.
- (c) An international student who is not a South African citizen and who is not in possession of a permanent residential permit, must
  - (i) submit to the Office for International Affairs a study permit issued in favour of the UFS by the South African Department of Home Affairs;
  - (ii) comply with all the requirements of the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), and with the regulations issued in accordance with the said Act.

**A23      DURATION OF STUDY AND COMPILING A CURRICULUM**

- (a) Upon obtaining admission to the qualification for which a student has applied, the student must be registered at the UFS for at least one (1) year (two (2) semesters), or as stipulated by the faculty board and set out in the rules of the faculty in question.

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<sup>29</sup>

To be employed is not considered as exceptional merit.

- (b) Except in cases where the Council (via the Senate) implements new rules with immediate effect, a student may, for a Postgraduate Diploma, only register for the minimum period allowed for that qualification plus one (1) additional year in the case of full-time students and two (2) additional years in the case of part-time students, with the second period following directly after the first, and must complete her/his studies for that particular qualification in accordance with the rules applicable at the time of first registration.
- (c) A student from another institution of higher education or a student from the UFS who interrupts her/his studies for a year or longer than a year, or who switches to another qualification, remains subject to both the General Academic Rules and the faculty rules that happen to apply at the time of the new registration, except with the approval of the dean of the relevant faculty in respect of the faculty rules on the recommendation of the head of a school or the director of a centre, and with written notification to the Registrar.
- (d) A student must compile a curriculum in accordance with the module and venue timetable, the examination timetable and the module prerequisites as set out in the rules of the faculty in question, and must do so in consultation with the relevant programme director and/or the academic head of department, or the head/dean of a school, or the director of a centre.
- (e)
  - (i) Subject to a student's academic achievements, the dean of the faculty in question may, on the recommendation of the head of a school or the director of a centre, or the programme director, grant a student permission to register for additional modules – up to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits – provided that the admission requirements are met.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
  - (iii) The dean may grant approval for a deviation<sup>30</sup> from the approved curriculum to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits, on the condition that:
    - (aa) The replacement module(s) or credits are offered at the same HEQF level as the original module(s) or credits, or a higher level; and
    - (bb) The credit load of the replacement module(s) is equal to or higher than the original module(s), and that the minimum total number of programme credits is attained, providing that content relevancy was considered as well;
    - (cc) The coherence in the curriculum was maintained, i.e. that the set of modules built on one another cumulatively to achieve the purpose and outcome of the programme;
    - (dd) The structure of the deviated curriculum still offers clear majors at higher NQF levels, e.g. a minor cannot serve as a substitute for a major;
    - (ee) Progression in terms of cognitive complexity is taken into account and that the content of the deviating or recognised module allows for vertical articulation;
    - (ff) No deviation may be approved for the major or specialisation module(s) or credits of the qualification;

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<sup>30</sup>

A deviation means that the curriculum or the learning programme or the combination of modules that lead to a specific qualification is modified (APDC decision of 3 September 2015).

- (gg) No deviation may be approved at the highest HEQF level of the qualification;
- (hh) A deviation from and/or recognition for a specific module may be approved only once; and
- (ii) Previous deviations and recognitions are considered when making a decision.

## **A24 STUDENT REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION**

### **A24.1 Registration**

- (a) All student registrations are done in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS.
- (b) Before a person's term of study commences, she/he must annually, during the first registration opportunity, register for both semesters (if applicable) for the period as prescribed by the Senate, and must pay the required fees.
- (c) Academic credit is earned only in respect of modules registered for in compliance with the correct module code(s) as indicated in the faculty rules, and for which passes have been obtained.
- (d) Registration for modules at the beginning of the year in respect of the second semester is conditional and remains subject to the rules that apply to modules with specific prerequisites, as set out in the rules of the faculties in question.
- (e) A person cannot simultaneously register for more than one (1) qualification
  - (i) at this institution, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing, with the approval of the Registrar, on the recommendation of the dean(s);
  - (ii) or another institution of higher education, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing and with the approval of the dean(s) in question, and of the other institution of higher education, taking into account the specific admission requirements, and with written notification to the Registrar as well as the other institution of higher education.
- (f) The UFS grants no registration with retroactive effect.
- (g) Conditional academic registration is granted by the UFS only if the Registrar approves such registration. Financial and academic motivations for conditional registration can be considered.
- (h) If the dean of a faculty grants approval to a student to register for a qualification or a module at a time other than the registration opportunity approved by the Senate, an additional fee will be levied for late registration.
- (i) If a person has not fully settled her/his account in respect of the previous year, a subsequent registration cannot take place.

**A24.2 Re-registration**

To be able to re-register for a qualification, a student must meet the readmission requirements and her/his UFS account for the previous year(s) must have been settled in full.

**A24.3 Cancellation of a registration or a module(s) by a student**

- (a) Notification of the cancellation of a registration must be given electronically or in writing.
- (b) The date on which the cancellation was submitted electronically, or the written notification is received, is taken to be the date of the cancellation of the registration.
- (c) Notification of the cancellation may be given during the specified period in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. In order to receive financial credit, specific due dates apply.
- (d) Cancellation of a module(s) after due dates could imply that a student
  - (i) is not granted readmission to a module; and
  - (ii) is liable for the tuition fees for the module.
- (e) Cancellation of all modules by due dates:
  - (i) A student who cancels all her/his modules before 31 March will be held liable for the minimum cost charges.
  - (ii) The minimum cost will also be charged if a student registers for the first time in July and cancels all her/his second-semester modules before 15 August.

**A24.4 Cancellation of a student's registration by the UFS**

- (a) A student's registration at the UFS may be cancelled if she/he is found guilty in terms of the rules that pertain with regard to disciplinary action against students.
- (b) A student's registration for a specific qualification may also be cancelled if the relevant dean deems such cancellation to be in the interests of the UFS and/or the student, provided that
  - (i) Prior to a final decision being taken,
    - (aa) the dean of the relevant faculty informs the student in writing of the intention and also of the reasons for doing so;
    - (bb) the student – upon receiving written notification of the proposed cancellation – be given an opportunity to address written representations to the dean of the relevant faculty not to proceed with the proposed action.

- (ii) The dean, upon receipt of the written representations from the student, may decide
  - (aa) not to pursue the matter; or
  - (bb) to have the student's registration for the qualification cancelled, with written notification to the ECS and to the student.

**A25 SWITCHING QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR DISCIPLINES AND/OR MODULES AND/OR MIGRATING TO ANOTHER UFS CAMPUS/CENTRE**

- (a) A prospective student who wishes to change the qualification and/or discipline for which she/he has applied, must use the online platform to do so.
- (b) A registered student who wants to switch from one qualification and/or discipline and/or module(s) to another, must apply electronically or on the prescribed form(s), for the switch in question and, before a modified registration can be done, the student must obtain the relevant dean's approval to do so. The general principle is that an early-exit qualification may not be awarded to a student who fails to complete the requirements for a qualification.
- (c) In the case of a module switch, note that the responsibility lies with the student to catch up work that has already been dealt with, and she/he can neither lay claim to any additional help from the lecturer nor expect to be accommodated in respect of notes, assignments, practicals and assessments that have been missed.
- (d) A prospective or registered student who migrates from one campus/centre of the UFS to another campus/centre of the UFS must apply on the prescribed form and obtain the necessary approval from the dean.

**A26 CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER**

- (a) The Registrar, on the recommendation of the academic head of department or the dean, may grant a person exemption from or give credit for credits earned through formal learning in a prior qualification or in a partially completed qualification – whether obtained here or elsewhere – with a view to taking another qualification, provided that:
  - (i) No more than 50% of the credits may be transferred from the completed qualification(s) to another qualification, subject to the provision that
    - (aa) at least 50% of the credits for the new qualification be earned at the UFS; and
    - (bb) a maximum of 50% of the credits accrued at the highest NQF level in the previously completed qualification(s) be acknowledged for another qualification.
  - (ii) As regards a discontinued qualification, all the applicable credits may be granted for the new qualification, except in respect of a student from another institution of higher education, in which case no more than 50% of the credits required to obtain the qualification may be transferred – also taking into account the 50% restriction in respect of credits earned at the highest NQF level.
  - (iii) If credits have been granted based on a discontinued qualification, the registration period for the previous qualification and that for the new qualification must at least coincide with the period prescribed for the new qualification at the UFS.

- (iv) A person from another institution of higher education has to register at the UFS for at least one (1) academic year (two (2) semesters).
- (v) Credits from a completed or a discontinued qualification may be transferred to another qualification only once.
- (b) Credits are granted on the basis of formal learning with a relevance of at least 50%.
- (c) Exemptions are granted on the basis of non-formal learning in accordance with RPL guidelines, with a minimum relevance of at least 50%.

## **ASSESSMENT: POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS**

### **A27 ASSESSMENT RULES**

#### **A27.1 Attendance of teaching opportunities**

- (a) Compulsory attendance of teaching opportunities in a module, as prescribed by the board of the faculty in which the specific module is offered and indicated in the module guide or its addendum, is one of the prerequisites for admission to the examination.
- (b) An apology for non-attendance of teaching opportunities on account of unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by supporting documentation and presented to the lecturer in question at the next available teaching opportunity in the module.

#### **A27.2 Module mark**

- (a) To gain admission to the examination in a module, a module mark of at least 40% is required, except where the relevant faculty requires a module mark of more than 40% as the minimum for admission to the examination.
- (b) A module mark is set out in the module guide or its addendum and is the result of both the continuous and the summative assessments, which are conducted in a decentralised fashion during the course of the module term.
- (c) A module mark that has been obtained in a module is valid only for the next examination applicable to the module in question.
- (d) Except where the dean of the faculty in which the relevant module is offered, in consultation with the particular lecturer, decides otherwise, a student must, in order to gain admission to the examination in a module, meet all the prescribed subminimum and assignment requirements, and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments as set out in the relevant module guide or its addendum.

#### **A27.3 Examinations as summative assessment**

- (a) Two (2) examinations are scheduled per semester:
  - (i) a main mid-year examination and an additional mid-year examination in respect of the first-semester modules; and



- (ii) a main end-of-year examination and an additional end-of-year examination in respect of the second-semester modules and year modules, except in the case of the following:
    - (aa) exceptions as indicated in the faculty rules;
    - (bb) where a system of continuous assessment is followed in respect of practical examinations;
    - (cc) where a system of continuous assessment with summative assessment is followed.
- (b) Once admission to the examination has been granted, participation in the main mid-year examination and the main end-of-year examination is compulsory.
- (c) A student who has passed a module but wishes to improve the final mark – provided that a final mark of at least 60% has been obtained – must, within the time allowed and on the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination.
- (d) A student who (as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances) is unable to take the main mid-year examination or the main end-of-year examination, may, within the period allowed for this purpose and using the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination during the relevant additional mid-year examination or additional end-of-year examination, except as regards the following:
  - (i) a student who participated in the scheduled main examination in a given semester, who obtained an examination mark of at least 30% and a final mark of at least 45% for the module; or
  - (ii) a student who participated in the scheduled main examination in a given semester, who obtained a final mark of at least 50% yet failed to obtain the required subminimum of 40% in the examination.
- (e) A student who (as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances) is unable to take either the main or additional examinations could be considered to write an ad hoc examination.
- (f) A student who wrongfully participates in a main examination or an additional examination will receive no recognition for such an examination, and she/he will be deemed not to have participated in the examination.
- (g)
  - (i) A student in her/his final academic semester who – upon completion of the main end-of-year examination or the main mid-year examination – must prolong her/his studies to obtain the qualification subsequent to failing a single module during the main mid-year examination or the main end-of-year examination, depending on which semester applies;
  - or
  - (ii) a student in her/his final academic semester who has to prolong her/his studies to obtain the qualification after having qualified for and participated in the additional examination of the semester in question, and who, subsequent to completing the additional examination, still needs only one (1) module to obtain the qualification, irrespective of whether the said module was failed during either the main or the additional examination, will automatically qualify for a special examination, which normally takes place before the commencement of the next semester.

- (h) A student in her/his final academic semester who has failed to comply with the prerequisites regarding admission to an examination, will not be considered for participation in a special examination, irrespective of the fact that the student needs only one (1) module to obtain the qualification.
- (i)
  - (i) A student who wishes to improve her/his final mark in a module with the sole purpose of gaining admission to a subsequent postgraduate qualification (Bachelor Honours Degree or a Master's Degree, but not a Doctoral Degree) must, via the academic head of department and with the dean's approval, within the specified time, apply for admission to the additional examination. The mark obtained in the additional examination is recorded on the student's study record together with a note indicating that the student obtained this mark in an additional examination, with the proviso that only the highest mark obtained will be reflected on the student's record.
  - (ii) A student who wishes to improve her/his final mark in a module with the sole purpose of gaining admission to a subsequent postgraduate qualification (Bachelor Honours Degree or a Master's Degree, but not a Doctoral Degree) and who has failed to gain admission to an additional examination, may, in the following year, repeat the module(s) after having registered for non-degree purposes, and may again take an examination in the said module after a new module mark has been obtained. The mark(s) will be recorded on the student's study record.

#### **A27.4 Pass requirements, passing with distinction and continuous assessment**

- (a) To pass a module, a student must obtain a final mark of at least 50%.
- (b) The calculation of the final mark of at least 50% is set out in accordance with the following:
  - (i) A module mark of at least 40% must be taken into account.
  - (ii) A subminimum of 40% applies in respect of the examination mark.
  - (iii) Where more than one (1) paper is written in a module, a subminimum of 40% should be obtained per paper and this may also apply in cases where a paper comprises more than one (1) section.
  - (iv) The weight assigned to the examination mark must be no less than 40% and no more than 60%, provided that, in the case of blended learning students, the weight assigned to the examination mark must be no less than 70% and no more than 80%.
- (c) In order to pass a module with distinction, a student must obtain a final mark of at least 75% and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments.
- (d) Where a system of continuous assessment applies, a student passes when a final mark of at least 50% has been obtained, or at least 75% has been obtained to pass the module with distinction, and she/he has participated in all the assessments, unless otherwise stated in the module guide.
- (e) A system of promotion does not apply for Postgraduate Diplomas.
- (f) Where a student has been granted admission to a module on the basis of RPL and has been exempted from specific assessments in the module, the final mark is based on the examination mark.

- (g) Results received after the submission date published in the UFS calendar for a particular diploma ceremony will not be taken into account for that ceremony, but will be held over until the following diploma ceremony.

#### **A27.5 Examiners, assessors and moderators**

Examiners, assessors and moderators who have been appointed by the relevant academic head of department, in accordance with the Quality Assurance Policy, conduct module examinations and their appointment is subject to approval by the faculty board.

#### **A27.6 Oral assessment**

An oral assessment may, with the approval of the academic head of department, be conducted instead of a written assessment, provided that

- (a) the assessment is conducted during an officially scheduled examination period;
- (b) the oral assessment for each module is at least half an hour per student;
- (c) besides the assessor(s), at least the academic head of department or a senior lecturer appointed by her/him is also present;
- (d) a digital recording is made of the oral assessment;
- (e) oral assessments are conducted only at a campus of the UFS, except where the dean grants permission for other centres to be used.

#### **A27.7 Assignments, portfolios and/or research essays**

- (a) Guidelines for the submission of assignments, portfolios and/or research essays are set out in the module guide. In the event where the assignment, portfolio and/or research essay is used for final assessment, the submission must take place during the officially scheduled examination period.
- (b) An apology for non-submission of assignments arising from unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by corroborative documentation and offered to the relevant lecturer as soon as possible, but not later than the next lecture that can be attended in the module, or a time stipulated by the relevant faculty.

#### **A27.8 Plagiarism**

Any matters relating to plagiarism will be dealt with in terms of the institutional rules and policies of the UFS.

#### **A27.9 Centres at which examinations are conducted**

- (a) A student takes the written examination on the campus or at the centre at which the module was offered, except if indicated to the contrary by the Examination Administration Division.
- (b) An additional examination is only written at a UFS campus, or as indicated to the contrary by the UFS.

**A27.10 Additional time during examinations**

The Registrar may grant a student additional time for assessments on the basis of a written application, accompanied by referral from the programme director and a medical certificate or on the recommendation of Student Counselling and Development, in collaboration with CUADS.

**A27.11 Errors as regards the examination timetable, tests, assignments and research essays**

A student is not entitled to any exceptions or concessions if she/he has erred in respect of the examination timetable and/or the scheduled test timetable, or the submission of assignments or research essays.

**A27.12 Results in respect of examinations, assignments, tests and research essays**

- (a) A faculty or a department must make provisional examination results of the main and additional examinations available to students within seven (7) working days after an examination, as scheduled in the examination timetable.
- (b) Provisional examination results can also be accessed electronically on the UFS website.
- (c) Students are responsible for obtaining their results before the additional examination. The academic results of students whose accounts are in arrears by more than two thousand rand (R2000,00) will not be made available to the students. However, results indicating reassessment or special examinations that are to be written in the relevant additional examination sitting will be visible on the study record, irrespective of outstanding payments.
- (d) Except where the Senior Director of Finance decides otherwise, official examination results are made available electronically to a student.
- (e) A student may discuss the provisional results of an examination, test, assignment or research essay with the lecturer and with the academic head of department (irrespective of a student's account being in arrears, but on condition that particulars regarding the results are not divulged). The discussion must take place within five (5) working days after the provisional results have been announced. A student has the right to address a justified written appeal to the dean, with notification to the academic head of department. Such appeal must be lodged within two (2) working days after discussion with the academic head of department.
- (f) A student has the right of access to her/his script(s).
- (g) If, owing to extraordinary circumstances, an examination result and/or feedback regarding an application in respect of an additional examination is not available one (1) week before the date of the additional examination, a further ad hoc examination may be scheduled with the approval of the programme director and the academic head of department or the Director of the School of Financial Planning Law, with written notification to the dean and to the Registrar, provided that
  - (i) as regards first-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination must take place before the second semester commences;

- (ii) as regards year modules and second-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination takes place before the new academic year commences;
  - (iii) all examination results in respect of first-semester modules have been published prior to commencement of the second semester;
  - (iv) all examination results in respect of year modules and modules of the second semester have been announced and entered on the computer network prior to commencement of the new academic year;
  - (v) any examination result received after the above-mentioned dates be sent to the Registrar by the academic head of department or the head/dean of a school or the Director of the School of Financial Planning Law – on the basis of written justification of the circumstances and with the approval of the dean, and with notification to the examination committee.
- (h) If a student qualifies for an additional examination or has been admitted to such an examination and the module comprises more than one (1) paper, the examination in both papers must be written during the additional examination in question.
- (i) No disclosure of marks or student information or discussion of students' performance will be done with parents or other third parties without the prior written permission of the student, in order to protect personal information.

**A27.13 Requirements in respect of examinations**

- (a) Only registered students who have gained admission to examinations may participate in examinations.
- (b) A student who disregards the Practice Directives in respect of examinations and examination venues is dealt with in terms of the rules applicable to disciplinary procedures, which may result in expulsion.
- (c) Tests are subject to the same principles as examinations.

**A27.14 Special Assessment for Continuous Assessment Modules**

Students in their final academic semester who have to prolong their studies to obtain the qualification subsequent to failing a single continuous assessment module, who participated in all the assessments and obtained a final module mark of 45%, can be awarded a special assessment of which the final format will be determined by the faculty.

**A28 QUALIFICATION WITH DISTINCTION**

- (a) Except where faculty rules stipulate additional requirements, a qualification is awarded with distinction if a student meets the following requirements:
  - (i) obtained a weighted average of at least 75%, based on the minimum number of modules prescribed for the qualification in question; and
  - (ii) completed the qualification in the minimum period, and
  - (iii) did not fail any module or take an additional examination, except for the purpose of improving a final mark. The result of discontinuation of a

module(s) will not be taken into account for the calculation of a qualification with distinction.

- (b) With the approval of the dean, in consultation with the Registrar, the restriction regarding the minimum period can be revoked on the basis of written justification of the circumstances, provided that such approval be obtained before the qualification is awarded at a diploma ceremony.
- (c) Where exemption from or recognition of a module(s) from a previously discontinued qualification is granted, the registration period in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be an additional semester/year in respect of the new qualification.
- (d) Exemptions or recognitions from a completed qualification(s) are taken as additional residential years in respect of the new, completed qualification.
- (e) Where a module has been repeated in an additional examination to improve the final mark, the highest final mark that has been obtained in the module is used for applying the rule in connection with a pass with distinction.
- (f) Where exemption from or recognition of an occasional module(s) from a previous year is granted, every year in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be an additional residential year in respect of the new qualification.
- (g) Where a final-year student qualified for a special examination and the mark obtained in the special examination complies with the requirements for a distinction, the mark of the special examination will be taken into account.

## **A29 PUBLICATION OF A RESEARCH ESSAY**

- (a) If the supervisor/co-supervisor<sup>31</sup>, in consultation with the dean – before or after the degree has been awarded and subsequent to consultation with the Registrar and on the recommendation of the academic head of department – grants written authorisation for publication of a research essay, the following particulars must be stated on the title page:
- (b) This publication is based on research conducted under the supervision of ....., in partial/complete fulfilment of the requirements for the Postgraduate Diploma ..... in the Faculty of ..... at the University of the Free State, and is published with the necessary approval.”
- (c) Copyright of students’ scripts (research essays, mini-dissertations, dissertations, theses, etc.) vests in the UFS. The UFS encourages the publication of derivative works of such scripts, preferably in subsidy-bearing publications. Copyright (including associated risks and benefits) of derivative works of scripts shall vest in the student. However, the prior approval of the UFS Directorate of Research Development is required in the three cases below:
  - (i) Contract research: The publication of derivatives of scripts that were developed as part of contract research conducted by the UFS may be subject to certain contractual conditions.
  - (ii) Patents: Some scripts may contain patentable or protectable subject matter with potential commercial benefits.

