

**University of Pretoria
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Department of Animal and Wildlife Sciences**

Date: March 2017

Degree programme: **BScAgric (Animal and Pasture Science) 02133432**

Proposal to temporarily suspend the degree programme as from 2018 in order to restructure and align it with the HEQSF requirements.

1 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND MOTIVATION

The BScAgric (Animal and Pasture Science) degree is currently part of the degree programmes offered in the Department of Animal and Wildlife Sciences. The degree was originally structured to accommodate students with an interest in pasture science and a postgraduate study in pasture science. The first two years of the degree was similar to the BScAgric (Animal Science) degree with an additional prescribed module in botany, resulting in a relatively high credit load. In the third and fourth year the curriculum differed and the Pasture Science option included no modules in biometry, animal breeding or poultry science as these were replaced with soil science and crop physiology. At final-year level there were always timetable issues due to the inclusion of GKD 350 as a core module in the final (fourth) year.

The omission of BME 210 in the third year has created numerous problems over the years as students who wanted to continue with a master's degree then had to add the module either in the final year (resulting in lecture clashes) or at postgraduate level. The Animal and Pasture Science option also did not include GTS 251 in the second year which was made a prerequisite for GTS 261 since 2014. The inclusion of GTS 251 in the curriculum is currently not possible because it will result in an unacceptable credit load of 171 in the second year.

A further constraint with the Animal and Pasture science degree is the fact that the curriculum in the final year does not include animal breeding or poultry science. Students with this degree end up in the animal feed industry without any poultry science. It is a requirement for registration as a Professional Animal Scientist to have competencies in the three major disciplines, animal nutrition, animal physiology and animal breeding. Students may experience limitations with registration in the animal science category and registration in the agricultural category will be recommended. The danger of this current combination of animal science and pasture science lies in omission of fundamentals of both the disciplines and producing graduates that do not meet the requirements of either the livestock or the pasture/crop industry.

Over the past six years the intake in this degree seems impressive, but only a few students remain in the programme as demonstrated in the table below. It seems that they change to animal science once they have had the opportunity in their second year to engage with senior animal science students and are exposed to the industry.

Table 1 Statistics of the intake vs graduates for the BScAgric (Animal and Pasture Science) students for the period 2011 to 2016

Year	Intake first year	Graduates final year
2011	22	2
2012	41	2
2013	49	8
2014	41	7
2015	27	6
2016	22	3

The degree in the current format requires serious restructuring in order to ensure that the qualification has academic merit, aligns with HEQSF requirements and offers students an outcome that will adequately prepare them for postgraduate studies in Pasture Sciences as well as potential for employment in the agricultural industry.

2 PROPOSAL

It is proposed that the degree programme BScAgric (Animal and Pasture Science) 02133432 temporarily be suspended as from 2018 and that it be restructured and aligned with the HEQSF requirements.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No students will register for the degree in 2018. It is not foreseen that there will be significant financial implications as prospective students can register for the BScAgric (Animal Science) instead.

4 TIMETABLE AND SPACE IMPLICATIONS

Timetable clashes will be reduced for 2018.

5 STAFF IMPLICATIONS

None

6 TRANSITIONAL MEASURES

Students who registered for the degree in 2017 were required to register for the additional GTS 251 and are advised to register for BME 210 if they have an interest in postgraduate studies.

7 CONSULTATION WITH OTHER FACULTIES/DEPARTMENTS

The modules are presented within the Faculty, therefore consultation only had to take place with the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences.

8 YEARBOOK IMPLICATIONS

Note: A closing date is to be added by the Applications Division to prevent students from registering for the programme in 2018.

Although students will not be able to register for the BScAgric (Animal and Pasture Science) 02133432 in 2018, programme information will still be displayed in the 2018 online yearbook due to system requirements.

The following note will be added for 2018 and is to be removed once the programme has been made available for enrolment purposes again:

Degree temporarily suspended as from 2018 – until further notice

Prof EC Webb
Head of Department