

University of Pretoria Yearbook 2025

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

Faculty regulations and information

The regulations for the degrees published here are subject to change and may be amended after the publication of this information.

The General Academic Regulations and Student Rules apply to all faculties and registered students of the University, as well as all prospective students who have accepted an offer of a place at the University of Pretoria. On registering for a programme, the student bears the responsibility of ensuring that they familiarise themselves with the General Academic Regulations applicable to their registration, as well as the relevant faculty-specific and programme-specific regulations and information as stipulated in the relevant yearbook. Ignorance concerning these regulations will not be accepted as an excuse for any transgression, or basis for an exception to any of the aforementioned regulations.

1. BACHELOR'S DEGREES

1.1 Admissions

1.1.1 Transferring student (Also consult General Academic Regulation G1)

1.1.1.1 Definition of a transferring student

A transferring student is a student who, at the time of application for a degree programme at the University of Pretoria (UP) –

- a. is a registered student at another tertiary institution, or
- b. was previously registered at another tertiary institution and did not complete the programme enrolled for at that institution, and is not currently enrolled at a tertiary institution, or
- c. has completed studies at another tertiary institution, but is not currently enrolled at a tertiary institution;
- d. has started with tertiary studies at UP, then moved to another tertiary institution and wants to be readmitted at UP.

1.1.1.2 Guidelines for admission of transferring students to degree programmes at UP

A transferring student will be considered for admission based on

- a. an NSC or equivalent qualification with exemption to bachelor's or diploma studies (whichever is applicable); and
- b. meeting the minimum faculty-specific programme and subject requirements at NSC or tertiary level; or
- c. having completed a higher certificate at a tertiary institution with faculty-specific subjects/modules passed (equal to or more than 50%), as well as complying with faculty rules on admission;
- d. previous academic performance (must have passed all modules registered for up to the closing date of application) (preference will be given to students who passed modules on first attempt) or as per faculty regulation/promotion requirements;
- e. a certificate of good conduct;
- f. certificate of financial good standing.

Note:

- a. Students need to familiarise themselves with additional programme specific requirements.
- b. Students who have been dismissed at the previous institution due to poor academic performance, will not be considered for admission to UP.
- c. Admission of transferring students will always depend on the availability of space in the programme and the respective faculty.
- d. Transferring students who do not meet the guideline as described under 1.1.1.2 (d) above, may be conditionally admitted only if the prerequisites of the module/s in the applied for programme are met. If students do not meet the set conditions, they will not qualify for transfer to the University of Pretoria.
- e. Students transferring from other universities must adhere to General Academic Regulation G9.4 before the degree may be awarded by the University of Pretoria.

1.1.2 Returning students (Also consult General Academic Regulation G1)

1.1.2.1 Definition of a returning student

A returning student is a student who, at the time of application for a degree programme

- a. is a registered student at UP, and wants to transfer to another degree at UP, or
- b. was previously registered at UP and did not complete the programme enrolled for, and did not enrol at another tertiary institution in the meantime (including students who applied for leave of absence), or
- c. has completed studies at UP, but is not currently enrolled or was not enrolled at another tertiary institution after graduation.

1.1.2.2 Guidelines for admission of returning students to degree programmes at UP

A returning student will be considered for admission based on

- a. an NSC or equivalent qualification with exemption to bachelor's or diploma studies (whichever is applicable); and
- b. meeting the minimum faculty-specific programme and subject requirements at NSC or tertiary level; or
- c. previous academic performance (should have a cumulative weighted average of at least 50% for the programme enrolled for).
- d. Confirmation of certificate of good standing as well as good financial standing.
- e. having applied and was granted leave of absence.

Note:

- a. Students need to familiarise themselves with additional programme specific requirements.
- b. Students who have been excluded/dismissed from a faculty due to poor academic performance may be considered for admission to another programme at UP, as per at least one of the guidelines above. The Faculty Admissions Committee may consider such students if they were not dismissed more than once and if they meet specific relevant module performance criteria.
- c. Only one (1) transfer between UP faculties will be allowed, and a maximum of two (2) transfers within a faculty.
- d. Admission of returning students will always depend on the availability of space in the programme and the respective faculty.
- e. Returning students who do not meet the guideline as described under 1.1.2.2 above may be conditionally admitted only if the prerequisites of the module/s in the applied for programme are met. If students do not meet the set conditions, they will not be permitted to return.
- f. Confirmation of certificate of good standing as well as good financial standing.
- g. Leave of absence may be granted for a maximum of 12 months (1 academic year).