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<sup>31</sup> The Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, in consultation with the Dean and Registrar, grants written authorisation for publication of a research report on the Qwaqwa Campus.

- (iii) Legislative requirements: The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (No. 10 of 2004) or the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (No. 51 of 2008) may impose limitations upon the UFS to grant certain rights to students.

**A30–A39** Reserved for potential future additions.

## BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREES

### APPLICATION, SELECTION AND ADMISSION: BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREES

#### A40 APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

- (a) A prospective first-time entering student wishing to study at the UFS must apply for admission online or on the prescribed application form and submit this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the date annually determined by the UFS.
- (b) A student who previously discontinued her/his studies for at least one (1) academic year, or has been academically excluded, must apply for readmission online or on the prescribed application form and submit this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the university application closing date annually determined by the UFS.
- (c) A student registered at the UFS who wishes to continue with a Bachelor Honours Degree in the year after the first relevant qualification has been obtained, must – on the prescribed form and within the period scheduled for that purpose – apply to the academic head of department for admission. A person's application must comply with UFS and faculty-specific admission/readmission requirements.
- (d) The applications of students from other institutions of higher education must include a certificate of conduct, as well as an academic record, to be considered for admission. Students who have been excluded at those institutions will only be considered for admission to the UFS by the dean in consultation with the FAAC, on the strength of justified, written submissions.
- (e) It remains the responsibility of the applicant to ensure correct capturing of all academic data. The UFS takes no responsibility if a student does not receive a final or conditional offer due to incorrect academic data or missing information. The UFS reserves the right not to process incomplete applications received, or to initiate follow-up communication to retrieve missing information.
- (f) The Registrar considers applications (including postgraduate international applications) received after the closing date only in exceptional cases. Only applications submitted online or delivered to the office of Student Academic Services are deemed received.
- (g) The date on which either missing information or documentation in respect of an incomplete application is received, will be taken to be the date on which the UFS received the application.

#### A41 ADMISSION OR READMISSION TO THE UFS AND TO A BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE

##### A41.1 Admission

- (a) A person is admitted to a Bachelor Honours Degree on the recommendation of the academic head of department, provided that she/he has already obtained a relevant Bachelor's Degree or an appropriate Advanced Diploma and meets any other or further requirements as set out in the rules of the faculty in question, on condition that a person may also be admitted to a Bachelor Honours Degree:
  - (i) with the dean's permission, on the recommendation of the academic head of department in consultation with the Registrar – on the strength



of a qualification that they consider to be equivalent to a first Bachelor's Degree, or

- (ii) with the approval of the dean of the faculty, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, on the strength of a standard of proficiency – determined by means of RPL – that is sufficient for the purposes of postgraduate study, with notification to the ECS.
- (b) No student will be allowed to register for a Bachelor Honours Degree module for occasional study unless the required undergraduate qualification has been obtained.
- (c)
  - (i) In addition to the above-mentioned requirements that pertain in respect of admission to all Bachelor Honours Degrees, the dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar, may require a person to complete certain additional modules before admission, or before the qualification is awarded.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (d) On the strength of a justified written application, based on special circumstances on the recommendation of the dean and the academic head of department, a student who has obtained a Bachelor's Degree or an Advanced Diploma in one faculty may be allowed to register for a Bachelor Honours Degree in another faculty.
- (e)
  - (i) In exceptional cases, the dean may – on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar – admit the said student to a single module for the maximum number of credits normally allocated to a Bachelor Honours module, or for more than one (1) module (other than those that are prescribed) where the number of credits add up to more than that maximum number, provided that it/these are deemed complementary to the specific programme of study and that the student possesses sufficient undergraduate knowledge of the discipline to warrant admission to the module(s).
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (f) The responsibility to see to it that a person satisfies the necessary admission requirements lies with the relevant academic head of department and the programme director.
- (g) An offer by the UFS is subject to fulfilment of the conditions determined by the UFS, and availability of space in the programme during the registration period. The UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer should the processed academic results be erroneous or fraudulent. Should a student engage in conduct which the UFS, in its sole and unfettered discretion, deems undesirable, the UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer.

**A41.2 Progression rule in respect of postgraduate students (applicable to all programmes as from 2014)**

- (a) Students who are admitted to postgraduate programmes are generally expected to pass all the modules for which they registered in a particular study year. A student will normally only be allowed to proceed with a programme if she/he has passed at least 75% of the modules required in an academic year.

- (b) A student:
- (i) who has not yet completed the qualification after the minimum duration of the relevant qualification plus one (1) year – calculated from the date of first registration for the Bachelor Honours Degree in question – may, on the basis of exceptional merit and on the recommendation of the academic head of department, be granted admission by the dean for one (1) additional year, with written notification to the Registrar;
  - (ii) who, after the minimum period plus one (1) year and one (1) further semester (or one (1) year in the case of an outstanding year module) has not yet obtained the qualification, but has completed at least 85% of the total number of credits required for the qualification, may be readmitted for one (1) additional semester or year (in the case of an outstanding year module) if the academic head of department recommends such readmission to the dean on the basis of exceptional merit, with written notification to the Registrar.
- (c) A student who has already twice registered for a specific module (examination paper/practicals) and has not yet met the pass requirements, will only be allowed one (1) further opportunity to re-register for the module – on the basis of exceptional merit and with the approval of the dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, and with written notification to the Registrar.

## **REGISTRATION: BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREES**

### **A42 SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO REGISTER AS A STUDENT**

- (a) A student
- (i) who registers at the UFS for the first time must forward to the UFS, before a date annually determined by the Senate, a certified copy of the qualification(s) in respect of which admission to the Bachelor Honours Degree was granted;
  - (ii) who previously studied at another institution of higher education must, not later than during the UFS's registration process, also submit an official academic record and a certificate of conduct from the previous institution(s) of higher education.
- (b) Certified copies must also be available during the registration process.
- (c) An international student who is not a South African citizen and who is not in possession of a permanent residential permit, must:
- (i) Submit to the Office for International Affairs a study permit issued in favour of the UFS by the South African Department of Home Affairs.
  - (ii) Comply with all the requirements of the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), and with the regulations issued in accordance with the said Act.
  - (iii) Apply to have SAQA evaluate the foreign qualifications obtained by the student prior to the application for admission at the UFS. The evaluation and verification of foreign qualifications include authenticating the status of institutions and the qualifications offered by them, investigating the authenticity of qualification documents and confirming that awards were made to individuals, and comparing foreign qualifications with South

African qualifications, considering the structure and outcomes of the foreign qualifications to locate them within the South African NQF (SAQA Application Guidelines and Form, March 2014 based on section 13(1)(m) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), Act 67 of 2008).

#### **A43 DURATION OF STUDY AND COMPILING A CURRICULUM**

- (a) As regards the Bachelor Honours Degree, a student must be registered at the UFS for at least one (1) year (two (2) semesters) subsequent to obtaining the qualification on the basis of which admission has been granted.
- (b) Except in cases where the Council (via the Senate) implements new rules with immediate effect, a student may, for a Bachelor Honours Degree, only be registered for the minimum period allowed for that qualification plus an additional year, with the second period following directly after the first, and she/he must complete her/his studies for that particular qualification in accordance with the rules applicable at the time of first registration.
- (c) A student from another institution of higher education or a student from the UFS who interrupts her/his studies for a year or longer than a year, or who switches to another qualification, remains subject to both the General Academic Rules and the faculty rules that happen to apply at the time of the new registration, except with the approval of the dean of the relevant faculty in respect of the faculty rules on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar.
- (d) A student must compile a curriculum in accordance with the module and venue timetable, the examination timetable and the module prerequisites as set out in the rules of the faculty in question, and must do so in consultation with the relevant academic head of department.
- (e)
  - (i) Subject to a student's academic achievements, a dean may, on the recommendation of the programme director, grant approval to a student to register for additional modules up to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits, provided that the admission requirements are met.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
  - (iii) The dean may grant approval for a deviation from the approved curriculum to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits, on the condition that:
    - (aa) The replacement module(s) or credits are offered at the same HEQF level as the original module(s) or credits, or at a higher level; and
    - (bb) The credit load of the replacement module(s) is equal to or higher than the original module(s), and that the minimum total number of programme credits is attained, providing that content relevancy was considered as well;
    - (cc) The coherence in the curriculum was maintained, i.e. that the set of modules built on one another cumulatively to achieve the purpose and outcome of the programme;
    - (dd) The structure of the deviated curriculum still offers clear majors at higher NQF levels, e.g. a minor cannot serve as a substitute for a major;

- (ee) Progression in terms of cognitive complexity is taken into account and that the content of the deviating or recognised module allows for vertical articulation;
- (ff) No deviation may be approved for the major or specialisation module(s) or credits of the qualification;
- (gg) No deviation may be approved at the highest HEQF level of the qualification;
- (hh) A deviation and/or recognition for a specific module may be approved only once; and
- (ii) Previous deviations and recognitions are considered when making a decision.

## **A44 STUDENT REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION**

### **A44.1 Registration**

- (a) All student registrations are done in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS.
- (b) Before a person's term of study commences, she/he must annually, during the first registration opportunity, register for both semesters (if applicable) for the period as prescribed by the Senate, and must pay the required fees.
- (c) Academic credit is earned only in respect of modules registered for in compliance with the correct module code(s) as indicated in the faculty rules, and for which passes have been obtained.
- (d) Registration for modules at the beginning of the year in respect of the second semester is conditional and remains subject to the rules that apply to modules with specific prerequisites, as set out in the rules of the faculties in question.
- (e) A person cannot simultaneously register for more than one (1) qualification:
  - (i) at this institution, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing, with the approval of the Registrar, on the recommendation of the dean(s);
  - (ii) or another institution of higher education, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing and with the approval of the dean(s) in question, and of the other institution of higher education, taking into account the specific admission requirements, and with written notification to the Registrar as well as the other institution of higher education.
- (f) The UFS grants no registration with retroactive effect.
- (g) Conditional academic registration is granted by the UFS only if the Registrar approves such registration. Financial and academic motivations for conditional registration can be considered.
- (h) If the dean of a faculty grants approval to a person to register for a qualification or a module at a time other than the registration opportunity approved by the Senate, an additional fee will be levied for late registration.
- (i) If a person has not fully settled her/his account in respect of the previous year, a subsequent registration cannot take place.

**A44.2 Re-registration**

- (a) To be able to re-register for a qualification, a student must meet the readmission requirements and her/his UFS account for the previous year(s) must have been settled in full.
- (b) The academic head of department, after consultation with the supervisor in consultation with the dean and the Registrar, must ascertain whether a student has in fact re-registered before supervision may commence.

**A44.3 Cancellation of a registration or a module(s) by a student**

- (a) Notification of the cancellation of a registration must be processed electronically or be given in writing.
- (b) The date on which the cancellation was submitted electronically, or the written notification is received, is taken to be the date of the cancellation of the registration.
- (c) Notification of the cancellation may occur during the specified period in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. In order to receive financial credit, specific due dates apply.
- (d) Cancellation of a module(s) after due dates could imply that a student
  - (i) is not granted readmission to a module; and
  - (ii) is liable for the tuition fees for the module.
- (e) Cancellation of all modules by due dates:
  - (i) A student who cancels all her/his modules before 31 March will be held liable for the minimum cost charges.
  - (ii) The minimum cost will also be charged if a student registers for the first time in July and cancels all her/his second-semester modules before 15 August.

**A44.4 Cancellation of a student's registration by the UFS**

- (a) A student's registration at the UFS may be cancelled if she/he is found guilty in terms of the rules that pertain with regard to disciplinary action against students.
- (b) A student's registration for a specific qualification may also be cancelled if the relevant dean deems this to be in the interests of the UFS and/or the student, provided that
  - (i) Prior to a final decision being taken,
    - (aa) the dean of the relevant faculty informs the student in writing of the intention and also of the reasons for doing so;
    - (bb) the student – upon receiving written notification of the proposed cancellation – be given an opportunity to address written representations to the dean of the relevant faculty not to proceed with the proposed action.
  - (ii) The dean, upon receipt of the written representations from the student, may decide

- (aa) not to pursue the matter; or
- (bb) to have the student's registration for the qualification cancelled, with written notification to the ECS and to the student.

**A45 SWITCHING QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR DISCIPLINES AND/OR MODULES AND/OR MIGRATING TO ANOTHER UFS CAMPUS/CENTRE**

- (a) A prospective student who wishes to change the qualification and/or discipline for which she/he has applied, must use the online platform to do so.
- (b) A registered student who wants to switch from one qualification and/or discipline and/or module(s) to another, must apply electronically for the switch in question and, before a modified registration can be done, the student must obtain the relevant dean's approval in consultation with the relevant academic head of the department, if applicable.
- (c) In the case of a module switch, note that the responsibility lies with the student to catch up work that has already been dealt with, and she/he can neither lay claim to any additional help from the lecturer nor expect to be accommodated in respect of notes, assignments, practicals and assessments that have been missed.
- (d) A prospective or registered student who migrates from one campus/centre of the UFS to another campus/centre of the UFS, must apply on the prescribed form and obtain the necessary approval from the dean.

**A46 CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER**

- (a) The Registrar, on the recommendation of the academic head of department or the dean, may grant a person exemption from or give credit for credits earned through formal learning in a previous qualification or in a partially completed qualification – whether obtained here or elsewhere – with a view to taking another qualification, provided that:
  - (i) no more than 50% of the credits may be transferred from the completed qualification(s) to another qualification, subject to the provision that:
    - (aa) No more than 50% of the credits required for the other qualification are credits that have been used for a completed qualification.<sup>32</sup>
    - (bb) A maximum of 25% of the credits accrued at the highest NQF level in the previously completed qualification(s) be acknowledged for another qualification.
  - (ii) as regards a discontinued qualification, all the applicable credits may be granted for the new qualification, except in respect of a student from another institution of higher education, in which case no more than 50% of the credits required to obtain the qualification be transferred – also taking into account the 25% restriction in respect of credits earned at the highest NQF level;
  - (iii) if credits have been granted on the basis of a discontinued qualification, the registration period for the previous qualification and that for the new

<sup>32</sup> The change to the rule is a direct quote from section 33 of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF), Volume 592, Government Gazette No. 38116.

qualification must at least coincide with the period prescribed for the new qualification at the UFS;

- (iv) a person from another institution of higher education has to register at the UFS for at least one (1) academic year (two (2) semesters);
  - (v) credits from a completed or a discontinued qualification may be transferred to another qualification only once.
- (b) Credits are granted on the basis of formal learning with a relevance of at least 50%.
  - (c) Exemptions are granted on the basis of non-formal learning in accordance with RPL guidelines, with a minimum relevance of at least 50%.
  - (d) Before the approval of content for CAT, it should be determined whether the content is current and relevant. The rules pertaining to the shelf life of modules and their relevancy beyond five (5) years will be determined by faculties and indicated in their different rule books.
  - (e) The application of a person in respect of recognition of or exemption from modules after her/his studies have been interrupted, is considered by an academic head of department in terms of the policy applicable to RPL.

## **ASSESSMENT: BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREES**

### **A47 ASSESSMENT RULES**

#### **A47.1 Attendance of teaching opportunities**

- (a) Compulsory attendance of teaching opportunities in a module, as prescribed by the board of the faculty in which the specific module is offered and indicated in the module guide or its addendum, is one of the prerequisites for admission to the examination.
- (b) An apology for non-attendance of teaching opportunities because of unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by supporting documentation and presented to the lecturer in question at the next available teaching opportunity in the module.

#### **A47.2 Research report**

A research report of limited scope (at least thirty (30) credits and not more than sixty (60) credits), in partial fulfilment of a Bachelor Honours Degree, is written under the guidance of a supervisor and, where applicable, a co-supervisor(s).

#### **A47.3 Module mark**

- (a) To gain admission to the examination in a module, a module mark of at least 40% is required, except where the relevant faculty requires a module mark of more than 40% as the minimum for admission to the examination.
- (b) A module mark is set out in the module guide or its addendum and is the result of both the continuous and the summative assessments, which are conducted in a decentralised fashion during the course of the module term.
- (c) A module mark that has been obtained in a module is valid only for the next examination applicable to the module in question.

- (d) Except where the dean of the faculty in which the relevant module is offered, in consultation with the particular lecturer, decides otherwise, a student must, in order to gain admission to the examination in a module, meet all the prescribed subminimum and assignment requirements, and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments as set out in the relevant module guide or its addendum.

#### **A47.4 Examinations as summative assessment**

- (a) Two (2) examinations are scheduled per semester:
- (i) a main mid-year examination and an additional mid-year examination in respect of the first-semester modules; and
  - (ii) a main end-of-year examination and an additional end-of-year examination in respect of the second-semester modules and year modules, except in the case of the following:
    - (aa) where a system of continuous assessment is followed in respect of practical examinations;
    - (bb) where a system of continuous assessment with summative assessment is followed.
- (b) Once admission to the examination has been granted, participation in the main mid-year examination and the main end-of-year examination is compulsory.
- (c) A student who, as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances, is unable to take the main mid-year examination or the main end-of-year examination, may, within the period allowed for this purpose and using the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination during the relevant additional mid-year examination or additional end-of-year examination, except as regards the following:
- (i) a student who was admitted to the scheduled main examination in a given semester and who obtained an examination mark of at least 30% and a final mark of at least 45% for the module; or
  - (ii) a student who was admitted to the scheduled main examination in a given semester and who obtained a final mark of at least 50%, yet failed to obtain the required subminimum of 40% in the examination.
- (d) A student who, as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances, was unable to participate in either the main or additional examinations, could be considered to write an ad hoc examination.
- (e) A student who has passed a module but wishes to improve the final mark – provided that a final mark of at least 60% has been obtained – must, within the time allowed and on the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination. A student who has not obtained a final mark of at least 60% and wishes to improve the final mark, should follow the steps as stipulated in Rule A53.4 (e)(i) and (ii).
- (f) (i) A student who wishes to improve her/his final mark in a module with the sole purpose of gaining admission to a subsequent postgraduate qualification (Master's Degree, but not a Doctoral Degree) must, via the academic head of department and with the dean's approval, within the specified time, apply for admission to the additional examination. The mark obtained in the additional examination is recorded on the student's study record, together with a note indicating that the student obtained this mark in an additional examination, with the proviso that only the highest mark obtained will be reflected on the student's study record.



- (ii) A student who wishes to improve her/his final mark in a module with the sole purpose of gaining admission to a subsequent postgraduate qualification (Master's Degree, but not a Doctoral Degree) and who has failed to gain admission to an additional examination, may, in the following year, repeat the module(s) after having registered for non-degree purposes, and may again take an examination in the said module after a new module mark has been obtained. The mark(s) will be recorded on the student's study record.
- (g) A student who wrongfully participates in a main examination or an additional examination, will receive no recognition for such an examination and she/he will be deemed not to have participated in the examination.
- (h) (i) A student in her/his final academic semester who – upon completion of the main end-of-year examination or the main mid-year examination – must prolong her/his studies to obtain the qualification subsequent to failing a single module during the main mid-year examination or the main end-of-year examination, depending on which semester applies;
- or
- (ii) a student in her/his final academic semester who has to prolong her/his studies to obtain the qualification after having qualified for and participated in the additional examination of the semester in question and who, subsequent to completing the additional examination, still needs only one (1) module to obtain the qualification, irrespective of whether the said module was failed during either the main or the additional examination, will automatically qualify for a special examination, which normally takes place before the commencement of the next semester.
- (i) A student in her/his final academic semester who has failed to comply with the prerequisites regarding admission to an examination, will not be considered for participation in a special examination, irrespective of the fact that the student needs only one (1) module to obtain the qualification.

**A47.5 Pass requirements, passing with distinction, promotion and continuous assessment**

- (a) To pass a research report, the assessor must award a mark of at least 50%.
- (b) If the qualification comprises both modules and a research report, each separate component must be passed. The research reports for Bachelor Honours Degrees must be submitted by the end of October for assessment, unless the particular faculty rules indicate differently.
- (c) To pass a module, a final mark of at least 50% must be obtained.
- (d) The calculation of the final mark of at least 50% is set out in the module guide in accordance with the following:
  - (i) A module mark of at least 40% must be taken into account.
  - (ii) A subminimum of 40% applies in respect of the examination mark.
  - (iii) Where more than one (1) paper is written in a module, a subminimum of 40% should be obtained per paper and may also apply in cases where a paper comprises more than one (1) section.

- (iv) The weight assigned to the examination mark must be no less than 40% and no more than 60%, provided that in the case of blended learning students, the ratio between the module mark and the examination mark is 20:80.
- (e) A system of promotion does not apply to Bachelor Honours Degrees.
- (f) In order to pass a module with distinction, a student must obtain a final mark of at least 75% and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments, and have completed the qualification in the minimum residential period stipulated in the UFS PQM.
- (g) Where a system of continuous assessment applies, a student passes when a final mark of at least 50% has been obtained and she/he has participated in all the assessments, unless otherwise stated in the module guide.
- (h) Where a student has been granted admission to a module on the basis of RPL and has been exempted from specific assessments in the module, the final mark is based on the examination mark.
- (i) Results received after the submission date published in the UFS calendar for a particular graduation ceremony will not be taken into account for that ceremony but will be held over until the following graduation ceremony.

#### **A47.6 Examiners, assessors and moderators**

Module examinations are conducted by examiners, assessors and moderators appointed by the relevant academic head of department in accordance with the Quality Assurance Policy, and subject to approval by the faculty board.

#### **A47.7 Oral assessment**

An oral assessment may, with the approval of the academic head of department, be conducted instead of a written assessment, provided that

- (a) the assessment is conducted during an officially scheduled examination period;
- (b) the oral assessment for each module is at least half an hour per student;
- (c) besides the assessor(s), at least the academic head of department or a senior lecturer appointed by her/him is also present;
- (d) a digital recording is made of the oral assessment;
- (e) oral assessments are conducted only at a campus of the UFS, except where the dean grants permission for other centres to be used.

