

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS TO GDC

STANDARD ADMISSIONS, CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER, AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Policy Name:	Undergraduate Admissions to GDC: Standard admissions, credit accumulation and transfer, and recognition of prior learning	Policy Number:	060
Approving Body:	Academic Board	Version:	1
Custodian:	Head of Quality Promotion	Storage:	I:Institutional/InstitDocs/Current/
Relevant Legislation:	<p>Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate</p> <p>Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate (Vocational) at Level 4</p> <p>Draft CAT and RPL Policy</p>	Related Documents:	<p>Application Form</p> <p>Special Admissions Application Form</p> <p>Guide for Special Admissions</p>



1. Preamble.

The South African National Qualifications Framework provides a single and comprehensive classification system for all quality-assured national qualifications. The NQF serves to classify and categorise qualifications, and articulate their specifications and variations. The NQF also provides a vehicle to facilitate access, mobility and progression within the educational system.

Additional legislation and policies support this, including the:

- Admission criteria for entry into higher education programmes
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Credit Accumulation and Transfer

This policy articulates the minimum requirements for enrolment in the undergraduate programmes at GDC with reference to the above. The document further details the procedures for application.

2. Types of application to GDC

GDC recognises three types of application to enrol, which include:

- a) Standard Admissions. This applies to candidates applying for entry in the full Higher Certificate or Degree programmes at GDC, and applications are based on qualifications achieved from formal study at school level.
- b) Credit Accumulation and Transfer. This applies to candidates applying for entry into the Degree programmes with advanced standing, or to have components of the programme exempted, based on credits obtained from previous study. Applications are based on the acknowledgement of formal post-school studies.
- c) Recognition of Prior Learning. This applies to candidates who have acquired relevant competencies through non-formal and informal mechanisms. Such candidates may apply for the full or part of the programmes at GDC, based on the demonstration of competencies comparable to candidates with formal education and training.
- d) Mature age exemptions. Certain exemptions are made for candidates who turn 23 or older in the first year of study. In all cases, the decision to admit an individual applicant is subject to a reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to fulfil and benefit from the objectives of the learning programme and achieve the standard required for the qualification.

3. Standard Admissions

3.1. Higher Certificate

3.1.1. Admission Criteria

Applicants must meet both of the following criteria

3.1.1.1. Completion of the National Senior Certificate. Applicants must be in possession of one of the following:

- i) National Senior Certificate with entry into a Higher Certificate as certified by Umalusi
- ii) National Certificate (Vocational) with entry into a Higher Certificate as certified by Umalusi
- iii) Senior Certificate if the applicant completed school prior to 2008
- iv) An alternative school-leaving qualification that has been evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority as comparable to an NQF-level 4 qualification

3.1.1.2. Competency in the English Language. Applicants must:

- i) Have attained a minimum of 50% in English as a home language, or first additional language where English was the language of teaching and learning in school, OR
- ii) Successfully complete an English assessment at the admission interview

3.1.2. Procedure

- a) Applicants are required to attend an individual interview which can be arranged by contacting the GDC.
- b) At the interview, applicants present evidence of their fulfilment of the admission criteria. Applicants may apply on the basis of their latest Grade 12 results, and acceptance will then be provisional on achievement of the NSC at the required level. Applicants will then be required to present the certificate showing the required achievement level at formal registration at the start of the academic year, failing which they will not be permitted to register.
- c) Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application on conclusion of the interview. Successful applicants will need to reserve a position to secure a place in the relevant programme.

3.2. Bachelor of Arts Degrees

3.2.1. Admission Criteria

Applicants must meet all three of the following criteria for admission into the Bachelor Degree programmes.