1.1.3 Readmission after interruption of studies (Also consult General Academic Regulation A12)

- Where a student's studies are interrupted for a year (except where leave of absence was granted), or longer, such student must apply for re-admission as outlined in the General Academic Regulations A12.
- A student who fails to renew their registration for a degree within five years of first registration for the degree will need to obtain written permission from all heads of department confirming acceptance of validity of previously passed modules (see G8).

1.2 Registration

1.2.1 Requirements and composition of study programme (Also consult General Academic Regulations A2 and G2)

The Dean may under special conditions, on the recommendation of the head of department, approve deviations with regard to the curriculum to a maximum of 36 elective module credits prior to registration.

1.2.2 Application of amended programme regulations (Consult General Academic Regulation G5)

1.2.3 Maximum credit load (Also consult General Academic Regulation A9)

- A student may not register for more than 160 module credits per year with a maximum of 90 of those module credits taken in any one of the semesters.
- Subject to permission by the Dean, a student can apply to take further additional module credits, but still limited to a maximum of 90 module credits in one semester.

1.2.4 Concurrent registration for two fields of study (Consult the General Academic Regulation G6)

Modules passed towards one of the two degree programmes cannot be credited for the other degree.

1.3 Prerequisites

- It remains the student's responsibility to ascertain, prior to registration, whether they comply with the prerequisites of the modules they want to register for.
- Students are also advised to check prerequisites for modules they plan on registering for in the following year to ensure that they register for and pass the prerequisite module/s.
- A student who qualified for the supplementary examination in the current semester will be deemed to have met the GS requirement. The Dean in consultation with the Head of Department will only in exceptional circumstances consider a waiver of prerequisites.

1.4 Repeating of modules (Also consult General Academic Regulation G11.2)

- A student who fails a module must repeat the module in the next academic year, unless the module is presented during the Summer or Winter School.
- Modules may only be repeated once.
- The Dean, based on the student's academic record, may exercise discretion to allow the student a third opportunity to register for a module.
- Modules that have been passed may not be repeated.

1.5 Recognition of modules (Also consult General Academic Regulations G8 and G9)

- Students who are already in possession of a bachelor's degree, will not receive credit for modules of which the content overlaps with modules from the degree that was already conferred.
- Credits will not be considered for more than 25% of the credits passed previously for an uncompleted degree.
- UP students should get prior permission in writing from the department and inform the faculty before they register for modules at other institutions for completion of degree requirements at UP.
- Dependent on module content credit will be granted for modules passed at another institution, however 50%

of the modules must be completed at UP.

1.6 Examinations (Also consult the General Academic Regulation G12)

Please note:

- Some modules in NAS are completed via continuous assessment only and therefore do not have summative exams and supplementary exams. Please consult study guides for the module-specific requirements. A pass mark of 50% is required; students who fail to achieve this may be offered an additional assessment opportunity according to departmental-specific criteria.
- The requirements for admission to the examination are published in the study guide and the relevant department is required to inform students of the specific requirements at the beginning of each module.
- The final mark for the module is a combination of the year or semester mark and the examination mark, with the proviso that a module can only be passed if a subminimum of 40% is obtained in the examination and the practical component (if applicable) of the module has been satisfactorily completed. The year or semester mark must contribute 40%-60% and the examination mark must contribute 40%-60% to the final mark (G 11.1). Deviations from this rule can be approved by the Dean. The formula that is used to determine the final mark will be specified in the study guide of the module.