#### **A47.8 Assignments, portfolios and/or research essays**

- (a) Submission of assignments, portfolios and/or research essays is set out in the module guide. In the event where the assignment, portfolio and/or research essay is used for final assessment, the submission must take place during the officially scheduled examination period.

- (b) Apology for non-submission of assignments arising from unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by corroborative documentation and offered to the relevant lecturer as soon as possible, but not later than the next lecture that can be attended in the module.

**A47.9 Plagiarism**

- (a) Any matters relating to plagiarism will be dealt with in terms of the institutional rules and policies of the UFS.
- (b) A summary report compiled in the Turnitin plagiarism search engine must be submitted by the student together with the research essay, and a written declaration of approval by the supervisor.

**A47.10 Centres at which examinations are conducted**

A student takes the written examination on the campus or at the centre at which the module was offered, except if indicated to the contrary by the Examination Administration Division.

**A47.11 Additional time during examinations**

The Registrar may grant a student additional time for assessments on the basis of a written application, accompanied by a medical certificate or on the recommendation of Student Counselling and Development, in collaboration with CUADS.

**A47.12 Errors as regards the examination timetable, tests, assignments and research essays**

A student is not entitled to any exceptions or concessions if she/he has erred in respect of the examination timetable and/or the scheduled test timetable, or the submission of assignments or research essays.

**A47.13 Results in respect of examinations, assignments, tests and research essays**

- (a) A faculty or a department must make provisional examination results of the main and additional examinations available to students within seven (7) working days after an examination, as scheduled in the examination timetable.
- (b) Provisional examination results can also be accessed electronically on the UFS website.
- (c) Students are responsible for obtaining their results before the additional examination.
- (d) Except where the Senior Director of Finance decides otherwise, official examination results are made available electronically to a student.
- (e) A student may discuss the results of an examination, test or assignment with the lecturer and with the academic head of department (irrespective of a student's account being in arrears, but on condition that particulars regarding the results are not divulged).
- (f) This discussion must take place within five (5) working days after the provisional results have been announced. A student has the right to address a justified written appeal to the dean, with notification to the academic head of department. Such an appeal must be lodged within two (2) working days after discussion with the academic head of department.

- (g) For the purposes of the above-mentioned discussion, the student has the right of access to her/his script.
- (h) If, owing to extraordinary circumstances, an examination result and/or feedback regarding an application in respect of an additional examination is not available one (1) week before the date of the additional examination, a further ad hoc examination may be scheduled with the approval of the academic head of department, with written notification to the dean and to the Examination Administration Division, provided that:
  - (i) As regards first-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination must take place before the second semester commences.
  - (ii) As regards year modules and second-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination must take place before the new academic year commences.
  - (iii) All examination results in respect of first-semester modules have been published prior to commencement of the second semester.
  - (iv) All examination results in respect of year modules and modules of the second semester have been announced and entered on the computer network prior to the commencement of the new academic year.
  - (v) Any examination result that is received after the above-mentioned dates be sent to the Registrar by the academic head of department – on the basis of written justification of the circumstances and with the approval of the dean, and with notification to the examination committee.
- (i) If a student qualifies for an additional examination or has been admitted to such an examination and the module comprises more than one (1) paper, the examination in both papers must be written during the additional examination in question.
- (j) No disclosure of marks or student information or discussion of students' performance with parents or other third parties will take place without the prior written permission of the student, in order to protect personal information.

#### **A47.14 Requirements in respect of examination venues**

- (a) Only registered students who have gained admission to examinations may participate in examinations.
- (b) A student who disregards the Practice Directives in respect of examinations and examination venues is dealt with in terms of the rules applicable to disciplinary procedures, which may result in expulsion.
- (c) Tests are subject to the same principles as examinations.
- (d) Departments that use a system of continuous assessment may not schedule assessments during approved examinations.

#### **A47.15 Special Assessment for Continuous Assessment Modules**

Students in their final academic semester who have to prolong their studies to obtain the qualification subsequent to failing a single continuous assessment module, who participated in all the assessments and obtained a final module mark of 45%, can be awarded a special assessment of which the final format will be determined by the faculty.

**A48 QUALIFICATION WITH DISTINCTION**

- (a) Except where faculty rules stipulate additional requirements, a qualification is awarded with distinction if a student meets the following requirements:
- (i) obtained a weighted average of at least 75%, based on the minimum number of modules (papers / research essays / practicals) prescribed for the qualification in question, and
  - (ii) completed the qualification in the minimum residential period as stipulated in the UFS PQM, and
  - (iii) did not fail any module or repeat any module during an additional examination, except for the purpose of improving a final mark. The result of a discontinuation of a module(s) will not be taken into account for the calculation of a qualification with distinction.
- (b) With the approval of the dean, in consultation with the Registrar, and on the recommendation of the academic head of department, the restriction regarding the minimum period can be revoked on the basis of written justification of the circumstances, provided that such approval be obtained before the qualification is awarded at a graduation ceremony.
- (c) Where exemption from or recognition of a module(s) from a previously discontinued qualification is granted, the registration period in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be an additional semester/year in respect of the new qualification.
- (d) Exemptions or recognitions from a completed qualification(s) are taken as additional residential years in respect of the new, completed qualification.
- (e) Where a module has been repeated in an additional examination to improve the final mark, the highest final mark that has been obtained in the module is used for applying the rule in connection with a pass with distinction.
- (f) Where exemption from or recognition of an occasional module(s) from a previous year is granted, every year in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be an additional residential year in respect of the new qualification.
- (g) Where a final-year student qualified for a special examination and the mark obtained in the special examination complies with the requirements for a distinction, the mark of the special examination will be taken into account.

**A49 PUBLICATION OF A RESEARCH REPORT**

- (a) If the supervisor/co-supervisor, in consultation with the dean – before or after the degree has been awarded and subsequent to consultation with the Registrar and on the recommendation of the academic head of department – grants written authorisation for publication of a research report, the following particulars must be stated on the title page:
- (b) “This publication is based on research conducted under the supervision of ....., in partial/complete fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor Honours Degree qualification ..... in the Faculty of ..... at the University of the Free State, and is published with the necessary approval.”

(c) Copyright of students' scripts (research essays, mini-dissertations, dissertations, theses, etc.) vests in the UFS. The UFS encourages the publication of derivative works of such scripts, preferably in subsidy-bearing publications. Copyright (including associated risks and benefits) of derivative works of scripts shall vest in the student. However, the prior approval of the UFS Directorate of Research Development is required in the three cases below:

- (i) Contract research: The publication of derivatives of scripts that were developed as part of contract research conducted by the UFS may be subject to certain contractual conditions.
- (ii) Patents: Some scripts may contain patentable or protectable subject matter with potential commercial benefits.
- (iii) Legislative requirements: The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (No. 10 of 2004) or the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (No. 51 of 2008) may impose limitations upon the UFS to grant certain rights to students.

**A50–A59** Reserved for potential future additions.

## MASTER'S DEGREES

### APPLICATION, SELECTION AND ADMISSION: MASTER'S DEGREES

#### A60 APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

- (a) Prior to officially applying for admission to a Master's Degree, online or on the prescribed form, the prospective student must approach the academic head of department of the discipline in which the study is to be undertaken to clarify the following:
  - (i) Whether the department does indeed have at its disposal the specific specialised expertise and research resources to embark on the proposed study.
  - (ii) Whether the department does indeed have at its disposal the necessary personnel capacity and the physical capacity to provide supervision and/or to involve other persons from outside the UFS.
  - (iii) Whether the application is subject to selection.
  - (iv) The mode of presentation and assessment.
  - (v) The academic prerequisites that have to be met.
- (b) Once approval has been granted for submission of an official application, a prospective first-time entering student wishing to study at the UFS must apply for admission online or on the prescribed form and submit this with the requisite documents (letter of permission from the academic head of department, certified copies of qualification certificates, study records and certificates of conduct, etc.), and must do so before the date annually determined by the UFS.
- (c) A student who previously discontinued her/his studies for at least one (1) academic year, or has been academically excluded, must apply for readmission online or on the prescribed application form and submit this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the university application closing date annually determined by the UFS.
- (d) If a person presents a Master's Degree in the form of a master's research dissertation or two (2) interrelated publishable manuscripts / published articles, she/he may – bearing in mind the subsidy guidelines – apply for admission at any time during the academic year. However, in cases where examinations have to be taken, applications in respect of admission must be made before the academic year commences and before the registration process ends.
- (e) In cases where a student submits the research dissertation or interrelated publishable manuscripts / published articles after the communicated deadline, the student's fees will be adjusted proportionally. The academic year in which the degree is awarded determines the fees charged and payable:
  - (i) If the degree is awarded in time for the student to graduate at the June graduation ceremony, no fees are paid by the student for that year.
  - (ii) If the degree is not awarded in time for the June graduation, but in time for the December graduation, the student pays the registration fee plus 50% of the tuition fees for the first semester.

- (iii) If the degree is not awarded in the applicable academic year, the student pays for the full year.
- (f) The applications of students from other institutions of higher education must include a certificate of conduct, as well as an academic record, to be considered for admission. Students who have been excluded at those institutions will only be considered for admission to the UFS by the dean in consultation with the FAAC, on the strength of justified, written submissions.
- (g) It remains the responsibility of the applicant to ensure correct capturing of all academic data. The UFS takes no responsibility if a student does not receive a final or conditional offer due to incorrect academic data or missing information. The UFS reserves the right not to process incomplete applications received, or to initiate follow-up communication to retrieve missing information.
- (h) The Registrar considers applications (including postgraduate international applications) received after the closing date only in exceptional cases. Only applications submitted online or delivered to the office of Student Academic Services are deemed received.

## **A61 ADMISSION OR READMISSION TO THE UFS AND TO A MASTER'S DEGREE**

### **A61.1 Admission**

- (a) To be admitted to a Master's Degree, a person must
  - (i) already have obtained a relevant Postgraduate Diploma, or a relevant Bachelor Honours Degree, or a relevant Bachelor's Degree at NQF Level 8 (excluding a four-year, 480-credit professionally-oriented BEd Degree, which needs to be followed by an Honours degree in Education, and excluding a BTech degree, which needs to be followed by a relevant Postgraduate Diploma) or a relevant Postgraduate Diploma; and
  - (ii) have obtained a weighted average of at least 60% (not rounded to the next integer), or, on the strength of special circumstances, have obtained a mark – as recommended by the academic head of department and approved by the faculty board in question – for the Bachelor Honours Degree or for the modules (at the highest NQF level) presented for the four-year professionally-oriented Bachelor's Degree in the discipline in which she/he is to proceed; and
  - (iii) meet any other requirements as approved by the faculty board in question, provided that a person may also be admitted to a Master's Degree
    - (aa) with the dean's permission, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, in consultation with the Registrar – on the strength of a qualification(s) that they consider to be equivalent to a four-year professionally-oriented Bachelor's Degree and/or a Bachelor Honours Degree, including qualifications that were obtained internationally and were verified by MIE (Managed Integrity Evaluation (Pty) Ltd), or
    - (bb) with the approval of the dean of the faculty, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, on the strength of a standard of proficiency – determined by means of RPL – that is sufficient for the purposes of Master's Degree studies, with notification to the ECS.



- (iv) The academic head of department may also require a person to take an oral and/or a written examination and/or to be subjected to an interview, before admission to Master's Degree studies may be granted.
- (b) A person is admitted to interdisciplinary Master's Degree studies subject to a justified written application for admission from the dean/assistant dean of the faculty in which the previous qualification was obtained, provided that the relevant dean/assistant dean, after consultation with the dean(s)/assistant dean(s) of the other faculty(ies), recommends the application to the ECS.
- (c)
  - (i) In addition to the above-mentioned requirements that pertain to the admission to all Master's Degrees, the dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar, may require a person to complete certain additional modules before admission, or before the qualification is awarded.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (d) A student who has obtained either a four-year professionally-oriented Bachelor's Degree and/or a Bachelor Honours Degree in one faculty may, on the strength of a justified written application based on special circumstances, be allowed by the ECS – on the recommendation of the dean and the academic head of department – to register for a Master's Degree in another faculty. Students from any faculty can register for the Master's Degree in Higher Education in the Faculty of Education.
- (e)
  - (i) In exceptional cases, the dean – on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar – may admit the said student to a single module for a maximum number of credits normally allocated to a Master's module, or for more than one (1) module (other than those that are prescribed) where the number of credits add up to more than such maximum number, provided that it/these are deemed complementary to the specific programme and that the student possesses sufficient knowledge of the discipline to warrant admission to the module(s).
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (f) The responsibility to see to it that a person satisfies the necessary admission requirements lies with the relevant academic head of department, in consultation with the dean and Registrar.
- (g) An offer by the UFS is subject to fulfilment of the conditions determined by the UFS, and availability of space in the programme during the registration period. The UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer should the processed academic results be erroneous or fraudulent. Should a student engage in conduct which the UFS, in its sole and unfettered discretion, deems undesirable, the UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer.

**A61.2 Progression rule in respect of postgraduate students (applicable to all programmes as from 2014)**

Students who are admitted to postgraduate programmes are expected to pass all the modules, as specified in the curriculum, for which they registered in a particular study year. After the first year of study, a student will only be allowed to proceed with a programme for a next study year if she/he has passed at least 75% of the credits and/or mini-dissertation required to complete the qualification.

**A61.3 Readmission on the strength of academic progress**

- (a) Where a particular research protocol requires the student to collect data over a period that exceeds either the normal minimum period stipulated in the UFS PQM or the maximum period based on research, this should be stipulated and agreed upon before commencement of the study. If a student has not yet obtained the Master's Degree after the minimum study period, she/he may only continue the study on the approval of the academic head of department and the dean of the faculty, ratified by the faculty board. Therefore, the final decision is made by the faculty.
- (b) A student who has already twice registered for a specific module (paper/practical) in a coursework Master's Degree dissertation or mini-dissertation and has not yet met the pass requirements, is only allowed one (1) further opportunity to register for the module – on the basis of exceptional merit, with the approval of the dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, and with written notification to the Registrar.
- (c)
  - (i) A student who is registered for a research Master's Degree may, with the permission of the dean of the faculty, place her/his studies in abeyance for a period of no more than one (1) year in the event of exceptional circumstances only, and subject to the availability of supervision. The student's application for abeyance will only be presented to the dean of the faculty for approval if supported by the student's supervisor.
  - (ii) The student needs to apply for abeyance before the start of the semester in which the abeyance is to commence, but not later than the last date of registration of this preceding semester.
  - (iii) The student will be allowed to register in the year following immediately after the expiry of the abeyance year, without having to reapply for admission.
  - (iv) Should the student fail to register in the year following the abeyance period, she/he will have to reapply for admission and this year will be added when calculating the residential period of the student if studies are continued.
  - (v) The year for which the request for abeyance has been approved by the dean, is not included when calculating the residential period of the student.
  - (vi) The decision on approval of abeyance needs to be communicated to the Registrar, for capturing by Student Academic Services.
  - (vii) During the abeyance period the student is not entitled to, nor will receive, any supervision guidance and/or participation in any academic activities whatsoever.
  - (viii) A student only has one (1) opportunity per degree to apply for abeyance.
- (d) Should the study not be completed after the minimum study period (as stipulated in the UFS PQM) plus one (1) year for Master's students, comprehensive reasons for further registration must be provided to the research supervisor. The dean/assistant dean, in collaboration with the head of the department and research supervisor, can approve an extension of the study.
- (e) Failure to submit a dissertation either at the end of the regular period or the extended period (if an extension has been formally approved by the dean/assistant dean) will result in the registration being automatically cancelled by the UFS.

**REGISTRATION: MASTER'S DEGREES****A62 SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO REGISTER AS A STUDENT**

- (a) A student
  - (i) who registers at the UFS for the first time, must submit her/his prescribed application form and include a certified copy of the qualification(s) in respect of which admission to the Master's Degree was granted;
  - (ii) who previously studied at another institution of higher education must submit an official academic record and a certificate of conduct from the previous institution(s) of higher education during the application process.
- (b) Certified copies must also be available during the registration process.
- (c) An international student who is not a South African citizen and who is not in possession of a permanent residential permit, must:
  - (i) submit to the Office for International Affairs a study permit issued in favour of the UFS by the South African Department of Home Affairs (excluding non-residential international students who live abroad).
  - (ii) comply with all the requirements of the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), and with the regulations issued in accordance with the said Act (excluding non-residential international students who live abroad).
  - (iii) apply to have SAQA evaluate the foreign qualifications obtained by the student prior to the application for admission at the UFS. The evaluation and verification of foreign qualifications include authenticating the status of institutions and the qualifications offered by them, investigating the authenticity of qualification documents and confirming that awards were made to individuals, and comparing foreign qualifications with South African qualifications, considering the structure and outcomes of the foreign qualifications to locate them within the South African NQF (SAQA Application Guidelines and Form, March 2014, based on section 13 (1) (m) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), Act 67 of 2008) including non-residential international students.

**A63 MODE OF PRESENTATION**

- (a)
  - (i) There are two (2) types of Master's Degrees, namely a general Master's Degree and a professional Master's Degree.
  - (ii) There are two (2) variants of the general Master's Degree: a Master's Degree by dissertation, or a Master's Degree by coursework and a mini-dissertation. Both variants must include a significant research component in the form of a research project.
  - (iii) The requirements for the successful completion of a general Master's Degree are as follows:
    - (aa) Master's Degree by dissertation (hundred and eighty (180) credits research): a single advanced research project, culminating in the production and acceptance of a dissertation or other forms of research, as indicated below.

- (bb) Master's Degree by coursework and mini-dissertation: A coursework programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, and in some cases demonstration of the ability to relate knowledge to a range of contexts for professional practice. In addition, this variant of a general Master's Degree must contain a research project comprising a minimum of sixty (60) credits at NQF Level 9, culminating in the acceptance of a mini-dissertation or other forms of research.
- (cc) In addition to a dissertation or treatise, a general Master's Degree may take the form of a technical report, one or more creative performances or works, or a series of interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles or other research-equivalent output.
- (iv) The requirements for the successful completion of a professional Master's Degree are as follows:
  - (aa) Successful completion of a coursework programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, as well as demonstration of the ability to relate knowledge to the resolution of complex problems in appropriate areas of professional practice.
  - (bb) A professional Master's Degree must include an independent study component that comprises at least a quarter of the total credits, which must be at NQF Level 9, consisting of either a single research or technical project or a series of smaller projects demonstrating innovation or professional expertise.
- (v) In accordance with the stipulations of a faculty board, as contained in the faculty rules, a Master's Degree may be presented in the form of one of the following options (with the standard faculty approval procedures applying to all forms of the titles of the research component):
  - (aa) the submission of a Master's Degree research dissertation (minimum 180 credits) or two (2) interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles (minimum hundred and eighty (180) credits); or
  - (bb) successful completion of coursework and submission of a mini-dissertation (minimum sixty (60) credits) and minimum hundred and eighty (180) credits in total, or one (1) publishable manuscript/published article (minimum sixty (60) credits) and minimum hundred and eighty (180) credits in total.
- (b) A Master's Degree may also be partially (at least 50%) completed at the UFS and at a foreign (international) university with which the UFS has entered into an agreement in this regard, in accordance with the requirements of the UFS Policy on Joint Degrees with Foreign Universities, as amended from time to time.
- (c) Irrespective of the mode of presentation, the standard of the outcomes must correspond with the requirements of the Level 9 descriptors of the HEQSF.

**A64 REQUIREMENTS IN RESPECT OF A MASTER'S DEGREE RESEARCH DISSERTATION OR INTERRELATED, PUBLISHABLE MANUSCRIPTS/PUBLISHED ARTICLES OR A COURSEWORK MASTER'S DEGREE MINI-DISSERTATION**

- (a) The salient characteristic of this particular qualification is that a person must make an advanced-level contribution to the development of knowledge.
- (b) The following requirements are stipulated in respect of this study:
  - (i) A Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles are written under the guidance of a supervisor or a supervisor and a co-supervisor(s) (minimum hundred and eighty (180) credits at NQF Exit Level 9).
  - (ii) A coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation is written under the guidance of a supervisor or a supervisor and a co-supervisor(s) (minimum sixty (60) credits at NQF Exit Level 9).
- (c) No Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or mini-dissertation may contain work that is identical to work that a student previously presented for a qualification.
- (d) The requirements in respect of a Master's Degree are as follows:
  - (i) A Master's by coursework involves a mini-dissertation or one (1) publishable manuscript/published article in the place of a mini-dissertation (minimum sixty (60) credits research).
  - (ii) In the case of an exceptional Master's student with a demonstrable capacity for research, a student can choose to submit a publishable manuscript.
  - (iii) A Master's by research work involves a dissertation or two (2) interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles (hundred and eighty (180) credits research).
  - (iv) Introductory and concluding chapters must form part of the research work done by the student when publishable manuscripts/published articles are submitted in the place of a mini-dissertation or dissertation.

**A65 DURATION OF STUDY AND COMPILING A CURRICULUM**

- (a) A Master's Degree student must be registered at the UFS for at least one (1) year (two (2) semesters), or as stipulated by the faculty board and set out in the rules of the faculty in question.
- (b) Except in cases where the Council (via the Senate) implements new rules with immediate effect, a student may, for a Master's Degree, only be registered for the minimum period allowed for that qualification plus an additional year, with the second period following directly after the first, and must complete her/his studies for that particular qualification in accordance with the rules applicable at the time of first registration.
- (c) A student from another institution of higher education or a student from the UFS who interrupts her/his studies for a year or longer, or who switches to another qualification, remains subject to both the General Academic Rules and the faculty rules that happen to apply at the time of the new registration, except with the

dean's approval in respect of the relevant faculty rules on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar.

