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NATIONAL BENCHMARK TESTS (NBT) AND ENGLISH ACADEMIC LITERACY (EAL)

Introduction

As you may be aware, it is normally compulsory for all prospective first-year students at the University of the Free State to write the National Benchmark Tests (NBTs). The UFS uses these results to provide the best possible academic support to students. Based on the NBT results, students may be required to complete an academic literacy development module (EAL) in their first year of study.

However, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are aware that not all students have an equal opportunity to write the NBTs. Therefore, in an attempt to place students in the EAL modules as accurately as possible, the UFS has an alternative algorithmic strategy in place to enrol students into the appropriate EAL modules. The aim of the EAL modules is to provide you with literacy skills that will enhance your chances of academic success.

You may be required to register for one of these modules. Please note that these modules will run online.

Please also make sure you contact the NBT station or your faculty of the intended programme of study to find out whether you should register or not.

If you have written the NBTs, then we will use your results for placement into the EAL modules.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR RESULTS

Lerato Marumo at nbt@ufs.ac.za (Bloemfontein)

Refiloe Tsetsana at nbtqwa@ufs.ac.za (Qwaqwa)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the NBT (National Benchmark Test)?

The NBT is a test of your existing abilities to access (read and understand) and produce (write) academic language at university level. The NBT consists of two different tests:

- The Academic and Quantitative Literacy (AQL) test
- The Mathematics test

What will the algorithm do?

The UFS has created the algorithm for those students who were not able to write the NBT. The algorithm will predict how you would have performed in the Academic Literacy part of the NBT test if you had written it.

If the algorithm predicts a score of 64% and above, then you will be exempted from the EAL modules. If the algorithm predicts a score of below 64%, then you are required to enrol in the appropriate EAL module.

However, if you are a student enrolled or planning to be enrolled in an Extended Curriculum Programme, you are required to enroll for the appropriate EAL module irrespective of your NBT results or the algorithm prediction.

What are the English Academic Literacy modules?

The EAL modules are academic literacy and English language developmental modules which aim to help you develop the necessary language and literacy skills for success at higher education. The modules are as follows:

- Law (first year): EALL 1508
- Education (first year): EALT 1508 and AGAE 1508
- Natural and Agricultural Sciences (first year): EALN 1508 and AGAN 1508
- Humanities, Nursing, and Theology (first year): EALH 1508 and AGAH 1508
- Economic and Management Sciences (first year): EALE 1508

Why is the NBT important?

The NBT is important, because it gives the university an indication of whether or not you need some additional support that might help you to succeed in your studies. If you score 64% and above, then you will be exempt from the EAL modules. If you score below 64%, then you are required to enrol in the appropriate EAL module.

What if I am an Extended Curriculum Programme student?

Extended Curriculum Programme students are required to enroll for the appropriate EAL module irrespective of their NBT results or the algorithm prediction.

What happens if you did not pass the NBT?

If you did not pass the Academic Literacy part of the NBT, you will be required to enroll for an extra developmental subject (English Academic Literacy module) in your first year, which you will need to pass before being allowed to finish your qualification. Please contact your faculty advisers or the NBT office for assistance in registering for the appropriate module.



What happens if you did not write the NBTs?

In an attempt to place students in the EAL modules as accurately as possible, the UFS has an alternative algorithmic strategy in place to enroll students into the appropriate EAL modules. You may be required to register for one of these modules. Please make sure you contact the NBT officers or your faculty adviser to find out whether you should register or not.

I wrote the NBT. Will the UFS use the algorithm as well?

No. If you have written the NBT, the UFS will use your NBT results and will not use the algorithm.

Do you have to register for the developmental subject while waiting for your results?

Yes. However, if you have passed the NBT, you will be de-registered for the subject and you may then stop attending those classes. This way, should you not pass the NBT, you will not have lost out on the valuable first weeks of class.

Where can I get more information?

If you need more clarification on the above information:



Call the UFS NBT office at **+27 51 401 2448 (Bloemfontein)**

Call the UFS NBT office at **+27 58 718 5188 (Qwaqwa)**



nbt@ufs.ac.za (Bloemfontein)

nbtqwa@ufs.ac.za (Qwaqwa)

Alternatively, contact the call centre at T: +27 51 401 2444

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