1.6.1 Examination admission and pass requirements

- A final mark of at 50% is required to pass a module.
- Core and elective modules in the fixed curriculum: A minimum semester/year mark of 40% is required for admission to the examination in all modules.
- Class attendance is compulsory for all students in all modules for the full duration of all programmes. A student may be refused admission to the examination or promotion to a subsequent year of study if they fail to comply with the attendance requirements.
- In certain modules, e.g. those with practical components, a department may stipulate additional requirements for students to be admitted to the examination. These requirements must be published in the study guide of the module. A student may be refused admission to the examination in a module by the head of the relevant department should the student not comply with these requirements.

1.6.2 Special examinations (Also consult General Academic Regulation G12.4)

- Special exams will be scheduled on the same date as the supplementary exam in the corresponding module but will be a full exam equivalent to the main exam.
- Additional exams are not arranged for students who are unable to write the special examinations at the scheduled times or students who fail the special exam.

1.6.3 Supplementary examinations (Also consult General Academic Regulation G12.3)

- Qualifying for a supplementary exam may be considered for students with a mark of 40%-49%. Module-specific criteria will be stipulated in the study guide.
- Students who obtained a final mark of at least 50% but who do not meet the required examination subminimum must be granted a supplementary exam.
- To pass a supplementary examination, a student must obtain a minimum of 50%.
- The highest final percentage a student can obtain in a supplementary examination is 50%.
- If a student fails the supplementary examination, the mark obtained in the supplementary examination will be recorded as the final mark for the module.
- Special supplementary examinations are not arranged for students who are unable to write the examinations at the times and venues scheduled for supplementary examinations.

1.6.4 Chancellor's examinations in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (Also consult General Academic Regulation G12.5)

- A student who requires a maximum of not more than 36 credits to comply with all the requirements for the degree may apply for a chancellor's examination at the end of the first or second semester.
- The application will be considered by the Dean, on recommendation by the head of department.
- A student who has obtained a final mark of less than 40% in any one of the relevant modules, or who has previously been admitted to a chancellor's examination, does not qualify for this concession.
- Students who qualified for a supplementary examination in a failed module will be considered for a chancellor's examination

Additional information about the application process will be available on the NAS Student Administration webpage.

1.6.5 Perusal and re-marking of examination papers (Consult General Academic Regulation G14)

1.7 Progression requirements (Also consult General Academic Regulation A8)

- A student must pass all the prescribed fundamental, core and elective module credits as set out for each year of the programme in order to be promoted to the next level of study. Please refer to the curricula of the respective programmes.
- Higher level module credits cannot be used at a lower level of study.

1.8 Minimum and maximum duration of study (Also consult General Academic Regulations A2.5, G3 and G7)

A student must be able to complete the programme for which they are re-registering, within the prescribed minimum period (years = N) plus one year (N+1), on a case by case basis approval may be granted for completion in the minimum prescribed period plus two years (N+2).

1.9 Exclusion, dismissal, deregistration of modules and leave of absence (Also consult General Academic Regulation G4)

All students whose academic progress is not acceptable as stipulated in the General Academic Regulations G3.2 can be excluded or dismissed from further studies.

1.9.1 Exclusion and dismissal

- A student who is excluded from further studies in terms of the stipulations of the above mentioned regulations, will be notified in writing by the Dean or Examinations Committee at the end of the relevant semester.
- A student who has been excluded from further studies may apply in writing to the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Student Administration for re-admission via the appeals portal.
- Should the student be re-admitted by the Faculty Appeals Committee, strict conditions will be set which the student must comply with in order to proceed with their studies.
- Should the student not be re-admitted to further studies by the Faculty Appeals Committee, they will be informed in writing.
- Students who are not re-admitted by the Faculty Appeals Committee have the right to take the decision on review to the Senate Review Committee on Re-admission.
- Any decision taken by the Senate Review Committee on Re-admission is final.

1.9.2 Deregistration of modules (Consult General Academic Regulation G4.2)

1.9.3 Leave of absence (Consult General Academic Regulation G4.3)

1.10 Recognition of excellence

1.10.1 Criteria for eligibility

To qualify for the awards the following criteria must be met:

- a. Dean's Merit List

The student will be considered if they have passed all first-time registered modules as prescribed for a programme at each year level of study (100-, 200-, 300-, or 400-level) for that year with a weighted average of 75% (not rounded).