- (d) If a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation, or publishable manuscript/published article is not accepted and the student subsequently re-registers for the Master's Degree, the faculty board gives an ad hoc ruling as regards the study period. Written notification of the ruling is forwarded to the Registrar.
- (e)
  - (i) Depending on a student's academic achievements, a dean may, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, grant approval to a student to register for additional modules up to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits, provided that the admission requirements have been met.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
  - (iii) The dean may grant approval for a deviation from the approved curriculum up to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits, on the condition that:
    - (aa) The replacement module(s) or credits are offered at the same HEQF level as the original module(s) or credits, or at a higher level;
    - (bb) The credit load of the replacement module(s) is equal to or more than the original module(s), and that the minimum total number of programme credits is attained, providing that content relevancy was considered as well;
    - (cc) The coherence in the curriculum was maintained, i.e. that the set of modules built on one another cumulatively to achieve the purpose and outcome of the programme;
    - (dd) The structure of the deviated curriculum still offers clear majors at higher NQF levels, e.g. a minor cannot serve as a substitute for a major;
    - (ee) Progression in terms of cognitive complexity is taken into account and the content of the deviating or recognised module allows for vertical articulation;
    - (ff) No deviation may be approved for the major or specialisation module(s) or credits of the qualification;
    - (gg) No deviation may be approved at the highest HEQF level of the qualification;
    - (hh) A deviation and/or recognition for a specific module may be approved only once; and
    - (ii) Previous deviations and recognitions are considered when making a decision.
- (f) A student must compile a curriculum in accordance with the module and venue timetable, the examination timetable and the module prerequisites as approved by the faculty board in question and in consultation with the relevant academic head of department, in consultation with the dean and Registrar.

## **A66 STUDENT REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION**

### **A66.1 Selection for registration**

- (a) A person who qualifies to register for her/his Master's Degree by means of the dissertation option or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles (journal manuscript/published article option) must meet the following requirements before being able to register for the qualification concerned:
- (i) All Master's applicants are subject to a selection process, which could differ from one department to the next and the details of which will be published in the departmental brochures for postgraduate selection, as well as on the departmental web page.
  - (ii) Selection for registration is based on the content and performance in the prior degree, academic merit, bridging arrangements, prior work experience and research ability.
  - (iii) The supervisor, in consultation with the head of department, reserves the right to request applicants to write an admission examination or to enrol for additional modules or to comply with additional admission requirements when deemed necessary.
  - (iv) If the above-mentioned requirements are confirmed to be of the appropriate standard by the supervisor and the academic head of department, the applicant (if required) must write either the IELTS or TALPS test, whichever is required by the relevant academic department and/or faculty, at her/his own cost. The applicant must attain the level of achievement required by the relevant academic department and/or faculty.

### **A66.2 Registering for the qualification**

- (a) All student registrations are done in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. Registrations for the first semester can take place until the last working day in March, and the registrations for the second semester can take place until the last working day in September.
- (b) Before a person's term of study commences, she/he must annually, during the first registration opportunity, register for both semesters (if applicable) for the period as prescribed by Senate, and must pay the required fees.
- (c) Within the first ten (10) weeks after registration the faculty will, if it is deemed necessary, present an orientation programme (attendance of which is mandatory) to enrich all students intending to study at this level with appropriate research methods and the required background.
- (d) After registration, the student must work on a research proposal together with the supervisor, except in cases where a research proposal is submitted immediately and accepted by the faculty research committee or the faculty board.
- (e) An acceptable research proposal and provisional title must usually be approved by the faculty research committee or faculty board, including compliance with requirements of the ethics committees, within the first six (6) months after registration. Once the faculty board has approved a title registration, the information is entered on the system by staff in the relevant faculties.
- (f) An extension with regard to the submission of the research proposal and provisional title may only be granted with the approval of the dean upon the

recommendation of the academic head of department, and with notification in writing to the Registrar, according to the specific requirements of each faculty. The requirements regarding the granting of an extension for the submission of the research proposal and a provisional title for full-time and part-time students will be specified in the faculty rule books.

- (g) A student who wishes to begin, after the registration period, with Master's Degree studies that do not include examination papers, may be permitted to register by the academic head of department in consultation with the assistant dean and Registrar. Study fees and the minimum residential period, as stipulated in the UFS PQM, will apply.
- (h) Where actions related to registration permitted outside the official registration period take place between October and December, the student must, at least within the subsequent year(s), register for the qualification concerned within the scheduled registration period.
- (i) Academic credit is earned only in respect of modules registered for in compliance with the correct module code(s) as indicated in the faculty rules, and for which passes have been obtained.
- (j) Registration for modules at the beginning of the year in respect of the second semester is conditional and remains subject to the rules that apply to modules with specific prerequisites, as set out in the rules of the faculties in question.
- (k) A person cannot simultaneously register for more than one (1) qualification
  - (i) at this institution, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing, with the approval of the Registrar, on the recommendation of the dean(s);
  - (ii) or another institution of higher education, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing and with the approval of the dean(s) in question and of the other institution of higher education, taking into account the specific admission requirements, and with written notification to the Registrar as well as the other institution of higher education;
- (l) No retroactive registration will be granted for any qualification.
- (m) A first registration for a Master's Degree that entails only a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles may – taking into account the subsidy guidelines – take place outside the approved registration periods.
- (n) If a person has not fully settled her/his account in respect of the previous year, a subsequent registration cannot take place and no supervision can be given or teaching opportunities be attended.
- (o) The UFS grants conditional academic registration only if the Registrar approves such registration. Financial and academic motivations for conditional registration can be considered.

### **A66.3**

#### **Re-registration**

- (a) Students who re-register should do so by the end of March every year. No supervision can be provided to a student who did not register by the end of March.



- (b) To be able to re-register for a qualification, a student must meet the readmission requirements and her/his UFS account for the previous year(s) must have been settled in full.
- (c) A student must re-register for the qualification in question if:
  - (i) the Master's Degree by research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have not been submitted in accordance with the dates determined by the Senate for assessment;
  - (ii) the degree cannot be awarded during the next graduation ceremony, for example if corrections have to be made or if bound copies have not been received;
  - (iii) the Master's Degree by research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have not been submitted in accordance with the dates stipulated by the Senate and the qualification cannot be conferred at the first relevant graduation ceremony of the academic year. In this instance, the student must re-register and will be responsible for all fees charged for the first semester. Should a student miss the date for the submission of the dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles and therefore miss the first relevant graduation ceremony, and the degree is conferred at any other ceremony in the remainder of the academic year, then the student is required to register and is responsible for all fees charged for the first semester;<sup>33</sup>
  - (iv) the interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have not been submitted in accordance with the dates determined by the Senate for assessment, in which case the students who require residence in campus accommodation must apply or reapply for admission to campus accommodation.
- (d) The academic head of department, after consultation with the supervisor in consultation with the dean and the Registrar, must ascertain whether a student has in fact re-registered before supervision may commence.

**A66.4 Cancellation of a registration or a module(s) by a student**

- (a) Notification of the cancellation of registration must be processed electronically or be given in writing.
- (b) The date on which the cancellation was submitted electronically or the written notification is received is taken to be the date of the cancellation of the registration.
- (c) Notification of the cancellation of registration may be given during the specified period in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. In order to receive financial credit, specific due dates apply.
- (d) Cancellation of a module(s) after due dates could imply that a student
  - (i) is not granted readmission to a module; and
  - (ii) is liable for the tuition fees for the module.

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<sup>33</sup> Students who are enrolled for a Master's Degree by research in the previous academic year and are able to successfully submit their research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles in the next academic year, in time for the degree to be conferred at the graduation ceremony for the first semester, are not required to re-register and as a result are exempted from the payment of fees. The late submission of mini-dissertations is excluded from the exemption.

- (e) Cancellation of all modules by due dates:
- (i) A student who cancels all her/his modules before 31 March will be held liable for the minimum cost charges.
  - (ii) The minimum cost will also be charged if a student registers for the first time in July and cancels all her/his second-semester modules before 15 August.

**A66.5 Cancellation of a student's registration by the UFS**

- (a) A student's registration at the UFS may be cancelled if she/he is found guilty in terms of the rules that pertain with regard to disciplinary action against students.
- (b) A student's registration for a specific qualification may also be cancelled if the relevant dean deems this to be in the interests of the UFS and/or the student, provided that
  - (i) prior to a final decision being taken,
    - (aa) the dean of the relevant faculty informs the student in writing of the intention, and also of the reasons for doing so;
    - (bb) the student – upon receiving written notification of the proposed cancellation – be given an opportunity to address written representations to the dean of the relevant faculty not to proceed with the proposed action.
  - (ii) The dean, upon receipt of the written representations from the student, may decide
    - (aa) not to pursue the matter; or
    - (bb) to have the student's registration for the qualification cancelled, with written notification to the ECS and to the student.

**A67 REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH TITLES AND MODIFYING A RESEARCH TITLE**

- (a) Official title registration must be done in respect of all research titles.
- (b) Modifications to an approved research title may, on the recommendation of the supervisor and the academic head of department, be approved by the faculty board in question.

**A68 SUPERVISOR(S) AND CO-SUPERVISOR(S)**

- (a) A supervisor, and a co-supervisor(s) if applicable, are approved by the faculty board on the recommendation of the academic head of department.
- (b) Co-supervisors can be nominated irrespective of whether they are affiliated with the UFS.
- (c) If the supervisor is not affiliated with the UFS in any capacity, a co-supervisor who is in the UFS's employ must be nominated.

## A69

**EXAMINERS AND MODERATORS**

This rule must be read in conjunction with Rule A72.5.2.

- (a) All examiners and moderators are – on the recommendation of the academic head of department – approved by the faculty board in accordance with the Quality Assurance Policy.
- (b) Examiners and moderators who are appointed by the relevant academic head of department in accordance with the Quality Assurance Policy and approved by the faculty board conduct a module examination.
- (c) The assessment panel of a Master's Degree by research should consist of three (3) members, with the proviso that if an internal examiner – who must not be either the supervisor or the co-supervisor(s) – is nominated, the external examiners must constitute the majority of the assessment panel. If it is decided to appoint only external examiners, three (3) examiners still need to be appointed for a Master's Degree by dissertation. External examiners must be recognised experts in their fields and must not have any affiliation with the UFS.
- (d) In the case of interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, the assessment panel should consist of three (3) members, with the proviso that if an internal examiner – who must not be either the supervisor or the co-supervisor(s) – is nominated, the external examiners must constitute the majority of the panel. External examiners must be recognised experts in their fields and must not have any affiliation with the UFS.
- (e) Examiners who may additionally be required for a practical project or an oral examination, together with the academic head of department, constitute the nominated panel of examiners.
- (f) With reference to a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation, at least two (2) examiners should be appointed, one of whom must be nominated as the external examiner (person not affiliated with the UFS) and the other as the internal examiner (who must not be either the supervisor or the co-supervisor(s)).
- (g)
  - (i) Examiners will only be appointed once the student indicates that she/he is going to submit the research for assessment. As soon as the supervisor considers the study to be at an advanced stage, the examiners should be nominated in order to allow sufficient time for the approval of such nomination by the faculty boards.
  - (ii) The General Academic Rules for a specific academic year will apply when a postgraduate student submits her/his final documentation for examination. In exceptional circumstances justified in writing, the dean, on the recommendation of the supervisor and the academic head of department, may approve the modification as regards the examiners and moderators, with notification to the faculty committee and the Registrar.
- (h) A student may not communicate with an examiner or a moderator. Assessment decisions should be made transparently and students must be afforded reasonable access to such information. The content of assessment reports can be made known to the student orally or in writing by the supervisor at her/his discretion, provided that the comments are treated confidentially (the identity of the assessor may not be revealed) and comments of a personal nature are removed before the information is provided to the student.

- (i) In the event that an examiner is no longer available, a new examiner must be appointed in accordance with General Rule A80 (a) to (g) prior to the submission of the research for assessment.
- (j) The Registrar must keep the supervisor informed as regards the examiners and moderators and their acceptance of nominations.

**A70 SWITCHING QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR DISCIPLINES AND/OR MODULES AND/OR MIGRATING TO ANOTHER UFS CAMPUS/CENTRE**

- (a) A prospective student who wishes to change the qualification and/or discipline for which she/he has applied, must use the online platform to do so.
- (b) A registered student who wants to switch from one (1) qualification and/or discipline and/or module(s) to another, must apply electronically for the switch in question and, before a modified registration can be done, must obtain the relevant dean's approval to do so.
- (c) In the case of a module switch, note that the responsibility lies with the student to catch up work that has already been dealt with, and she/he can neither lay claim to any additional help from the lecturer nor expect to be accommodated in respect of notes, assignments, practicals and assessments that have been missed.
- (d) A prospective or registered student who migrates from one campus/centre of the UFS to another campus/centre of the UFS, must apply on the prescribed form and obtain the necessary approval from the dean.

**A71 CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER**

- (a) The Registrar, on the recommendation of the academic head of department or the dean, may once grant a person exemption from or give credit for credits earned through formal learning in a prior qualification or in a partially completed qualification – whether obtained here or elsewhere – with a view to taking another qualification, provided that:
  - (i) No more than 50% of the credits may be transferred from the completed qualification(s) to another qualification, subject to the provision that
    - (aa) no more than 50% of the credits required for the other qualification are credits that have been used for a completed qualification;<sup>34</sup>
    - (bb) a maximum of 25% of the credits accrued at the highest NQF level in the previously completed qualification(s) be acknowledged for another qualification.
  - (ii) As regards a discontinued qualification, all the applicable credits may be granted for the new qualification, except in respect of a student from another institution of higher education, in which case no more than 50% of the credits required to obtain the qualification be transferred – also taking into account the 25% restriction in respect of credits earned at the highest NQF level. Before the approval of content for CAT, it should be determined whether the content is current and relevant.

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<sup>34</sup> Change to the rule is a direct quote from section 33 of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF). Volume 592. Government Gazette No. 38116.

- (iii) If credits have been granted based on a discontinued qualification, the registration period for the previous qualification and that for the new qualification must at least coincide with the period prescribed for the new qualification at the UFS.
  - (iv) A person from another institution of higher education has to register at the UFS for at least one (1) academic year (two (2) semesters).
  - (v) Credits from a completed or a discontinued qualification may be transferred to another qualification only once.
  - (vi) No Master's Degree research dissertation may contain work that is identical in terms of research and content to work that a student previously presented for a qualification.
- (b) A UFS student who wishes to continue with her/his studies for the Master's Degree at another institution of higher education, or a person who is registered for a Master's Degree at another institution of higher education and wishes to continue with her/his studies at the UFS, may only continue with the same research after the UFS and the other institution of higher education have come to an agreement as regards the research that has already been done and the subsidy implications.
  - (c) With regard to a student who fails to fulfil the requirements for a qualification, the general principle is that the student may not be awarded an early-exit qualification.
  - (d) Before the approval of content for CAT, it should be determined whether the content is current and relevant. The rules pertaining to the shelf life of modules and their relevancy beyond five (5) years will be determined by faculties and indicated in their different rule books.

## **ASSESSMENT: MASTER'S DEGREES**

### **A72 ASSESSMENT RULES**

#### **A72.1 Attendance of teaching opportunities**

- (a) Compulsory attendance of teaching opportunities in a module, as prescribed by the board of the faculty in which the specific module is offered and indicated in the module guide or its addendum, is one of the prerequisites for admission to the examination.
- (b) Apology for non-attendance of teaching opportunities on account of unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by supporting documentation and presented to the lecturer in question at the next available teaching opportunity in the module.

#### **A72.2 Module mark**

- (a) To gain admission to the examination in a module, a module mark of at least 40% is required, except where the relevant faculty requires a module mark of more than 40% as the minimum for admission to the examination.
- (b) A module mark is set out in the module guide or its addendum and is the result of both the continuous and the summative assessments, which are conducted in a decentralised fashion during the course of the module term.

- (c) A module mark that has been obtained in a module is valid only for the next examination applicable to the module in question.
- (d) Except where the dean of the faculty in which the relevant module is offered (in consultation with the particular lecturer) decides otherwise, a student must, in order to gain admission to the examination in a module, meet all the prescribed subminimum and assignment requirements, and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments as set out in the relevant module guide or its addendum<sup>35</sup>.

### **A72.3 Examinations: modules**

- (a) Two (2) examinations are scheduled per semester:
  - (i) a main mid-year examination and an additional mid-year examination in respect of the first-semester modules; and
  - (ii) a main end-of-year examination and an additional end-of-year examination in respect of the second-semester modules and year modules, except in the case of the following:
    - (aa) where a system of continuous assessment is followed in respect of practical examinations;
    - (bb) where a system of continuous assessment with summative assessment is followed.
- (b) Once admission to the examination has been granted, participation in the main mid-year examination and the main end-of-year examination is compulsory.
- (c) A student who, as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances, is unable to take the main mid-year examination or the main end-of-year examination, may, within the period allowed for this purpose and using the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination during the relevant additional mid-year examination or additional end-of-year examination, except as regards the following:
  - (i) a student who was admitted to the scheduled main examination in a given semester (module mark at least 40%) and who obtained an examination mark of at least 30% and a final mark of at least 45% for the module; or
  - (ii) a student who was admitted to the scheduled main examination in a given semester (module mark at least 40%) and who obtained a final mark of at least 50%, but who did not obtain the required subminimum of 50% in the examination.
- (d) A student in her/his final academic semester who must prolong her/his studies to obtain the qualification subsequent to failing a single module will not be considered for a special examination, as special examinations are only considered up to Honours level.
- (e) A student who wrongfully participates in a main examination or an additional examination will receive no recognition for such an examination, and she/he will be deemed not to have participated in the examination.

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<sup>35</sup> The granting of approval to a student who has not obtained the required semester mark is specifically excluded from this rule, as no student will be allowed to participate in an examination without having obtained the required semester mark.

**A72.4 Oral assessment**

- (a) Refer to Oral Assessment Guidelines.
- (b) An oral assessment may, with the approval of the academic head of department, be conducted instead of a written assessment, provided that
  - (i) the assessment is conducted during an officially scheduled examination period;
  - (ii) the oral assessment for each module is at least half an hour per student;
  - (iii) besides the examiner(s), at least the academic head of department or a senior lecturer appointed by her/him is also present;
  - (iv) a digital recording be made of the oral assessment;
  - (v) oral assessments be conducted only at a campus of the UFS, except where the dean grants permission for other centres to be used.

**A72.5 Pass requirements**

If the qualification entails both an examination and a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation or publishable manuscript/published article, each module must be passed with at least 50% to obtain the qualification.

**A72.5.1 Pass requirements, passing with distinction: modules**

- (a) To pass a module, a final mark of at least 50% must be obtained.
- (b) The calculation of the final mark is set out in the module guide in accordance with the following:
  - (i) The module mark (at least 40% for admission to the examination) must be taken into account.
  - (ii) A subminimum of at least 50% applies in respect of the examination mark.
  - (iii) Where more than one (1) paper is written in a module, a subminimum of no less than 50% should be obtained per paper and may also apply in cases where a paper comprises more than one (1) section.
  - (iv) The weight assigned to the examination mark must be no less than 50% and no more than 80%.
- (c) Where a system of continuous assessment – with or without summative assessment – applies, the information is included in the module guide, and a student passes the module when a final mark of at least 50% has been obtained and she/he has participated in all the assessments, unless otherwise stated in the module guide.
- (d) In order to pass a module with distinction, a student must obtain a final mark of at least 75% – in accordance with the same guidelines that apply in respect of the calculation of a pass mark.
- (e) A system of promotion does not apply to Master's Degrees.

**A72.5.2 Pass requirements, passing with distinction: coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertations or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles**

- (a) For a student to pass a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation or publishable manuscript/published article, both of the two (2) appointed examiners must have awarded a pass mark. The dean confirms the final result on the recommendation of the supervisor.
- (b) To pass a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation or publishable manuscript/published article with distinction, a weighted average mark of at least 75% (rounded to the next integer) must be obtained within the minimum residential period indicated by the UFS PQM. Any exception to this rule can be made at the dean's discretion. The modules taken as occasional studies for which recognition is given in the qualification, count towards the residential time when considering a distinction.
- (c)
  - (i) In the case where the two (2) appointed examiners are not in agreement, an arbitrator must be appointed by the dean of the faculty in collaboration with the head of the academic department. The decision of the arbitrator regarding the examination of the original work (and not a revised version), as well as the recommendation reports received from all examiners, will be final.
  - (ii) Upon receipt of the assessment reports from the Examination Administration Division, the head of department may (in consultation with the supervisor and the dean) decide to appoint an arbitrator in the case of borderline decisions, or when discrepancies occur in assessments. The dean approves the appointment of the arbitrator. In these cases, the decision of the arbitrator will be final.
  - (iii) A borderline decision occurs when the final weighted average mark of the student is forty-eight (48), forty-nine (49), seventy-three (73) or seventy-four (74).
  - (iv) Discrepancies with regard to assessments occur when:
    - (aa) there is a difference of at least 25% between any of the examiners' marks;
    - (bb) only one (1) of the examiners did not award a distinction mark;
    - (cc) any one (1) of the examiners does not award a mark and recommends that the document be revised and resubmitted (option 3) or be rejected (option 4 on the prescribed form).
  - (v) The comments of both the examiners and the arbitrator must be made available to the student, only after all the examination reports have been obtained and the final mark decided upon. The student must make the recommended revisions before the final work is submitted for the awarding of the degree.

**A72.5.3 Pass requirements, passing with distinction: Master's Degree research dissertations or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles**

- (a) A student passes a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles, only when each of the three (3) examiners has awarded a mark of at least 50%. If more than one (1) examiner did not pass the student an arbitrator cannot be considered, and it remains a fail mark. If only one (1) of the three (3) examiners failed the student, an arbitrator could be considered.