3.2.1.1. Completion of the National Senior Certificate. Applicants must be in possession of one of the following:

- i) National Senior Certificate with entry into a Bachelor's Degree as certified by Umalusi
- ii) National Certificate (Vocational) with entry into a Bachelor's Degree as certified by Umalusi. The certificate must be issued in one of the following organising fields:
 - Culture and Art
 - Communication Studies and Language
 - Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology
 - Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences



- Physical Planning and Construction
 - iii) Senior Certificate if the applicant completed school prior to 2008
 - iv) An alternative school-leaving qualification that has been evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority as comparable to an NQF-level 4 qualification
- 3.2.1.2. Competency in the English Language. Applicants must:
- i) Have attained a minimum of 60% in English as a home language, or first additional language where English was the language of teaching and learning in school, OR
 - ii) Successfully complete an English assessment at the admission interview
- 3.2.1.3. Ability to analyse and communicate ideas and concepts through a visual medium. This will be assessed via either:
- i) an existing portfolio of art or design work, OR
 - ii) a drawing exercise conducted at the admission interview.
- 3.2.2. Procedure
- a) Applicants are required to attend an individual interview which can be arranged by contacting the GDC.
 - b) At the interview, applicants present evidence of their fulfilment of the admission criteria. Applicants may apply on the basis of their latest Grade 12 results, and acceptance will then be provisional on achievement of the NSC at the required level. Applicants will then be required to present the certificate showing the required achievement level at formal registration at the start of the academic year, failing which they will not be permitted to register.
 - c) Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application on conclusion of the interview. Successful applicants will need to reserve a position to secure a place in the relevant programme.

4. Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)

Applicants who have studied towards a cognate qualification at another institution may apply for entry into the Bachelor's Degree programme with advanced standing. This is typically for transfer from another institution into GDC's 2nd or 3rd level study.

4.1. CAT Principles

- a) The undergraduate programmes at GDC are not modularised, and the unit of study is a full academic year. Accordingly, CAT can only be considered if applicants have previously completed at least one full year or level of study.
- b) Previous study must have been in a programme that is comparable to the programmes at GDC. Applicants will need to provide detailed information on their programme of study in order for GDC to assess comparability. This applies even in the case where applicants have registered for the same qualification (e.g. a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Graphic Design) at another institution.
- c) CAT is intended for candidates who have studied elsewhere but have not completed the qualification. That is, CAT applies to candidates who have completed two years of a degree elsewhere, and enrol to do the final third year at GDC. Applications from candidates who have already completed a higher education qualification will be subject to the '50% rule'. As articulated in the Higher Education Qualifications Subframework (2013) "a maximum of 50% of the credits of a completed qualification may be transferred to another qualification, provided also that no more than 50% of the credits required for the other qualification are credits that have been used for a completed qualification."
- d) Applicants may apply solely on the basis of CAT, or a combination of CAT and RPL. The latter refers to cases where applicants have studied formally and this has been supplemented by other learning. The typical case for this is studying towards design (for instance completing a diploma) and then augmenting skills with work experience.
- e) CAT is not applicable for the Higher Certificate programme given that it is a one-year, non-modularised programme.

4.2. Admission Criteria and Procedure

CAT applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by a panel of GDC faculty, and there are no standard admission criteria that apply in every case. However, in order to be eligible for a CAT application, candidates must provide evidence of previous study in cognate programmes. The procedure for CAT applications for the undergraduate programmes at GDC are as follows:

- a) Applicants should complete the Special Admissions Application Form and email to specialadmissions@designcenter.co.za.
- b) On confirmation that the application is eligible for CAT, GDC will contact the applicant to arrange an interview. At the interview, applicants are required to provide evidence of both their previous study and their design competencies. The Guide for Special Admissions details the evidence required.

5. Recognition of Prior Learning

Applicants who are applying to enrol at GDC on the basis that they have developed relevant competencies through informal means (for example work experience) may apply through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

5.1. RPL Principles

- a) RPL is outcomes-based. Assessment is done on the competencies, skills and attitudes of applicants, and not on the means by which these may have been acquired. However, in order to be eligible for an RPL assessment, applicants must first demonstrate that they have engaged in some activity that explains how they have acquired the relevant competencies.



- b) All competencies related to the learning outcomes of GDC's programmes are assessed. Thus competencies in both the practice of design, as well as competencies in the theoretical and academic aspects are assessed.
- c) The assessment of competencies acquired through RPL should take into account that learning has occurred through in/non-formal means. The assessment should make provision for the translation of competencies to their formal and structured equivalents, as opposed to replicating assessment criteria used in formal study.
- d) Applicants may apply solely on the basis of RPL, or a combination of RPL and CAT. The latter refers to cases where applicants have studied formally and this has been supplemented by other learning. The typical case for this is studying towards design (for instance completing a diploma) and then augmenting skills with work experience.
- e) The '50% Rule' applies and applicants may not have more than more than 50% of the programme credited through RPL.
- f) No more than 10% of GDC's enrolment may be from RPL admissions.

5.2. Admission Criteria and Procedure

RPL applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by a panel of GDC faculty, and there are no standard admission criteria that apply in every case. However, in order to be eligible for a RPL application, candidates must provide evidence of that they have engaged in some activity that explains the development of the relevant competencies. The procedure for RPL applications for the undergraduate programmes at GDC is as follows:

- a) Applicants should complete the Special Admissions Application Form email to specialadmissions@designcenter.co.za.
- b) On confirmation that the application is eligible for RPL, GDC will contact the applicant to arrange an interview. At the interview, applicants are required to provide evidence of both their design competencies. The Guide for Special Admissions details the evidence required.

6. Mature age exemptions

Mature age exemptions apply only to entry into the Higher Certificate, and the first year of study of the Degree programme.

6.1. If the applicant turns 23 in the first year of study, the following admission criteria apply

- a) The applicant must have passed Matric or equivalent with English as a subject.
- b) The demonstration of the attainment of necessary abilities, skills and knowledge base in order to cope with the programme. This may include the submission of a portfolio of work undertaken over a specified period of time and completion of written, theoretical assignments.

6.2. If the applicant is turning 45 or older in first year of study, the applicant must demonstrate the necessary abilities, skills and knowledge base in order to cope with the programme. This may include the submission of a portfolio of work undertaken over a specified period of time and completion of written, theoretical assignments.

7. Admission Outcomes

The following are possible outcomes of applications:

- a) Accepted for entry into the Higher Certificate or Degree programme
- b) Accepted into the Degree programme with advanced standing (level of study to be advised)
- c) Accepted into the Degree programme with exemptions from subjects (subjects to be advised)
- d) Accepted into the Degree programme with advanced standing and exemptions from subjects (level of study and subjects to be advised)
- e) Accepted into a level lower than was applied for (with or without subject exemptions)
- f) Not accepted, enrolment at GDC not advised

8. Successful Admissions

- a) Successful applicants will be issued with a letter confirming their acceptance and specifying any conditions or exemptions.
- b) Successful applicants will receive a Reservation Form which must be completed and submitted with a reservation fee to secure a position at GDC. Reservations are conducted on a first-come-first-serve basis.

9. Delayed registrations and re-registration

9.1. Delayed registration

Acceptance into a programme is for a given calendar year. Applicants that delay their registration to the next calendar year or later may be required to undergo another admission interview.

9.2. Re-registration after failure

In the event of a failure of module or level of study, students may re-register for the same module or level of study once only within a four year period. I.E. if a student fails the same module or level of study twice, they will not be permitted to re-register at GDC for the same course within the next four years. Thereafter, applicants will be required to undergo an admission interview to assess the most appropriate level of entry into the programme.



9.3. Re-registration within a qualification after a leave of absence

Students taking leave of one or more years before completion of a whole qualification may be asked to undergo an admission interview in order to assess appropriate level for re-admission. Positions for re-admission cannot be guaranteed after a Leave of Absence. Criteria to be considered when granting Re-Admission after Leave of Absence

- a) Length of leave of absence
- b) Professional / academic activities engaged in during leave of absence
- c) Changes to course and/or curriculum

The decision to grant a re-admission after a Leave of Absence will be made by the Head of Academic Planning after due consultation with the relevant academic and administrative staff at GDC.

10. Version History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By:	Nature of Amendments
1	May 2016	Academic Board	Replaces the previous Admissions Policy document