- (b) The average of the three (3) appointed examiners' marks is calculated for the final mark. An average mark of at least 75% must be obtained for the degree to be awarded with distinction<sup>36</sup>.
- (c) If the student fails, she/he must once again apply for admission and the same research that was previously assessed may not again, in unaltered form, be submitted for assessment.
- (d) To pass a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles with distinction, a student must obtain an average mark of at least 75% (rounded to the next integer, that is 74,5% to 75%) irrespective of the residential time (ECS 14 September 2015).
- (e) Upon receipt of the assessment reports from the Examination Administration Division, the head of department may (in consultation with the supervisor and the dean) decide to appoint an arbitrator in the case of borderline decisions, or when discrepancies occur in assessments. In these cases, the decision of the arbitrator will be final.
  - (i) A borderline case occurs when the final average mark of the student is forty-eight (48), forty-nine (49), seventy-three (73) or seventy-four (74).
  - (ii) Discrepancies with regard to assessments occur when:
    - (aa) there is a difference of at least 25% between any of the examiners' marks;
    - (bb) only one (1) of the examiners did not award a distinction mark;
    - (cc) any one (1) of the examiners does not award a mark and recommends that the document be revised and re-submitted (option 3) or be rejected (option 4 on the prescribed form).

**A72.6      Assessment of Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles**

- (a) A student who intends to submit a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles for assessment must, on the prescribed form and with the approval of the supervisor and, if applicable, the co-supervisor(s), notify the official in the Postgraduate Office at Student Academic Services or, in the case of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus, the Examination Administration Division: Student Academic Services, in consultation with the assistant dean and Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research, of her/his intention to submit, as follows:
  - (i) in the case of the Bloemfontein Campus, on or before the last working day in September of the preceding year in order to graduate during the April graduation ceremonies; or
  - (ii) in the case of the Bloemfontein Campus, on or before the first working day in April for graduating during the December graduation ceremonies.
  - (iii) in the case of the Qwaqwa Campus, on or before the last working day of September of the preceding year for graduating during the May graduation ceremony.

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To obtain the qualification with distinction, all the requirements for distinction must be complied with.

- (b) It is the supervisor's responsibility to see to it that the title of the Master's Degree research dissertation or of the interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have already been registered before she/he approves the notification of submission. It is the responsibility of the supervisor, in consultation with the dean, to ensure that the examiners and moderators have accepted their nominations in writing before she/he accepts the notification of submission. The correctness of delivery addresses, contact details and e-mail addresses of examiners and moderators must be signed off by supervisors.
- (c) Only if the following requirements have been met, can the Registrar accept a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles so that it/these may be dispatched for assessment:
- (i) Notification of submission has been received, provided that the student is registered and would have been registered for the minimum residential period at the time of the submission.
  - (ii) The research proposal, title registration and allocation of the supervisor and, if applicable, a co-supervisor(s), have been approved by the faculty board.
  - (iii) The faculty board has nominated the examiners and moderators and they have accepted the nominations in writing.
  - (iv) A student must submit the research in accordance with the dates determined by the Senate for assessment:
    - (aa) on or before the last working day of November of the preceding year in order to graduate during the April graduation ceremonies; or
    - (bb) on or before the last working day in July in order to graduate during the December graduation ceremonies;
    - (cc) in the case of the Qwaqwa Campus, on or before the last working day in November of the previous year in order to graduate during the May graduation ceremony.
    - (dd) It is possible, however, that due to problems/issues regarding the research, the student will only receive the qualification during the next graduation ceremony and will be required to register for the following semester/academic year. Should a student be required to register again, tuition fees will also be charged. In exceptional circumstances, based on merit, the Registrar may waive any additional fees payable by the student.
  - (v) All fees have been paid.
- (d) Once a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have been submitted for assessment, they may not be withdrawn and the assessment must proceed.
- (e) If an examiner has already examined a research dissertation or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles and awarded a pass mark, the research dissertation or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles will not be resubmitted to the examiner who has awarded a pass mark.

**A72.7      Assessment of coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertations or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles**

- (a)      The submission date for assessment of a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation or publishable manuscript/published article is – with due regard for the deadlines determined by the Senate in respect of qualifying for the next graduation ceremony – determined by the student in consultation with the supervisor.
- (b)      Once a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation or publishable manuscript/published article has been submitted for assessment, it may not be withdrawn and the assessment must proceed.
- (c)      If an examiner has already examined a mini-dissertation or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles and awarded a pass mark, the mini-dissertation or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles will not be resubmitted to the examiner who has awarded a pass mark.

**A72.8      Requirements to be met in respect of the submission of a Master's Degree research dissertation, interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, or coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation**

- (a)      There is no standard format for submission of a dissertation: formatting is at the candidate's discretion. Reasonable-width margins (2–2,5 cm) and 1,5 spacing are desirable to ensure comfortable reading of the text. Consistent referencing should be applied, and there may be departmental variations in the referencing system requirements.
- (b)      For assessment purposes, a student must submit either properly bound copies or subedited copies in temporary bindings, or electronic copies saved in the prescribed electronic format.
- (c)      An abstract of no more than six hundred (600) words must be included at the beginning of the dissertation, coursework mini-dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, together with approximately ten (10) key terms that describe the topic.
- (d)      A summary report compiled in the Turnitin plagiarism search engine must be submitted by the student together with the research dissertation, interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published article or coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation, and a written declaration of approval by the supervisor, at the time of submission.
- (e)      When the student submits the research dissertation, interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation, the supervisor must provide the following:
  - (i)      a letter that she/he approves the submission for assessment and that the submitted work has not previously, either in part or in its entirety, been submitted to the examiners or moderators;
  - (ii)     proof of the title registration, and
  - (iii)    proof of appointment of the examiners, with their acceptance of appointment and their addresses for the dispatching of the examination copy.

- (f) The student must submit the following written declarations:

"I, ....., declare that the Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, or coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation that I herewith submit for the Master's Degree qualification ..... at the University of the Free State is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education."

If a written agreement was concluded between the University and the student, the written agreement must be submitted in lieu of the declaration by the student.

- (g) The title page must include the following:

(i) the registered research title;

(ii) the student's full names;

(iii) a declaration reading:

"Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the Master's Degree ..... in the Department of ..... in the Faculty of ..... at the University of the Free State.";

(iv) the submission date;

(v) the name of the supervisor and, if applicable, the co-supervisor(s).

## **A72.9 Assessment reports**

- (a) Within forty-five (45) days after an examiner has received a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, the Registrar must be provided with an assessment report.
- (b) The supervisor and/or co-supervisor(s) may not peruse the examiners' assessment reports before all the reports have been received.
- (c) The evaluation of all the assessment reports is done by the dean on the recommendation of the academic head of department, and the dean can use her/his discretion in difficult cases. Only when applicable, a faculty evaluation committee meeting can be convened under the chairmanship of the dean. The Registrar must be notified of the final decision by the dean and/or the faculty evaluation committee (as applicable). A report in this regard must be submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee.
- (d) If modifications are required or corrections have to be made by the student, the supervisor and the academic head of department must, in writing, provide confirmation to the dean that all of the requirements as specified by the examiners have been met, subsequent to which the dean has to notify the Registrar of the final result.
- (e) After the modifications/corrections have been made and subsequent to the dean having informed the Registrar of the final result, the student and the internal and external examiners are notified of the result.
- (f) Assessment reports must, at the student's request, be made available to her/him without the marks and without in any way identifying the examiners.

- (g) Within forty-five (45) calendar days after an examiner has received a coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation or article, the head of department of the Postgraduate Office in Student Academic Services must be provided with an assessment report, subsequent to which the dean confirms the final results.
- (h) The Registrar must, when forwarding the assessment reports to the dean, confirm that all rules and due dates have been adhered to.

**A72.10 Plagiarism**

Any matters relating to plagiarism will be dealt with in terms of the institutional rules and policies of the UFS.

**A72.11 Centres at which examinations are conducted**

- (a) A student takes the written examination on the campus or at the centre at which the module was offered, except if indicated to the contrary by the Examination Administration Division.
- (b) A student may, in the prescribed manner and before a date specified by the UFS, apply to take a written examination at another venue.
- (c) A student's application to take a written examination at another venue is subject to the condition that
  - (i) an invigilator is available in accordance with the requirements specified by the UFS;
  - (ii) an application has been received in good time;
  - (iii) the prescribed fees have been paid;
  - (iv) where there are differences in time regarding when the examination commences and when it is conducted, an arrangement may be made with the invigilator;
  - (v) an appropriate venue for the examination is available.
- (d) Taking an additional examination at another centre is further subject to the condition that the UFS is able, in good time, to finalise the required arrangements in respect of taking additional examinations.

**A72.12 Additional time during examinations**

The Registrar may grant a student additional time for assessments on the basis of a written application, accompanied by a medical certificate or on the recommendation of Student Counselling and Development, in collaboration with CUADS.

**A72.13      Errors as regards the examination timetable and submission of research for assessment**

A student is not entitled to any exceptions or concessions if she/he has erred in respect of the examination timetable and/or the scheduled submission of research for assessment.

**A72.14      Examination results<sup>37</sup>**

- (a) As indicated in the module guide, a faculty or a department must make provisional examination results of the main and additional examinations available to students within seven (7) working days after an examination as scheduled in the examination timetable.
- (b) After the final evaluation of the assessment reports or after adjustments/corrections have been made, the Registrar officially informs the student and the examiners of the result.
- (c) Provisional examination results can also be accessed electronically by following a prescribed procedure, and they are also available on the UFS website.
- (d) Students are responsible for obtaining their results before the additional examination.
- (e) Except where the Senior Director of Finance decides otherwise, official examination results are made available electronically to a student.
- (f) A student may discuss the results of an examination, test or assignment with the lecturer and with the academic head of department (irrespective of a student's account being in arrears, but on condition that particulars regarding the results are not divulged). The following procedures apply:
  - (i) The discussion must take place within five (5) working days after the provisional results have been announced. A student has the right to address a justified written appeal to the dean, with notification to the academic head of department. Such appeal must be lodged within two (2) working days after discussion with the academic head of department.
  - (ii) At the Qwaqwa Campus, the discussion is held with the lecturer and the assistant dean in consultation with the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, within five (5) working days after the provisional results have been announced. A student has the right to address a justified written appeal to the Campus Principal, with notification to the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus. Such appeal must be lodged within two (2) working days after the results have been discussed with the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, in consultation with the assistant dean and Registrar.
- (g) For the purposes of the above-mentioned discussion, the student has the right of access to her/his script.

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<sup>37</sup> The academic results of students whose accounts are in arrears by more than two thousand rand (R2000,00) will not be made available to the students.

- (h) If, owing to extraordinary circumstances, an examination result and/or feedback regarding an application in respect of an additional examination is not available one (1) week before the date of the additional examination, a further ad hoc examination may be scheduled with the approval of the programme director and the academic head of department, with written notification to the dean and to the Registrar: Examination Administration Division, provided that
- (i) as regards first-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination must take place before the second semester commences;
  - (ii) as regards year modules and second-semester modules, such an ad hoc examination must take place before the new academic year commences;
  - (iii) all examination results in respect of modules of the first semester have been announced and entered on the computer network prior to commencement of the second semester;
  - (iv) all examination results in respect of year modules and modules of the second semester have been announced and entered on the computer network prior to commencement of the new academic year;
  - (v) any examination result that is received after the above-mentioned dates be sent to the Registrar by the academic head of department – on the basis of written justification of the circumstances and with the approval of the dean, and with notification to the examination committee.
- (i) If a student qualifies for an additional examination or has been admitted to such an examination and the module comprises more than one (1) paper, the examination in both papers must be written during the additional examination in question.

#### **A72.15 Requirements in respect of examination**

- (a) Only registered students who have gained admission to examinations may participate in examinations.
- (b) A student who disregards the Practice Directives in respect of examinations and examination venues is dealt with in terms of the rules applicable to disciplinary procedures, which may result in expulsion.
- (c) Where the conducting of examinations is influenced by differences in time zones, the person must remain under the supervision of the invigilator.
- (d) Tests are subject to the same principles as examinations.
- (e) Departments that use a system of continuous assessment may not schedule assessments during approved examinations.

#### **A73 QUALIFICATION WITH DISTINCTION**

- (a) Except where faculty rules stipulate additional requirements, a qualification is awarded with distinction if a student meets the following requirements:
  - (i) An average mark of at least 75% has been obtained in respect of a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles.

- (ii) A weighted average of at least 75%, rounded to the next integer (that is 74,5% to 75%) has been obtained based on the minimum number of modules, coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation, publishable manuscript/published article, practicals or public defence of research prescribed for the qualification in question.
  - (iii) No module has been failed or repeated in an additional examination.
  - (iv) The Master's Degree research mini-dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published article was not resubmitted for assessment purposes.
  - (v) All components of the Master's Degree have been completed within the maximum of three (3) consecutive years allowed for completion of the qualification.
  - (vi) The result of a discontinuation of a module(s) will not be taken into account for the calculation of a qualification with distinction.
- (b) Where exemption from or recognition of a module(s) from a previously discontinued qualification is granted, the registration period in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be an additional semester/year in respect of the new qualification.
  - (c) Exemptions or recognitions in respect of a completed qualification(s) are taken as additional residential years in respect of the new, completed qualification.
  - (d) Where exemption from or recognition of an occasional module(s) from a previous year is granted, every year in which the module(s) in question was passed, is deemed to be an additional residential year in respect of the new qualification.

**A74 PUBLICATION OF A MASTER'S DEGREE RESEARCH DISSERTATION OR A COURSEWORK MASTER'S DEGREE MINI-DISSERTATION**

- (a) If the supervisor/co-supervisor<sup>38</sup>, in consultation with the dean – before or after the degree has been awarded and subsequent to consultation with the Registrar and on the recommendation of the programme director and/or the academic head of department – grants written authorisation for publication of a Master's Degree research dissertation or coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation, the following particulars must be stated on the title page:
- (b) "This publication is based on research conducted under the supervision of ....., in partial/complete fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree ..... in the Faculty of ..... at the University of the Free State, and is published with the necessary approval."
- (c) Copyright of students' scripts (mini-dissertations, dissertations, theses, etc.) vests in the UFS. The UFS encourages the publication of derivative works of such scripts, preferably in subsidy-bearing publications. Copyright (including associated risks and benefits) of derivative works of scripts shall vest in the student. However, the prior approval of the UFS Directorate of Research Development is required in the three cases below:
  - (i) Contract research: The publication of derivatives of scripts that were developed as part of contract research conducted by the UFS may be subject to certain contractual conditions.

<sup>38</sup> The Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, in consultation with the dean and Registrar, grants written authorisation for publication of a research report on the Qwaqwa Campus.



- (ii) Patents: Some scripts may contain patentable or protectable subject matter with potential commercial benefits.
- (iii) Legislative requirements: The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (No. 10 of 2004) or the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (No. 51 of 2008) may impose limitations upon the UFS to grant certain rights to students.

**A75–A79** Reserved for potential future additions.

## DOCTORAL DEGREES

### APPLICATION, SELECTION AND ADMISSION: DOCTORAL DEGREES

#### A80 APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

- (a) Prior to officially applying for admission to a Doctoral Degree, online or on the prescribed form, the prospective student must approach the academic head of department of the discipline in which the study is to be undertaken to clarify the following:
  - (i) whether the department does indeed have at its disposal the specific specialised expertise to embark on the proposed study;
  - (ii) whether the department does indeed have at its disposal the necessary personnel capacity, and also the physical capacity, to provide guidance and/or to involve other persons from outside the UFS;
  - (iii) whether the application is subject to selection;
  - (iv) the mode of presentation and assessment;
  - (v) the academic prerequisites that have to be met.
- (b) Once approval has been granted for submission of an official application, a prospective first-time student wishing to study at the UFS must apply for admission online or on the prescribed form and submit this with the requisite documents (letter of permission from the academic head of department, certified copies of qualification certificates, study records and certificates of conduct, etc.), and must do so before the date annually determined by the UFS.
- (c) A student registered at the UFS who wishes to continue with a Doctoral Degree in the year after the required Master's Degree has been obtained, must apply on the prescribed form.
- (d) If a person presents a Doctoral Degree in the form of a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, she/he may – bearing in mind the subsidy guidelines – apply for admission at any time during the academic year. However, in cases where examinations have to be taken, applications in respect of admission must be made before the academic year commences and before the registration process ends.
- (e) A student who previously discontinued her/his studies for at least one (1) academic year, or has been academically excluded, must apply for readmission online or on the prescribed application form and submit this with the requisite documents, and must do so before the university application closing date annually determined by the UFS.
- (f) If the degree is not awarded in the applicable academic year, the student pays for the full year.
- (g) The applications of students from other institutions of higher education must include a certificate of conduct, as well as an academic record, to be considered for admission. Students who have been excluded at those institutions will only be considered for admission to the UFS by the dean in consultation with the FAAC, on the strength of justified, written submissions.

- (h) It remains the responsibility of the applicant to ensure correct capturing of all academic data. The UFS takes no responsibility if a student does not receive a final or conditional offer due to incorrect academic data or missing information. The UFS reserves the right not to process incomplete applications received, or to initiate follow-up communication to retrieve missing information.
- (i) The Registrar considers applications (including postgraduate international applications) received after the closing date only in exceptional cases. Only applications submitted online or delivered to the office of Student Academic Services are deemed received.

## **A81 ADMISSION OR READMISSION TO THE UFS AND TO A DOCTORAL DEGREE**

### **A81.1 Admission**

- (a) To be admitted to a Doctoral Degree, a person must
  - (i) already have obtained a Master's Degree; and
  - (ii) have obtained a weighted average of at least 65% (not rounded to the next integer) or, on the strength of special circumstances, have obtained a mark as recommended by the academic head of department and approved by the faculty board in question, in the discipline in which she/he wishes to continue; and
  - (iii) meet any other requirements as approved by the faculty board in question, provided that a person may also be admitted to a Doctoral Degree
    - (aa) with the dean's permission, on the recommendation of the academic head of department and in consultation with the Registrar, on the strength of a qualification(s) that they consider to be equivalent to a Master's Degree; or
    - (bb) with the approval of the dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, on the strength of a standard of proficiency – determined by means of RPL – that is sufficient for the purposes of doctoral studies, with notification to the ECS.
  - (iv) The academic head of department may also require a person to take an oral and/or a written examination and/or to be subjected to an interview before admission to Doctoral Degree studies may be granted.
- (b) A student who was originally admitted to a Master's Degree may, after a study and registration period of at least one (1) year – on the recommendation of the faculty board and on the basis of a written justification – apply to the ECS for admission to and continuation of the study for a Doctoral Degree, provided that
  - (i) the supervisor, the co-supervisor(s) and the academic head of department (via the faculty research committee) recommend the application to the faculty board;
  - (ii) the Doctoral Degree is only awarded after two (2) further years' study; and
  - (iii) the general principle that an early-exit qualification may not be awarded if the student fails to complete the requirements for the qualification, is applied.

- (c) Before any assessment has taken place, a student may, on the basis of a written justification – on the recommendation of the supervisor and co-supervisor(s) and the academic head of department, and with notification to the ECS – apply to the faculty board to cancel her/his candidature for the Doctoral Degree and once again to grant her/him admission to continue with the Master's Degree.
- (d) A person is admitted to interdisciplinary doctoral studies subject to a justified written application for admission from the dean of the faculty in which the previous qualification was obtained, provided that the relevant dean, after consultation with the dean(s) of the other faculty(ies), recommends the application to the ECS.
- (e)
  - (i) In addition to the above-mentioned requirements that pertain in respect of admission to all Doctoral Degrees, the dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar, may require a person to complete certain additional modules before admission, or before the qualification is awarded.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (f) A student who has obtained a Master's Degree in one faculty may, on the strength of a justified written application based on special circumstances, be allowed by the Faculty Board to register for a Doctoral Degree in another faculty.
- (g)
  - (i) In exceptional cases, the dean – on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar – may admit the said student to a single module(s) other than those that are prescribed, provided that it/these are deemed complementary to the specific programme and that the student possesses sufficient knowledge of the discipline to warrant admission to the module(s).
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.
- (h) The responsibility to see to it that a person satisfies the necessary admission requirements lies with the academic head of department.
- (i) An offer by the UFS is subject to fulfilment of the conditions determined by the UFS, and availability of space in the programme during the registration period. The UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer should the processed academic results be erroneous or fraudulent. Should a student engage in conduct which the UFS, in its sole and unfettered discretion, deems undesirable, the UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer.

#### **A81.2 Readmission on the strength of academic progress**

- (a) If a student, after the maximum residential time as stipulated in the UFS PQM, has not yet obtained the Doctoral Degree, she/he may only continue with the study on the basis of exceptional merit and subject to the following conditions:
  - (i) after the minimum residential time as stipulated in the UFS PQM plus one (1) year, upon approval by the supervisor and/or the academic head of department and with the approval of the dean, with written notification to the Registrar;
  - (ii) after the minimum residential time as stipulated in the UFS PQM plus two (2) years on the basis of an exhaustive justification by the academic head of department, to be approved by the faculty committee and with written notification to the Registrar (provided that the stipulations pertaining to the adaptation to new rules have been taken into account);

- (iii) after the minimum residential time as indicated by the UFS PQM plus three (3) years, with the approval of the faculty board on the basis of a comprehensive written justification by the programme director and/or the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar or the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus in respect of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus, provided that the stipulations that pertain in respect of adaptation to new rules have been taken into account.
- (b)
  - (i) A student who is registered for a Doctoral Degree may, with the permission of the dean of the faculty, place her/his studies in abeyance for a period of no more than one (1) year, in exceptional circumstances only and subject to the availability of supervision. The student's application for abeyance will only be presented to the dean of the faculty for approval if supported by the student's supervisor.
  - (ii) The student needs to apply for abeyance before the start of the semester in which the abeyance is to commence, but not later than the last date of registration of this preceding semester.
  - (iii) The student will be allowed to register in the year immediately following the expiry of the abeyance year without having to reapply for admission.
  - (iv) Should the student fail to register in the year following the abeyance period, she/he will have to reapply for admission and this year will be added when calculating the residential period of the student if studies are continued.
  - (v) The year for which the request for abeyance has been approved by the dean, is not included when calculating the residential period of the student.
  - (vi) The decision needs to be communicated to the Registrar for capturing by Student Academic Services.
  - (vii) During the abeyance period the student is not entitled to, nor will receive, any supervision guidance and/or participate in any academic activities whatsoever.
  - (viii) A student only has one (1) opportunity per degree to apply for abeyance.
- (c) Should the study not be completed after six (6) years for doctoral students, comprehensive reasons for further registration must be provided to the research supervisor. The dean/assistant dean, on the advice of the head of the department and research supervisor, can, in collaboration with the Registrar, or in the case of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus, the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research, approve an extension of the study.
- (d) Failure to submit a thesis either at the end of the regular period or the extended period (if an extension has been formally approved by the dean) will result in the registration being automatically cancelled by the UFS.

**REGISTRATION: DOCTORAL DEGREES****A82 SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO REGISTER AS A STUDENT**

- (a) A prospective student
  - (i) registering at the UFS for the first time must, together with the prescribed application form, submit a certified copy(ies) of the qualification(s) on the strength of which admission to the Doctoral Degree is to be granted;
  - (ii) who previously studied at another institution of higher education must submit an official academic record and a certificate of conduct from the previous institution(s) of higher education during the application process.
- (b) Certified copies must also be available during the registration process.
- (c) An international student must:
  - (i) submit to the Office for International Affairs a study permit issued in favour of the UFS by the South African Department of Home Affairs.
  - (ii) comply with all the requirements of the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), and with the regulations issued in accordance with the said Act.
  - (iii) apply to have SAQA evaluate the foreign qualifications obtained by the student prior to the application for admission at the UFS. The evaluation and verification of foreign qualifications include authenticating the status of institutions and the qualifications offered by them, investigating the authenticity of qualification documents and confirming that awards were made to individuals, and comparing foreign qualifications with South African qualifications, considering the structure and outcomes of the foreign qualifications to locate them within the South African NQF (SAQA Application Guidelines and Form, March 2014, based on section 13(1)(m) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), Act 67 of 2008).

**A83 MODE OF PRESENTATION****(a) Doctoral Degree:**

The Doctoral Degree provides training for an academic career. It requires a candidate to undertake research at the most advanced academic levels, culminating in the submission, assessment and acceptance of a thesis. However, candidates may also present academic interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles and papers and, in certain fields, creative work such as artefacts, compositions, public performances and public exhibitions, in partial fulfilment of the research requirements. Coursework may be required as preparation for or value addition to the research, but does not contribute to the credit value of the qualification. The defining characteristic of this qualification is that the candidate is required to demonstrate high-level research capability and to make a significant and original academic contribution at the frontiers of a discipline or field. The work must be of a quality to merit publication. The degree may be earned through pure discipline-based or multidisciplinary research or applied research. This degree requires a minimum of two (2) years' full-time study after completing a Master's Degree. A graduate should be able to supervise and evaluate the research of others in the area of specialisation concerned.

An additional type of doctorate, the Higher Doctorate Degree, may be awarded on the basis of a distinguished record of research in the form of published works, creative works and/or other scholarly contributions that are judged by leading international experts to make an exceptional and independent contribution to one or more disciplines or fields of study.

In accordance with the stipulations of a faculty board, as contained in the faculty rules, a Doctoral Degree may be presented in the form of one (1) of the following options:

- (i) the submission of a doctoral thesis (three hundred and sixty (360) credits), or
- (ii) three (3) academic interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles and papers and, in certain fields, creative work such as artefacts, compositions, public performances and public exhibitions, in partial fulfilment of the research requirements (three hundred and sixty (360) credits).

(b) **Doctoral Degree (Professional):**

In accordance with the stipulations of a faculty board, as contained in the faculty rules, a Doctoral Degree (Professional) may be awarded, for instance: *Doctor of Education*, *Doctor of Commerce*, *Doctor of Engineering*, *Doctor of Law*, *Doctor of Nursing*, *Doctor of Social Work*, *Doctor of Pharmacy*. Candidates are required to undertake a combination of coursework and advanced research, leading to the submission, assessment and acceptance of a research component comprising an original thesis or another form of research that is commensurate with the nature of the discipline or field and the specific area of enquiry. The research component should comprise at least 60% of the degree. Doctoral Degrees (Professional) may also include appropriate forms of WIL. The defining characteristic of this qualification is that, in addition to the demonstration of high-level research, the qualification has a strong professional bias.

- (c) A Doctoral Degree may also be partially (at least 50%) completed at the UFS and the remainder at a foreign (international) university with which the UFS has entered into an agreement in this regard, in accordance with the requirements of the UFS Policy on Joint Degrees with Foreign Universities, as amended from time to time.
- (d) Irrespective of the mode of presentation, the standard of the outcomes must correspond with the requirements of the Level 10 descriptors of the HEQSF.

**A84 REQUIREMENTS IN RESPECT OF A THESIS, INTERRELATED, PUBLISHABLE MANUSCRIPTS/PUBLISHED ARTICLES OR MINI-THESIS**

- (a) The salient characteristic of this particular qualification is that a person must be able to undertake high-level research and make a significant and original scientific contribution.
- (b) The following requirements are stipulated in respect of this study:
  - (i) A thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles are written under the guidance of a supervisor or a supervisor and a co-supervisor(s) (three hundred and sixty (360) credits); or in those exceptions to this rule,
  - (ii) A mini-thesis is written under the guidance of a supervisor or a supervisor and a co-supervisor(s) (at least 60% of the degree).

- (c) No thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles may contain work that is identical to work that a student previously presented for a qualification.
- (d) The requirement in respect of a doctoral thesis is that at least three (3) publishable manuscripts/published articles are submitted. For the Professional Doctorates where the research component should comprise at least 60% of the degree, two (2) publishable manuscripts/published articles are submitted.
- (e) At least one (1) of the manuscripts must be publishable in an accredited journal, or the published articles must have appeared in an accredited journal.

## **A85 DURATION OF STUDY AND COMPILING A CURRICULUM**

- (a) A doctoral student must be registered at the UFS for at least two (2) years (four (4) semesters) or in relation with the minimum residential time stipulated in the UFS PQM for the specific doctoral degree.
- (b) Except in cases where the Council (via the Senate) implements new rules with immediate effect, a Doctoral Degree student may only be registered for the minimum residential period allowed for that qualification in the UFS PQM plus an additional year, with the second period following directly after the first, and she/he must complete her/his studies for that particular qualification in accordance with the General Academic Rules and the faculty rules applicable at the time of first registration.
- (c) A student from another institution of higher education or a student from the UFS who interrupts her/his studies for a year or longer, or who switches to another qualification, remains subject to both the General Academic Rules and the faculty rules that happen to apply at the time of the new registration, except with the dean's approval in respect of the relevant faculty rules on the recommendation of the programme director and/or the academic head of department and with written notification to the Registrar.
- (d) If a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or a mini-thesis is not accepted and the student subsequently re-registers for the Doctoral Degree, the faculty board gives an ad hoc ruling as regards the study period. Written notification of the ruling is forwarded to the Registrar.
- (e)
  - (i) Depending on a student's academic achievements, a dean may, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, grant approval to a student to register for additional modules to a maximum of thirty-two (32) credits, provided that the admission requirements have been met.
  - (ii) If the additional modules fall under the jurisdiction of another faculty, approval is granted in consultation with the dean of that faculty.

## **A86 STUDENT REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION**

### **A86.1 Selection for registration**

- (a) A person who qualifies to register to complete her/his Doctoral Degree by means of a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles must meet the following requirements before being able to register for the qualification concerned:



- (i) Before registration, the applicant should submit a research outline<sup>39</sup> that is considered appropriate by the academic department in which the applicant will be registered.
  - (ii) All doctoral applicants are subject to a selection process, which could differ from one department to the next and the details of which will be published in the departmental brochures for postgraduate selection, and on the departmental web page.
  - (iii) Selection for registration is based on the content and performance in the prior degree, academic merit, bridging arrangements, prior work experience and research ability.
  - (iv) The supervisor, in consultation with the head of department, reserves the right to request applicants to write an admission examination or to enrol for additional modules, or to comply with additional admission requirements when deemed necessary.
  - (v) If the above-mentioned requirements are confirmed to be of the appropriate standard by the supervisor and the academic head of department, the applicant (if required) must write either the IELTS or TALPS test, whichever is required by the relevant academic department and/or faculty, at her/his own cost. The applicant must attain the level of achievement required by the relevant academic department and/or faculty.
- (b) If the applicant complied with all the requirements stated in A107.1(a)(i)–(v), permission will be granted for registration.

#### **A86.2 Registration for the qualification**

- (a) All student registrations are done in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. Registrations for the first semester can take place until the last working day in March, and the registrations for the second semester can take place until the last working day in September.
- (b) Before a person's term of study commences, she/he must annually, during the first registration opportunity, register for both semesters (if applicable) for the period as prescribed by the Senate, and must pay the required fees.
- (c) Within the first ten (10) weeks after registration the faculty will, if it is deemed necessary, present an orientation programme (completion is mandatory) to enrich all students intending to study at this level with appropriate research methods and the required background.
- (d) After registration, the student must work on a research proposal together with the supervisor, except in cases where a research proposal is submitted immediately and accepted by the faculty research committee or the faculty board.
- (e) An acceptable research proposal and provisional title must be approved by the faculty research committee or faculty board, including compliance with the requirements of the ethics committees, within the first twelve (12) months following registration.
- (f) An extension with regard to the submission of the research proposal and provisional title, for a maximum period of another forty-five (45) days, may only be granted with the approval of the dean upon the recommendation of the academic head of department, and with notification in writing to the Registrar.

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<sup>39</sup> Should another approved test, assessment or mechanism exist in a faculty to determine a student's capacity to conduct research in the language of instruction, such test, assessment or mechanism may be applied.

- (g) Simultaneously with the application for approval of the research proposal and provisional title, a supervisor, as well as a co-supervisor(s) (if applicable), must be approved by the faculty board at the recommendation of the academic head of department, in accordance with the faculty procedures.
- (h) A student who wishes to begin, after the registration period, with Doctoral Degree studies that do not include examination papers, may be permitted to register by the academic head of department. Study fees and the minimum residential period, as stipulated in the UFS PQM, will apply.
- (i) When a student submits a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles after the communicated deadline, the student's fees will be adjusted proportionally. The academic year in which the degree is awarded determines the fees charged and payable:
  - (i) If the degree is awarded in time for the student to graduate at the June graduation ceremony, no fees are paid by the student for that year.
  - (ii) If the degree is not awarded in time for the June graduation, but in time for the December graduation, the student pays the registration fee plus 50% of the tuition fees for the first semester.
- (j) Where these steps take place between October and December and therefore do not fall within the official registration period, the student must (at least within the subsequent year(s)) register for the qualification concerned within the scheduled registration period.
- (k) Academic credit is earned only in respect of modules registered for in compliance with the correct module code(s) as indicated in the faculty rules, and for which passes have been obtained.
- (l) Registration for modules at the beginning of the year in respect of the second semester is conditional and remains subject to the rules that apply to modules with specific prerequisites as set out in the rules of the faculties in question.
- (m) On the recommendation of the programme director and/or the academic head of department and with the dean's approval, a student may – irrespective of the prerequisites that apply in respect of undergraduate qualifications – register for the said modules without having complied with the prerequisites, and then simultaneously take the modules at different levels within the same discipline.
- (n) A person cannot simultaneously register for more than one (1) qualification
  - (i) at this institution, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing, with the approval of the Registrar, on the recommendation of the dean(s);
  - (ii) or at another institution of higher education, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing and with the approval of the dean(s) in question, and of the other institution of higher education, taking into account the specific admission requirements, and with written notification to the Registrar as well as the other institution of higher education.
- (o) No retroactive registration will be granted for any qualification.

- (p) A first registration for a Doctoral Degree that entails only a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, may – taking into account the subsidy guidelines – take place outside the approved registration periods.
- (q) If a student has not fully settled her/his account in respect of the previous year, a subsequent registration cannot take place and no supervision can be given or teaching opportunities be attended.
- (r) Conditional academic registration is granted by the UFS only if the Registrar approves such registration. Financial and academic motivations for conditional registration can be considered.

### **A86.3 Re-registration**

- (a) Students who re-register should do so by the end of March every year. No supervision can be provided to a student who did not register by the end of March.
- (b) To be able to re-register for a qualification, a student must meet the readmission requirements and her/his UFS account for the previous year(s) must have been settled in full.
- (c) A student must re-register for the qualification in question if
  - (i) the thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have not been submitted in accordance with the dates determined by the Senate for assessment;
  - (ii) the degree cannot be awarded during the next graduation ceremony, for example if corrections have to be made or if bound copies have not been received;
  - (iii) the thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have not been submitted in accordance with the dates stipulated by the Senate and the qualification cannot be conferred at the first relevant graduation ceremony of the academic year. In this instance, the student must re-register and will be responsible for all fees charged for the first semester. Should a student miss the date for the submission of the thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles (and therefore miss the first relevant graduation ceremony) and the degree is conferred at any other ceremony during the remainder of the academic year, then the student is required to register and is responsible for all fees charged for the first semester.<sup>40</sup>
- (d) The academic head of department, after consultation with the supervisor in consultation with the dean and the Registrar, must ascertain whether a student has in fact re-registered before supervision may commence.

### **A86.4 Cancellation of a registration or a module(s) by a student**

- (a) Notification of the cancellation of registration must be processed electronically or be given in writing.

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<sup>40</sup> Students who enrolled for a Doctoral Degree by research in the previous academic year and are able to successfully submit their thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles in the next academic year, in time for the degree to be conferred at the graduation ceremony for the first semester, are not required to re-register and as a result are exempted from the payment of fees.

- (b) The date on which the cancellation was submitted electronically, or the written notification is received, is taken to be the date of the cancellation of the registration.
- (c) Notification of the cancellation of registration may be given during the specified period in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. In order to receive financial credit, specific due dates apply.
- (d) Cancellation of a module(s) after due dates could imply that a student:
  - (i) is not granted readmission to a module; and
  - (ii) is liable for the tuition fees for the module.
- (e) Cancellation of all modules by due dates:
  - (i) A student who cancels all her/his modules before 31 March will be held liable for the minimum cost charges.
  - (ii) The minimum cost will also be charged if a student registers for the first time in July and cancels all her/his second-semester modules before 15 August.

**A86.5 Cancellation of a student's registration by the UFS**

- (a) A student's registration at the UFS may be cancelled if she/he is found guilty in terms of the rules that pertain with regard to disciplinary action against students.
- (b) A student's registration for a specific qualification may also be cancelled if the relevant dean deems this to be in the interests of the UFS and/or the student, provided that
  - (i) Prior to a final decision being taken,
    - (aa) the dean of the relevant faculty informs the student in writing of the intention, and also of the reasons for doing so;
    - (bb) the student – upon receiving written notification of the proposed cancellation – be given an opportunity to address written representations to the dean of the relevant faculty not to proceed with the proposed action.
  - (ii) The dean, upon receipt of the written representations from the student, may decide
    - (aa) not to pursue the matter; or
    - (bb) to have the student's registration for the qualification cancelled, with written notification to the ECS and to the student.

**A87 REGISTRATION OF PROVISIONAL RESEARCH TITLES AND MODIFYING A RESEARCH TITLE**

- (a) Official title registration must be done in respect of all provisional research titles.
- (b) Modifications to an approved research title may, on the recommendation of the supervisor and the academic head of department, be approved by the faculty board in question.

**A88 SUPERVISOR AND CO-SUPERVISOR(S)**

- (a) A supervisor and a co-supervisor(s), if applicable, are approved by the faculty board on the recommendation of the academic head of department.
- (b) Co-supervisors may be nominated irrespective of whether they are affiliated with the UFS.
- (c) If the supervisor is not affiliated with the UFS in any capacity, a co-supervisor who is in the UFS's employ must be nominated.

**A89 EXAMINERS**

This rule must be read in conjunction with Rule A92.7.3.

- (a) All examiners are nominated by the academic head of the department and approved by the faculty board in accordance with the Quality Assurance Policy.
- (b) Examiners who are appointed by the relevant academic head of department in accordance with the Quality Assurance Policy, and approved by the faculty board, conduct a module examination.
- (c) At least three (3) examiners are required in respect of a thesis, provided that if an internal examiner – who must not be either the supervisor or the co-supervisor(s) – is nominated, the external examiners (persons not affiliated with the UFS) must constitute the majority of the panel of examiners.
- (d) In the case of interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles at least three (3) examiners are required, provided that, if an internal examiner – who must not be either the supervisor or co-supervisor(s) – is nominated, the external examiners (persons not affiliated with the UFS) must constitute the majority of the panel of examiners.
- (e) Examiners who may additionally be required for a practical project or an oral examination, together with the academic head of department, constitute the nominated panel of examiners.
- (f) At least three (3) examiners are required in respect of a mini-thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, provided that if an internal examiner – who must not be either the supervisor or the co-supervisor(s) – is nominated, the external examiners (persons not affiliated with the UFS) must constitute the majority of the panel of examiners.
- (g)
  - (i) Examiners will only be appointed once the student indicates that she/he is going to submit the research for assessment. As soon as the supervisor considers the study to be at an advanced stage, the examiners should be nominated in order to allow sufficient time for the approval of such nomination by the faculty boards.
  - (ii) The General Academic Rules for a specific academic year will apply when a postgraduate student submits her/his final documentation for examination. In exceptional circumstances, justified in writing, the dean – on the recommendation of the supervisor and the academic head of department – may approve the modification as regards the examiners, with notification to the faculty board and the Registrar.
- (h) Except in extraordinary circumstances, one (1) of the assessors must be an international examiner, as approved by the faculty board.

- (i) In the event that an examiner is no longer available, a new examiner must be appointed in accordance with general rule A89 (a) to (h) prior to the submission of the research for assessment.
- (j) A student may not communicate with an examiner.

**A90 SWITCHING QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR DISCIPLINES AND/OR MODULES AND/OR MIGRATING TO ANOTHER UFS CAMPUS/CENTRE**

- (a) A prospective student who wishes to change the qualification and/or discipline for which she/he has applied, must use the online platform to do so.
- (b) A registered student who wants to switch from one qualification and/or discipline and/or module(s) to another must apply electronically for the switch in question and, before a modified registration can be done, must obtain the relevant dean's approval to do so.
- (c) In the case of a module switch, note that the responsibility lies with the student to catch up work that has already been dealt with, and she/he can neither lay claim to any additional help from the lecturer nor expect to be accommodated in respect of notes, assignments, practicals and assessments that have been missed.
- (d) A prospective or registered student who migrates from one campus/centre of the UFS to another campus/centre of the UFS, must apply on the prescribed form and obtain the necessary approval from the dean.

**A91 CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER**

- (a) The Registrar, on the recommendation of the academic head of department or the dean, may once grant a person exemption from or give credit for credits earned through formal learning in a previous qualification or in a partially completed qualification – whether obtained here or elsewhere – with a view to taking another qualification, provided that
  - (i) no more than 50% of the credits may once only be transferred from the completed qualification(s) to another qualification, subject to the provision that
    - (aa) at least 50% of the credits for the new qualification be earned at the UFS; and
    - (bb) a maximum of 25% of the credits accrued at the highest NQF level in the previously completed qualification(s) be acknowledged for another qualification;
  - (ii) as regards a discontinued qualification, all the applicable credits may be granted for the new qualification, except in respect of a student from another institution of higher education, in which case no more than 50% of the credits required to obtain the qualification be transferred – also taking into account the 25% restriction in respect of credits earned at the highest NQF level;
  - (iii) if credits have been granted based on a discontinued qualification, the registration period for the previous qualification and that for the new qualification must at least coincide with the period prescribed for the new qualification at the UFS;

- (iv) a person from another institution of higher education has to register at the UFS for at least two (2) academic years (four (4) semesters);
  - (v) credits from a completed or a discontinued qualification may be transferred to another qualification only once.
- (b) A UFS student who wishes to continue with her/his Doctoral Degree studies at another institution of higher education, or a candidate who is registered for a Doctoral Degree at another institution of higher education and wishes to continue with her/his studies at the UFS, may only continue with the same research after the UFS and the other institution of higher education have come to an agreement as regards the research that has already been done and the subsidy implications.
- (c) With regard to a student who fails to fulfil the requirements for a qualification, the general principle is that the student may not be awarded an early-exit qualification.

## ASSESSMENT: DOCTORAL DEGREES

### A92 ASSESSMENT RULES

#### A92.1 Attendance of teaching opportunities

- (a) Compulsory attendance of teaching opportunities in a module, as prescribed by the board of the faculty in which the specific module is offered and indicated in the module guide or its addendum, is one of the prerequisites for admission to the examination.
- (b) An apology for non-attendance of teaching opportunities on account of unforeseen circumstances must be accompanied by supporting documentation and presented to the lecturer in question at the next available teaching opportunity in the module.

#### A92.2 Module mark

- (a) To gain admission to the examination in a module, a module mark of at least 60% is required.
- (b) A module mark is set out in the module guide or its addendum and is the result of both the continuous and the summative assessments, which are conducted in a decentralised fashion during the course of the module term.
- (c) A module mark that has been obtained in a module is valid only for the next examination applicable to the module in question.
- (d) Except where the dean of the faculty in which the relevant module is offered, in consultation with the particular lecturer, decides otherwise, a student must, in order to gain admission to the examination in a module, meet all the prescribed subminimum and assignment requirements, and must have participated in all the scheduled assessments as set out in the relevant module guide or its addendum<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> The granting of approval to a student who has not obtained the required semester mark is specifically excluded from this rule, as no student will be allowed to participate in an examination without having obtained the required semester mark.

**A92.3 Examinations: modules**

- (a) Two (2) examinations are scheduled per semester:
  - (i) a main mid-year examination and an additional mid-year examination in respect of the first-semester modules; and
  - (ii) a main end-of-year examination and an additional end-of-year examination in respect of the second-semester modules and year modules, except in the case of the following:
  - (iii) where a system of continuous assessment is followed in respect of practical examinations;
  - (iv) where a system of continuous assessment with summative assessment is followed.
- (b) Once admission to the examination has been granted, participation in the main mid-year examination and the main end-of-year examination is compulsory.
- (c) A student who (as a result of justified extraordinary circumstances) is unable to take the main mid-year examination may, within the period allowed for this purpose and using the prescribed form, apply for an additional examination during the additional mid-year examination. A student who does not participate in the main end-of-year examination may also – based on justified extraordinary circumstances, within the period allowed for this purpose and using the prescribed form – apply for an additional examination during the additional end-of-year examination.
- (d) A student in her/his final academic semester who must prolong her/his qualification subsequent to failing a single module will not be considered for a special examination, as special examinations are only considered up to Honours level.
- (e) A student who wrongfully participates in a main examination or an additional examination will receive no recognition for such an examination, and she/he will be deemed not to have participated in the examination.

**A92.4 Assessment opportunities: thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles**

- (a) A student who intends to submit a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles for assessment must, on the prescribed form and with the approval of the supervisor and, if applicable, the co-supervisor(s), inform the Registrar of her/his intention in accordance with the dates determined by the Senate for assessment:
  - (i) on or before the last working day of September of the preceding year in order to graduate during the April graduation ceremonies; or
  - (ii) on or before the first working day in April for graduating during the December graduation ceremonies.
  - (iii) In the case of the Qwaqwa Campus, on or before the last working day in September of the preceding year for graduating during the May graduation ceremony.



- (b) It is the supervisor's responsibility to see to it that the title of the thesis, mini-thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles has already been registered before the notification of submission is approved by her/him. It is the responsibility of the supervisor, in consultation with the dean, to ensure that the examiners and moderators have accepted their nominations in writing before she/he accepts the notification of submission. The correctness of delivery addresses, contact details and e-mail addresses of examiners and moderators must be signed off by supervisors.
- (c) Only if the following requirements have been met can the Registrar accept a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles so that it may be dispatched for assessment:
- (i) Notification of submission has been received, provided that the student is registered and will be registered for the minimum residential period at the time of the submission.
  - (ii) The research proposal, title registration and allocation of the supervisor, and a co-supervisor(s) if applicable, have been approved by the faculty board.
  - (iii) The faculty board has nominated the examiners and they have, in writing, accepted the nominations.
  - (iv) A student must submit the research in accordance with the dates determined by the Senate for assessment:
    - (aa) on or before the last working day in November of the preceding year in order to graduate during the April graduation ceremonies; or
    - (bb) on or before the last working day in July in order to graduate during the December graduation ceremonies.
    - (cc) In the case of the Qwaqwa Campus, the last working day in November of the previous year, in order to graduate during the May graduation ceremony.
    - (dd) It is possible, however, that due to problems/issues regarding the research, the student will only receive the qualification during the next graduation ceremony and will be required to register for the following semester/academic year. Should a student be required to register again, tuition fees will also be charged. In exceptional circumstances, based on merit, the Registrar may waive any additional fees payable by the student.
  - (v) All fees have been paid.
- (d) Once a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have been submitted for assessment, they may not be withdrawn and the assessment must proceed.

**A92.5      Assessment opportunities: mini-thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles**

- (a) The submission date for assessment of a mini-thesis or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles is, with due regard for the deadlines determined by the Senate in respect of qualifying for the next graduation ceremony, determined by the student after consultation with the supervisor, in consultation with the dean and Registrar.

- (b) Once a mini-thesis or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles have been submitted for assessment, it may not be withdrawn and the assessment must proceed.

**A92.6 Requirements to be met in respect of the submission of a thesis, interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or a mini-thesis**

- (a) There is no standard format for the submission of a dissertation or thesis: formatting is at the candidate's discretion. Reasonable-width margins (2–2,5 cm) and 1,5 line spacing are desirable to ensure comfortable reading of the text. Consistent referencing should be applied, and there may be departmental variations in the referencing system requirements.
- (b) For assessment purposes, a student may submit either properly bound copies or subedited copies in temporary bindings, or electronic copies saved in the prescribed electronic format.
- (c) An abstract of no more than six hundred (600) words must be included at the beginning of the thesis, together with approximately ten (10) key terms that describe the topic.
- (d) A summary report compiled in the Turnitin plagiarism search engine must be submitted by the student together with the thesis, interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or mini-thesis, and a written declaration of approval by the supervisor, at the time of submission.
- (e) When the student submits the thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, the supervisor must provide the following:
  - (i) a letter that she/he approves the submission for assessment and that the thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles have not previously, either in part or in their entirety, been submitted to the examiners;
  - (ii) proof of the title registration, and
  - (iii) proof of appointment of the examiners with their acceptance of appointment, as well as their addresses for the dispatching of the examination copy.
- (f) The student must submit the following written declarations:
 

“I, ....., declare that the thesis (or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles or mini-thesis) that I herewith submit for the Doctoral Degree ..... at the University of the Free State, is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education.”

If a written agreement was concluded between the UFS and the student, the written agreement must be submitted in lieu of the declaration by the student.
- (g) The title page must include the following:
  - (i) the registered research title;
  - (ii) the student's full names;

- (iii) a declaration reading:  
 "Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the Doctoral Degree ..... in the Department of ..... in the Faculty of ..... at the University of the Free State.";
  - (iv) the submission date;
  - (v) the name of the supervisor, and the co-supervisor(s) if applicable.
- (h) The following particulars are required for publication in the graduation ceremony programme:
- (i) date of birth;
  - (ii) place of birth;
  - (iii) school at which the student matriculated;
  - (iv) professional career;
  - (v) exceptional achievements;
  - (vi) marital and family details.

#### **A92.7 Pass requirements for modules**

If the qualification entails both modules and a mini-thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, each individual module must be passed with at least 50% to obtain the qualification.

##### **A92.7.1 Pass requirements, passing with distinction: modules**

- (a) To pass a module, a final mark of at least 50% must be obtained.
- (b) The calculation of the final mark is set out in the module guide in accordance with the following:
  - (i) that a module mark (at least 60% for admission to the examination) be taken into account; and
  - (ii) a subminimum of at least 50% applies in respect of the examination mark; and
  - (iii) where more than one (1) paper is written in a module, a subminimum of no less than 50% should be obtained per paper and may also apply in cases where a paper comprises more than one (1) section.
  - (iv) the weight assigned to the examination mark must be no less than 50% and no more than 80%.
- (c) Where a system of continuous assessment applies, the information is included in the module guide and a student passes the module when a module mark of at least 60% has been obtained and she/he has participated in all the assessments, unless otherwise stated in the module guide.
- (d) In order to pass a module with distinction, a student must obtain a final mark of at least 75% in accordance with the same guidelines that apply in respect of the calculation of a pass mark. The qualification can, however, not be obtained with a distinction (refer to General Rule 113.7.3(e)).

**A92.7.2 Pass requirements for a mini-thesis or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles**

- (a) For a student to pass a mini-thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, each of the examiners must have awarded a mark of at least 50%. The dean confirms the final result on the recommendation of the supervisor and the academic head of department.
- (b) If the examiners are not unanimous regarding the result – that is, as regards a pass or essential corrections – the dean must internally appoint an arbitrator, on the recommendation of the supervisor and academic head of department, with written notification to the Registrar.
- (c) The decision of the arbitrator in respect of a pass or essential corrections regarding the examination of the original work and the recommendation reports received from all examiners, will be final.

**A92.7.3 Pass requirements: thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles**

This rule must be read in conjunction with Rule A89.

- (a) For a student to pass a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, each of the examiners must so recommend.
- (b) If the examiners are not unanimous regarding the result – that is, as regards a pass or essential corrections – the dean must, on the recommendation of the supervisor and the academic head of department, nominate an independent arbitrator, with written notification to the Registrar.
- (c) The dean may internally appoint an arbitrator, in consultation with the relevant structures, in the case of borderline decisions or when discrepancies occur in assessments. In these cases, the decision of the arbitrator regarding the examination of the original work and the recommendation reports received from all examiners, will be final.
- (d) If the student fails, she/he must once again apply for admission and the same research that was previously assessed, may not again be submitted for assessment.
- (e) Doctoral Degree qualifications are not awarded with distinction.

**A92.8 Promotion**

A system of promotion does not apply in respect of Doctoral Degree studies.

**A92.9 Oral assessment**

- (a) An oral assessment may, with the approval of the academic head of department, be conducted instead of a written assessment, provided that
  - (i) the assessment is conducted during an officially scheduled examination period;
  - (ii) the oral assessment for each module is at least half an hour per student;
  - (iii) besides the examiner(s), at least the academic head of department or a senior lecturer appointed by her/him is also present;

- (iv) a digital recording is made of the oral assessment;
- (v) oral assessments are conducted only at a campus of the UFS, except where the dean grants permission for other centres to be used.

#### **A92.10 Assessment reports**

- (a) Within forty-five (45) days after an examiner has received a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles, the Registrar must be provided with an assessment report.
- (b) The evaluation of all the assessment reports is done by the dean, on the recommendation of the academic head of department, and the dean can use her/his discretion in difficult cases. Only when applicable, a faculty evaluation committee meeting can be convened under the chairmanship of the dean. The Registrar must be notified of the final decision by the dean and/or the faculty evaluation committee (as applicable). A report in this regard is submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee.
- (c) If an examiner has already examined a mini-thesis, or thesis or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles and awarded a pass mark, the mini-thesis, thesis or interrelated publishable manuscripts/published articles will not be resubmitted to the examiner who has awarded a pass mark.
- (d) If modifications are required or corrections have to be made by the student, the supervisor and the academic head of department must, in writing, provide confirmation to the dean that all the requirements specified by the examiners have been met, subsequent to which the dean has to notify the Registrar of the final result.
- (e) Subsequent to the dean having informed the Registrar of the final result – after modifications/corrections have been made – the Registrar officially notifies the student and the examiners of the result.
- (f) Assessment reports must, at the student's request, be made available to her/him without in any way identifying the examiners.
- (g) Assessment reports of a mini-thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts/published articles must be sent to the academic head of department within forty-five (45) days after the said reports have been received, subsequent to which the dean confirms the final result.
- (h) The Registrar must, when forwarding the assessment reports to the dean, confirm that all rules and due dates have been adhered to.

#### **A92.11 Plagiarism**

Any matters relating to plagiarism will be dealt with in terms of the institutional rules and policies of the UFS.

#### **A92.12 Additional time during examinations/assessments**

The Registrar may grant a student additional time for assessments on the basis of a written application, accompanied by a medical certificate or on the recommendation of Student Counselling and Development, in collaboration with CUADS.

**A92.13 Errors regarding the submission of research for assessment purposes**

A student is not entitled to any exceptions or concessions if she/he has erred in respect of the scheduled submission of research for assessment.

**A92.14 Assessment results<sup>42</sup>**

- (a) If a student is required to make changes or improvements, the supervisor must inform the Registrar in writing when all the requirements set by the examiners have been met. Only once this has been done will the result be confirmed to the student.
- (b) Except where the Senior Director of Finance decides otherwise, official results are made available electronically to a student.
- (c) Assessment decisions should be made transparently, and students must be afforded reasonable access to such information. Assessment reports are not made available to students, but the contents can be made known to the student orally or in writing by the supervisor, at her/his discretion.
- (d) Results received after the submission date published in the UFS calendar for a particular graduation ceremony will not be taken into account for that ceremony but will be held over until the following graduation ceremony.

**A93 QUALIFICATION WITH DISTINCTION**

No doctoral qualification is awarded with distinction (cum laude).

**A94 PUBLICATION OF A THESIS**

- (a) If the supervisor/co-supervisor, in consultation with the dean – before or after the degree has been awarded and subsequent to consultation with the Registrar and on the recommendation of the academic head of department – grants written authorisation for publication of a thesis, the following particulars must be stated on the title page:
- (b) “This publication is based on research conducted under the supervision of ....., in partial/complete fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctoral Degree ..... in the Faculty of ..... at the University of the Free State, and is published with the necessary approval.”
- (c) Copyright of students’ scripts (mini-dissertations, dissertations, theses, etc.) vests in the UFS. The UFS encourages the publication of derivative works of such scripts, preferably in subsidy-bearing publications. Copyright (including associated risks and benefits) of derivative works of scripts shall vest in the student. However, the prior approval of the UFS Directorate of Research Development is required in the three cases below:
  - (i) Contract research: The publication of derivatives of scripts that were developed as part of contract research conducted by the UFS may be subject to certain contractual conditions.
  - (ii) Patents: Some scripts may contain patentable or protectable subject matter with potential commercial benefits.

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<sup>42</sup> The academic results of students whose accounts are in arrears by more than two thousand rand (R2000,00) will not be made available to the students.

- (iii) Legislative requirements: The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (No. 10 of 2004) or the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (No. 51 of 2008) may impose limitations upon the UFS to grant certain rights to students.

**A95–A99** Reserved for potential future additions.

## HIGHER DOCTORATES

### APPLICATION, SELECTION AND ADMISSION: HIGHER DOCTORATES

#### A100 APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

- (a) Prior to officially applying – online or on the prescribed form – for admission to the qualification, a prospective student must:
- (i) Address a justified written submission to the relevant dean.
  - (ii) Attach two (2) sets of certified copies of the scientific publications in respect of which application is being made.
  - (iii) Include an affidavit in respect of
    - (aa) her/his personal contribution to the scientific publications; and/or
    - (bb) her/his personal contribution to other scientific publications co-authored by her/him, which are contributory yet not crucial to the application for admission.
  - (iv) Include an affidavit to the effect that the same set of publications has not previously been submitted to another institution of higher education.
- (b) On the strength of a written, justified recommendation by the academic head of department and the faculty research committee, the application is submitted via the faculty board to the ECS to decide:
- (i) whether the person may proceed with the submission of an official application for admission; and
  - (ii) whether the person may register as a student; and
  - (iii) who must be nominated as a mentor(s) under whose guidance the person has to prepare her/his publications and assemble them for assessment.
- (c) Justified written submissions may be made to the relevant dean at any time of the year.

#### A101 ADMISSION TO THE HIGHER DOCTORATE DEGREE

- (a) To be admitted to the Higher Doctorate Degree
- (i) a person must already have a Doctoral Degree; and
  - (ii) have to her/his credit a distinguished record of published research at an advanced academic level, or creative work, or superb academic contributions.
- (b) A person may also be admitted to the Higher Doctorate Degree on the strength of her/his academic mentoring, with the approval of the ECS and on the recommendation of the academic head of department, the faculty research committee and the faculty board.
- (c) An offer by the UFS is subject to fulfilment of the conditions determined by the UFS, and availability of space in the programme during the registration period. The UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer should the processed academic results be erroneous or fraudulent. Should a student engage in conduct which the UFS, in its sole and unfettered discretion, deems undesirable, the UFS reserves the right to withdraw an offer.



## REGISTRATION: HIGHER DOCTORATES

### A102 STUDENT REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION

#### A102.1 Registration

- (a) Before the mentor(s) gives any guidance, the person must register as a student and pay the prescribed fees.
- (b) A subsequent registration for a Higher Doctorate – if the publications have not yet been submitted for assessment – must take place within the first scheduled registration process, and must include compliance with the requirements of the ethics committees.
- (c) The academic head of department, in consultation with the mentor(s), must ascertain whether a person has in fact re-registered before mentoring commences.

#### A102.2 Re-registration

A student does not qualify for re-registration if the examiners have not recommended a positive result.

#### A102.3 Cancellation of a registration by a student

- (a) Notification of the cancellation of a module(s) may occur during the specified period in accordance with the coordinated arrangements of the Registrar, as approved by the ECS. In order to receive financial credit, specific due dates apply.
- (b) The date on which the written notification is received, is taken to be the date of the cancellation of the registration.

#### A102.4 Cancellation of a student's registration by the UFS

- (a) A student's registration at the UFS may be cancelled if she/he is found guilty in terms of the rules that pertain with regard to disciplinary action against students.
- (b) A student's registration for a specific qualification may also be cancelled if the relevant dean deems this to be in the interests of the UFS and/or the student, provided that
  - (i) Prior to a final decision being taken,
    - (aa) the dean of the relevant faculty informs the student in writing of the intention, and also of the reasons for doing so;
    - (bb) the student – upon receiving written notification of the proposed cancellation – be given an opportunity to address written representations to the dean of the relevant faculty not to proceed with the proposed action.
  - (ii) The dean, upon receipt of the written representations from the student, may decide
    - (aa) not to pursue the matter; or
    - (bb) to have the student's registration for the qualification cancelled, with written notification to the ECS and to the student.

**A103 MENTOR**

A mentor is nominated by the ECS on the recommendation of the academic head of department, via the faculty research committee and the faculty board.

**A104 EXAMINERS**

- (a) Once the student indicates that she/he will be submitting the research report, the faculty board nominates the examiners and moderators, on the recommendation of the academic head of department and the faculty research committee.
- (b) At least three (3) international examiners who are considered to be leaders in the field, must be nominated.
- (c) The examiners must be affiliated with different institutions.
- (d) A mentor is not part of the examination panel.
- (e) In the event that an examiner is no longer available, a new examiner must be appointed in accordance with General Rule A135(a) to (d) prior to the submission of the research for assessment.
- (f) The student may not communicate with an examiner.

**ASSESSMENT: HIGHER DOCTORATES****A105 REQUIREMENTS TO BE MET WHEN SUBMITTING SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS**

- (a) A student must, under the mentor's guidance, prepare an overview of her/his scientific work and append an abstract (not more than ten thousand (10 000) words), and approximately ten (10) key terms that describe the topic of the manuscripts.
- (b) For assessment purposes, the student must submit a sufficient number of either properly bound copies or subedited copies in temporary bindings, or electronic copies saved in the prescribed electronic format.
- (c) A summary report compiled in the Turnitin plagiarism search engine must be submitted by the student together with the scientific publications, and a written declaration of approval by the mentor at the time of submission.
- (d) When the student submits the scientific publications, the mentor must provide the following:
  - (i) a letter that she/he approves the submission for assessment and that the submitted work has not previously, either in part or in its entirety, been submitted to the examiners or moderators;
  - (ii) proof of the title registration, and
  - (iii) proof of appointment of the examiners, with their acceptance of appointment and their addresses for the dispatching of the examination copy.

- (e) The title page must include the following:
- (i) the student's full names;
  - (ii) a declaration reading:  

"Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the Higher Doctorate in the Department of ..... in the Faculty of ..... at the University of the Free State, for the qualification .....";
  - (iii) the date of submission;
  - (iv) the name of the mentor(s).

#### **A106 ASSESSMENT REPORTS**

- (a) Within sixty (60) days after an examiner has received the scientific publications, the Registrar must be provided with an assessment report.
- (b) The evaluation of all assessment reports is done by the Registrar in consultation with the designated vice-rector and (where necessary) the dean, with notification to the Registrar, and with the submission of a report to the ECS.

#### **A107 PASS REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATION WITH DISTINCTION**

- (a) To qualify for the Higher Doctorate, all the assessment reports have to be positive.
- (b) If one (1) of the examiners' assessment reports is not positive as regards the result, an external, independent international examiner must be nominated on the recommendation of the Registrar and in consultation with the vice-rector and the dean.
- (c) The independent examiner's recommendation of the result is final.
- (d) The qualification is not awarded with distinction.
- (e) With regard to a student who fails to complete the requirements for a qualification, the general principle is that the student may not be awarded an early-exit qualification.

#### **A108 PLAGIARISM**

Any matters relating to plagiarism will be dealt with in terms of the institutional rules and policies of the UFS.

#### **A109 Reserved for potential further additions.**

**RULES: POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS/FELLOWS**

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## GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES: POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS / FELLOWS

### A110 POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS/FELLOWS <sup>43</sup>

#### A110.1 Primary objectives of postdoctoral research fellows

- (a) The postdoctoral research fellow should:
- (b) generate new knowledge and transfer knowledge and skills;
- (c) enable outstanding doctoral candidates to obtain experience of research and innovation at a higher education institution;
- (d) expand on existing research and ideas and pursue new lines of research;
- (e) interact with other academics and postdoctoral fellows;
- (f) emphasise an increase in publication outputs;
- (g) develop knowledge for stakeholders such as the government, business, industry and social communities;
- (h) promote national and international conference attendance and the presentation of research papers at these conferences.

#### A110.2 Responsibilities of the hosting institution

- (a) The host academic must ascertain that there is sufficient funding from a bona fide bursary source for a postdoctoral research fellow(ship).
- (b) The relevant host academic/host department must advertise the postdoctoral research fellowship in order to comply with the SARS regulations and interview and select an appropriate candidate, ensuring that the proposed candidate holds (or will soon hold) an appropriate doctoral degree, has an extensive research track record and/or publication record and has experience of delivering papers at conferences.
- (c) The postdoctoral research fellows are not employees of the UFS and do not qualify for employee benefits.
- (d) Postdoctoral research fellows will be registered as research students and will be issued with access cards that differ from those of employees. These cards may, in some instances, be student cards and student library cards.
- (e) The postdoctoral research fellowship can be extended according to the regulations of the Draft Policy on Postdoctoral Research Fellowships/Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

#### A110.3 Responsibilities of postdoctoral research fellow

- (a) By way of acceptance of the postdoctoral research fellowship, the research fellow must submit an application form for registration as a postdoctoral research fellow for the current academic year.

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<sup>43</sup> Information to compile definition derived from Draft UFS Policy on Postdoctoral Research Fellowships/Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

- (b) The research fellow must complete a memorandum of understanding in cooperation with the host, stipulating the general conditions of the award and the research to be undertaken.
- (c) In order to complete the documentation mentioned in (a) and (b) above, a registration process at the UFS must be followed to register the person concerned as a postdoctoral research fellow.
- (d) Progress reports must be submitted according to the stipulations agreed upon.

## LIBRARY RULES

### **L1 Admission to the Library**

- L1.1 Students can only access the Library with their individual, valid UFS student cards and must therefore ensure that their contact details are updated.
- L1.2 The right of admission to the Library is reserved.
- L1.3 Abuse of library privileges by a student will result in the withdrawal of library privileges, possible penalties and/or disciplinary action.

### **L2 Borrowing of material**

- L2.1 A student shall not remove a book or any other matter from the UFS Library other than in terms of the rules and procedures set by Library and Information Services.
- L2.2 Borrower privileges are not transferable. Therefore, a student will be held responsible for all material that is taken out under their name and may not lend such material to other people.
- L2.3 Students must report stolen or lost student cards to Library and Information Services. All thefts must also be reported to the Protection Services 24/7 Duty Room. All lost and found items and student cards must be handed in at Protection Services as well, to assist in locating the owner and returning the lost items.

### **L3 Conduct that will incur fines and disciplinary action**

- L3.1 Fines will be imposed on all overdue and lost books, as managed in collaboration with the Department of Finance.
- L3.2 Students with outstanding fines or long overdue and lost books will not be able to take out any material or access electronic databases.
- L3.3 Unauthorised removal of any UFS material or equipment from the Library will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

### **L4 Library Computers**

Users may not send, view or download offensive, unauthorised and/or illegal material.

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## PRACTICE DIRECTIVES FOR 2022 GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES

The following practice directives have reference to the 2022 General Academic Rules of the University of the Free State.

### CHAPTER 1 – APPLICATIONS

1. The **date** on which either lacking information or documentation in respect of an incomplete application is received, will be taken to be the date on which the UFS received the application.
2. **All South African students** must have achieved a minimum attainment level of 4 (50%–59%) in English or Afrikaans as the UFS language of instruction.
3. **International students** (excluding students who at school received instruction in the UFS language of instruction) must provide proof of language proficiency.
4. **International students** must note that neither a hospital plan policy nor a travel insurance plan shall be accepted in lieu of membership of a medical aid fund.
5. To apply for a **study permit**, a letter from the Office for International Affairs verifying admission to the UFS must accompany the application.

### CHAPTER 2 – ADMISSIONS

1. **Academic advice** in respect of faculty rules (for example in the case of curriculum compilation) given by staff designated by the faculty committee, corresponds to the application of faculty rules and is the responsibility of the dean.
2. **Admission to occasional studies:** To be admitted to occasional studies, a person must comply with the requirements and compulsory achievement levels. Permission to deviate from the requirements in the official mathematics bridging course in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences may be granted by the dean of the faculty in which the module is offered, with written notification to the Registrar.
3. **Admission to modules:** Permission to deviate from the rules regarding prerequisites in respect of a student studying at the Qwaqwa Campus is granted by the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, in consultation with the dean and Registrar, on the recommendation of the academic head of department and with written notification to the relevant dean.
4. **Admission** based on a standard of proficiency is dealt with in terms of the RPL policy.

5. **Exemptions** are granted on the basis of non-formal learning in accordance with RPL guidelines, limited to not more than fifty (50) percent of the modules or courses of the qualification programme in question.
6. The application of a person for recognition of or exemption from modules after her/his **studies have been interrupted**, is considered by an academic head of department and/or a programme director, dean/head of a school or a director of a centre in terms of the applicable RPL policy.
7. **Readmission:** All senior students not compliant with progression rules, or senior students receiving early notification for possible academic exclusion and who are blocked for registration, are to consult with an academic advisor (faculty or general) electronically or face to face according to the academic advising cycle during each academic year, in order to enable registration.

### CHAPTER 3 – REGISTRATIONS

1. The **office of the Registrar** deals with student registrations.
2. No **retroactive registration** will be granted for any qualification.
3. The registration of students for qualifications offered at the **Qwaqwa Campus** takes place at the Qwaqwa Campus.
4. Certified copies of **documents required to register** as a student are accepted only if the following information regarding the Commissioner of Oaths is clearly legible on the document:
  - the full name and surname;
  - the position she/he holds;
  - the place at which the certified copy was signed;
  - the date on which the certified copy was signed;
  - the business address; and
  - the signature.
5. **Certificates of conduct** must contain endorsements regarding the person's conduct and her/his financial position on the date of issue of the certificate.
6. **Language proficiency**
  - All South African students must have attained a minimum achievement level of 4 (50%–59%) in English or Afrikaans.
  - International students (excluding students who at school received instruction in the UFS language of instruction) must take the IELTS Test and obtain a minimum score of at least six (6) in each of the components of the test.

7. A person **cannot simultaneously register for more than one (1) qualification** at this or another institution of higher education, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances (General Academic Rule A13.1):

- (a) at this institution in the case of a student studying at the Qwaqwa Campus, unless the Registrar grants approval, on the recommendation of the dean after consultation with the assistant dean, and with the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, with written notification to the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus,
- (b) at this institution and/or another institution of higher education in the case of a student studying at the Qwaqwa Campus, except on the basis of exceptional circumstances justified in writing and with the approval of the dean(s) in question as well as the other institution of higher education, on the recommendation of the assistant dean and in consultation with the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, with written notification to the Registrar and the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus, as well as to the other institution of higher education as applicable,
- (c) in the case of the BML and the HCert in Management Development, the Director of the Business School grants approval, with written notification to the dean(s) and, where applicable, to the other institution of higher education,
- (d) in the case of the Advanced Diploma in Estate and Trust Administration, the Director of the School of Financial Planning Law grants approval, in consultation with the relevant dean(s) and, where applicable, the other institution of higher education.

8. **Cancellation of registration of module(s) by a student**

- (a) Notification of the cancellation of a registration must be processed through the self-service component of the PeopleSoft Campus Solutions system, or must be given in writing.
- (b) The date on which the cancellation was submitted through the self-service component of the PeopleSoft Campus Solutions system, or on which the written notification is received, is taken to be the date of the cancellation of the registration.
- (c) Students may cancel a module on the PeopleSoft self-service page at <http://kovsielife.ufs.ac.za> or by means of a written notification to the Registrar or to the campus head, in the case of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus.
- (d) To receive financial credit regarding the cancellation of modules, the following due dates apply:

- First-semester modules – up to and including 31 March.
  - Second-semester modules – up to and including 15 August.
  - Year modules up to and including 31 March – 100% credit will be granted; year modules up to and including 15 August – 50% credit will be granted.
  - A student registered for an online programme of the South Campus – up to the day prior to the start of a session.
- (e) If a student terminates her/his studies before 31 March, a minimum cost will be levied as indicated in the Fees Rule Book. The minimum cost will also be charged if a student registers for the first time in July, and if the student cancels all her/his second-semester modules before 15 August.

#### 9. **Switches between modules**

Module switches are recorded through the self-service component of the PeopleSoft Campus Solutions system or on a prescribed form, within the period scheduled for that purpose.

### **CHAPTER 4 – RECORDS**

1. A prescribed number of copies of the student's **academic record** are issued annually to the student free of charge. Any further academic record of the student will only be issued to the student upon payment of the required fees.
2. A student may **access study records and other documents** that are not required for official purposes and are therefore not issued on a UFS letterhead, are not signed, or do not bear the UFS stamp, via the student portal at <http://kovsielife.ufs.ac.za>.
3. **Official academic records, transcripts and/or certificates of conduct** will only be issued to a student when the overdue amount on her/his account is less than two thousand rand (R2000).

### **CHAPTER 5 – RESEARCH TITLES**

1. The **registered title**, as approved by the relevant faculty board, must be entered into the electronic database.
2. **No modifications** may normally be made to a registered title simultaneously with the submission of the research for assessment (a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts / published articles) and before faculty board approval has been obtained.

## CHAPTER 6 – EXAMINERS AND MODERATORS

1. **Nominations** for potential examiners and moderators should be submitted to the Postgraduate Programmes (Research) Unit in Student Academic Services.
2. Examiners and moderators are given **advance written notification of their nomination** and must, in writing, accept such nomination before the research is submitted or dispatched for assessment.
3. **Acceptance of nominations:** The Postgraduate Programmes Unit in Student Academic Services must keep the supervisor informed about examiners' and moderators' acceptance of nominations.

## CHAPTER 7 – SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH

1. After a **Master's Degree** research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts / published articles that were temporarily bound or assembled has/have been accepted, at least one properly bound copy each for the supervisor and the co-supervisor(s) must be submitted to the Registrar. In the case of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus, at least one properly bound copy each must be submitted to the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus and the Registrar. The Registrar signs off on all dissertations.
2. **Master's Degree students** submit an electronic copy of the accepted research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts / published articles directly into KovsieScholar. Should problems be experienced with the submission of the accepted research document, the student can submit one CD-ROM to the UFS Library. An electronic copy must also be submitted to the Registrar. In the case of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus, an electronic copy each must be submitted to the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus and the Registrar, and must meet the following requirements:
  - embedded font
  - one file containing the full text, an abstract, keywords, illustrations and maps
  - PDF format.
3. A **coursework Master's Degree** mini-dissertation or publishable manuscript / published article may be submitted to the Student Academic Services Department: Examination Administration Division by the academic head of department or her/his proxy, to be dispatched to the examiners.
4. **No modifications** may normally be made to a registered title simultaneously with the submission of the research for assessment (a Master's Degree research dissertation or interrelated, publishable manuscripts / published articles) and before faculty board approval has been obtained.

5. After a temporarily bound or assembled **thesis** or interrelated, publishable manuscripts / published articles or mini-thesis has/have been accepted, at least one properly bound copy each for the supervisor and the co-supervisor(s) and external examiner(s) and moderator(s) must be submitted to the Registrar, or to the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus in the case of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus.
6. **Doctoral students submit** an electronic copy of the accepted thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts / published articles directly into KowsieScholar. Should problems be experienced with the submission of the accepted research document, the student can submit one CD-ROM to the UFS Library. An electronic copy must also be submitted to the Registrar. In the case of a student at the Qwaqwa Campus, an electronic copy each must be submitted to the Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research of the Qwaqwa Campus and the Registrar, and must meet the following requirements:
  - embedded font
  - one file containing the full text, abstract, keywords, illustrations and maps
  - PDF format.
7. A **mini-thesis** may be submitted by the academic head of department or her/his proxy to the Examination Administration Division, Student Academic Services, to be dispatched to the examiners.
8. **Failure to comply** with the said requirements will result in the awarding of the qualification being postponed to a subsequent graduation ceremony.

## CHAPTER 8 – EXAMINATIONS

1. The **marks obtained in the main mid-year examination** and in the **main end-of-year examination**, and also the marks obtained in the **additional examinations**, are recorded on the student record system; however, only the best final mark of either the main mid-year examination or of the additional examination and the main end-of-year examination, or of the additional examination, will be reflected on the student's study record.
2. **Applications in respect of an additional examination** must be sent to the office of the Examination Administration Division.
3. A student studying at the **Qwaqwa Campus must forward an application for an additional examination** to the Registrar, Office of the Campus Principal, Qwaqwa Campus.
4. Departments that use a system of **continuous assessment** may not schedule assessments during approved examinations.



**CHAPTER 9 – EXAMINATION VENUES****Requirements in respect of examination venues**

1. A student card or prescribed proof of registration must be produced to gain entry to the examination venue.
2. A student may take into the examination venue only such particular electronic equipment as is specified on the examination paper and as has been communicated in advance to the students by the lecturer.
3. A student may take into the examination venue only such publications as are specified on the examination paper and as has been communicated in advance to the students by the lecturer.
4. Once fifteen (15) minutes from the commencement of the examination session have elapsed, no student is allowed into the examination venue.
5. Students may leave the examination venue only once forty-five (45) minutes from the commencement of the examination session have elapsed.
6. No extra time will be granted to students who arrive at the examination venue late.
7. Each individual student must confirm her/his presence in the examination venue by completing an attendance form fully, and by making the latter available to the invigilator upon request.
8. When an invigilator requests students to do so, they must immediately hand in examination scripts and documents supplied to them at the designated point in the examination venue.
9. A student may not take any pen holders, books of any description, notes or sheets of paper containing writing, cellphones / smart watches / dictaphones or electronic equipment into the examination venue during an examination session. The UFS cannot be held liable for loss of or damage to personal property that is left either in or outside the examination venue.
10. During the examination, a student may not
  - (a) in the examination venue, lend assistance to or receive assistance from, or attempt to lend assistance to or receive assistance from, or converse with any person other than the invigilator;
  - (b) visit the restroom unless she/he is accompanied by an invigilator of the same gender;

- (c) smoke or consume food or refreshments;
  - (d) be a source of disturbance to other students.
11. Full particulars must be supplied on the examination script(s), and a student may not remove any scripts from the examination venue.
  12. To obtain assistance in the examination venue, a student must draw the invigilator's attention by raising a hand.
  13. If an invigilator has reasonable grounds – confirmed as such by another invigilator – to believe that a student may be in possession of inadmissible notes or items, the student may be requested by the head invigilator to leave the examination venue with her/his examination script and the documentation that was supplied to her/him. Two (2) invigilators of the same gender as the student must be present when she/he is informed of the suspicion outside the examination venue. The invigilator then has the right to search the student for inadmissible notes or items in the presence of the other invigilator, and does so in conditions of privacy and in a way deemed not to compromise the student's dignity.

## **CHAPTER 10 – RESULTS**

1. If the result of a Master's Degree research dissertation, interrelated publishable article(s) or coursework Master's Degree mini-dissertation is announced after the due dates determined by the Senate for participation in the next graduation ceremony, the awarding of the qualification is automatically postponed, while the academic record will reflect the date on which the qualification was obtained.
2. If the result of a thesis or interrelated, publishable manuscripts / published article(s) or mini-thesis is announced after the due dates determined by the Senate for participation in the next graduation ceremony, the awarding of the qualification is automatically postponed to the next graduation ceremony, while the academic record will reflect the date on which the qualification was obtained.

## **CHAPTER 11 – GRADUATIONS**

1. When a qualification is awarded in absentia, the student must make prior arrangements regarding the posting of the certificate and must pay the necessary postage.
2. The UFS academic dress is registered with its supplier with regard to colour scheme and style, and is rented from the UFS.

## CHAPTER 12 – QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATES AND AWARDS

1. All Bachelor, Honours and Master's degree candidates at all the campuses/centres are eligible for **awards**.
2. Postgraduate Diplomas are not eligible for **Dean's Medals and Senate Medals**.

## CHAPTER 13 – MODULE AND VENUE TIMETABLE AND EXAMINATION TIMETABLE

### 1. Module and venue timetable

- (a) Curricula, based on the modules offered by departments and captured on the computer network, are taken into account when the module and venue timetable is annually compiled.
- (b) When a student experiences clashes in the module and venue timetable because two (2) or more modules have been scheduled in the same time slot, an adjustment can only be made by taking into account the entire scheduling process, (i.e. the examination timetable, the student's academic record and the possibility of taking alternative modules, especially with regard to modules that have been failed).
- (c) If a student has failed a module(s), it is not always possible to adapt the timetables and the student will have to modify her/his curriculum.

### 2. Examination timetable

- (a) Modules for which students are registered are taken into account to schedule the examination timetables twice a year (mid-year and end-of-year). Once the examination timetable is published, it is the only official timetable. In exceptional cases, and within the said deadlines for feedback, changes to the examination timetable can be requested by academic departments and can be sent to the head of the Curriculum Management Division, provided that the requested changes do not result in clashes.
- (b) Where rescheduling in respect of the examination timetable is not possible, a special arrangement can be made with the student with regard to writing the examination.
- (c) All modules scheduled for examination purposes are scheduled in the official examination venues, with the exception of off-campus modules, where the venue is indicated as "*centre where classes attended*". A request can be directed to the head of the Curriculum Management Division to have a *departmental venue* allocated as an examination venue on the examination timetable, where specific venue specifications are required and student numbers do not exceed thirty (30) students.

- (d) In cases where a student has not failed any modules and her/his curriculum was compiled in accordance with the curriculum requirements, a special arrangement will be made with the student concerning the writing of the examination.
- (e) The UFS recognises the religious holy days as indicated annually in the UFS Calendar and will avoid, if possible, scheduling examinations or assessments for such days.

## **CHAPTER 14 – THE EIGHT-CHARACTER ALPHANUMERIC MODULE CODING SYSTEM**

The eight-character alphanumeric code comprises two parts, namely the subject field and the catalogue number, consisting of four characters each.

### **1. Subject field**

Four letters of the alphabet are used to identify the discipline. The first three characters (letters) of the code constitute an abbreviation of the module title/name and refer to the subject field associated with the module. This subject-field coding holds meaning for staff and students; for example, MATH refers to Mathematics. The fourth character, also a letter of the alphabet, could further specify or narrow down the subject field, for example, Mathematical Statistics is MATS, Applied Mathematics is MATA, and so on. The four letters describing the subject field provide a wider range of options than was the case when only three letters of the alphabet were used. If letters are not repeated, there are 26 options for the first letter, 25 options for the second letter, 24 options for the third letter, and 23 for the fourth. This means that in total there are  $26 \times 25 \times 24 \times 23 = 358\,800$  possible four-letter code options.

### **2. Catalogue number**

The second set represents the catalogue number, which consists of four numerical characters. The first digit is assigned to either an undergraduate- or a postgraduate-level module. The numerical values one (1) to four (4) are thus assigned to undergraduate-level modules leading to Certificates (Higher and Advanced), Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Bachelor's Degrees and professionally-oriented Bachelor's Degrees, using 1 to indicate the first study year, 2 for the second study year, etc. The numerical value five (5) is assigned to postgraduate diplomas and year five (5) of the MBChB programme. Six (6) is assigned to Bachelor Honours Degrees, seven (7) to structured (coursework) Master's Degrees and also to coursework Master's Degree dissertations (mini-dissertations), eight (8) to Master's Degrees by research (Master's Degree research dissertations) and nine (9) to Doctoral Degrees.

The second digit reflects the NQF level at which the module is offered. The numerical values five (5) to eight (8) are therefore assigned to undergraduate-level modules leading to Certificates (Higher and Advanced), Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Bachelor's Degrees and Professional Bachelor's Degrees. The numerical value eight (8) is assigned to Postgraduate Diplomas and Bachelor Honours Degrees, nine (9) to Master's Degrees, and one (1), which represents 10, to Doctoral Degrees. The third digit (where possible) indicates the tuition period, i.e. semester one using odd numbers (1, 3, 5, 7 or 9), semester two using even numbers (2, 4, 6 or 8), or a year module (0). This approach not only

allows for a wider range of code options to be utilised, but also for tracking progression within a programme. The fourth and last digit corresponds to the credit load of the module in multiples of four. If the credit load deviates from this, a zero (0) is assigned (see Table 1 for examples). Although the institutional process of HEQSF alignment and curriculum review led to questions about the rigidity of characterising the institutional allocation of module credit values in multiples of four, both the limited number of digits available in PeopleSoft and the number of digits used to do HEMIS submissions necessitate the use of only one digit to indicate credits.

Table 1: Eight-character alphanumeric module code examples

Subject field					Catalogue number				
QUALIFICATION TYPE	MODULE Abbreviation				YEAR/ EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	NQF LEVEL	TUITION PERIOD Odd=1 <sup>st</sup> semester Even=2 <sup>nd</sup> semester 0=year module	CREDITS Multiples of 4	EXAMPLE
	The first 4 characters (letters)				1 <sup>st</sup> Digit	2 <sup>nd</sup> Digit	3 <sup>rd</sup> Digit	4 <sup>th</sup> Digit	
UNDERGRADUATE (UG)									
Higher Certificates	E	N	G	L	1	5	2	1 to 9 (X4)	ENGL1525, i.e. ENG=English L=Language 1=1 <sup>st</sup> year 5=NQF Level 2=2 <sup>nd</sup> semester 20=Credits (5X4)
Advanced Certificates					1	6	2		
Diplomas					1	5/6	1		
Advanced Diplomas					1	7			
Bachelor's Degrees					1/2/3	5/6/7			
Prof Bachelor's Degrees					1/2/3/4	5/6/7/8			
MBChB year 5	I	N	T	M	5	8	1	0	0=Credits (carries 48 credits)
POSTGRADUATE (PG)									
POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS									
POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS	E	D	U	P	5	8	2	8	EDUP5828, i.e. EDU=Education P=Policy 5=PG Dip level 8=NQF Level 2=2 <sup>nd</sup> semester 32=Credits (8X4)
BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREES									
BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREES	C	E	M	O	6	8	2	6	CEMO6826, i.e. CEM=Chemistry O=Organic 6=Bachelor Honours Degree level 8=NQF Level 2=2 <sup>nd</sup> semester 24=Credits (6X4)

## MASTER'S DEGREES

MASTER'S DEGREES	E	C	O	I	7	9	2	8	ECOI7928, i.e. ECO=Economics I=International monetary relations 7=Master's level (Structured) 9=NQF Level 2=2 <sup>nd</sup> semester 32=Credits (8X4)
	T	L	G	D	8	9	0	0	TLGD8900, i.e. TLG=Theology D=Dogmatology 8=Master's level (Research/Dissertation) 9=NQF Level 0=year 180=Credits

## DOCTORAL DEGREES

DOCTORAL DEGREES (PhD, DSc, DT, LLD, DPhil and MD)	A	G	R	O	9	1	0	0	AGRO9100, i.e. AGRO=Agronomy 9=Education level 1(0)= NQF Level 0=year 360=Credits
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Including the year/educational level, the NQF level and the credit value in the code limits the range of numbers that can be used in the catalogue number area, since many modules have the same levels and credit loads, e.g. a first-year module in the second semester in Mathematics at level 5 with 20 credits is expressed as MATH1525. The required differentiation is captured in the four digits of the subject field and the use of odd and even numbers for indicating the semesters.