1.11 Compliance with qualification requirements and privileges, and qualification with distinction (Consult with General Academic Regulation G15)

1.11.1 Qualification with distinction

A student obtains their degree with distinction if they complete the degree in minimum time and all prescribed modules at final year level are passed with a weighted average of at least 75% (not rounded), and if at least 65% is obtained in each of the relevant modules (core and elective) in the curriculum of the programme.

2 HONOURS DEGREES

2.1 Admission (Also consult General Academic Regulations G16-G29)

- a. The candidate must have an Advanced Diploma, BTech, or undergraduate degree with a minimum of 60% (see departmental websites for specific departmental requirements) in the broad area of specialisation that the candidate wishes to pursue for an honours programme.
- b. The student will be given acceptance to an honours programme, but on a case by case basis conditional acceptance in order to align the student's undergraduate training with the outcomes expected of a BSc graduate. The student may be expected to undertake additional coursework at NQF level 7 registered for non-degree purposes.
- c. The head of department concerned will be required to identify specific modules.
- d. Confirmation of candidature for acceptance will be based on the successful completion of the additional module requirements if any during the one year of registration for these modules.

2.1.1 Procedure

- a. The candidate must submit an official online application form, together with a motivation, matriculation certificate, academic record and a short CV. The CV should include details of relevant work experience and, where applicable, any publications.
- b. In the case of (2.1 b), the candidate must submit an official online application form, together with all required documentation a motivation, matriculation certificate, academic record and a short CV. The CV should include details of relevant work experience and, where applicable, any publications.
- c. The head of department has to identify and prescribe modules as set out in 1 above.
- d. The application is submitted via the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee and the Faculty Board.

2.2 Qualification with distinction

A student obtains their degree with distinction if they satisfy all the conditions below:

- a. They complete the degree in minimum time;
- b. They achieve a weighted average of at least 75% (not rounded) across all modules;
- c. Their final mark for each credit-bearing module is at least 65%.

2.3 Minimum and maximum duration of study

Candidates are required to familiarise themselves with the General Academic Regulations G16-G29 regarding the maximum period of registration and other requirements for honours degrees. As indicated in General Academic Regulation G18, the duration of an honours degree is one year. The latter is applicable to students registered full-

time. In exceptional cases, an extension for a second year may be granted to accommodate extended periods of illness or where a limited number of modules need to be repeated (see 2.4 and 2.5 below and G25.2). Extensions or repeating of modules must be motivated, recommended by the Head of Department, and approved by the Dean. Project modules may not be repeated unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances.

Prospective students working full-time may be granted the opportunity to complete the degree on a part-time basis (where feasible in the specific programme). Students approved for part-time study must complete the degree within two years. The same fee structure will apply for full time and part time studies.

2.4 Assessment and related matters (see G24-29)

- a. In order to complete an honours degree, a minimum of 50% must be obtained in all modules.
- b. As outlined in programme or module guides, coursework modules at honours level in NAS are completed through continuous assessment, or via semester grades and summative examinations. For modules completed through continuous assessment, departments may offer students an additional assessment opportunity to achieve 50%. For modules completed via summative exams, departments must specify the minimum performance required for examination entrance, as well as criteria for qualifying for a supplementary exam. Departments will set the maximum number of supplementary exams that may be written by a student. For research project modules the external examiner may recommend improvements to be made to a research report prior to a pass mark being awarded.
- c. Departments may set progression requirements linked to satisfactory academic performance.

2.5 Exclusion or dismissal (refer to G19)

- a. A student will be excluded if (i) progression requirements are not met, or (ii) they fail to complete the honours programme in minimum time (one-year for full-time, or two years for part-time).
- b. Students who were excluded from their programme and wish to be readmitted should:

- Write a letter of motivation detailing the extenuating circumstances which lead to their poor performance approved by the department's honours coordinator;
- Provide substantiating independent evidence of their circumstances;
- Draw up a completion plan outlining how they intend to complete their degree in the forthcoming year;
- Submit the completed documentation to NAS Student Administration for review by the NAS PG Appeals Committee;
- Readmitted students must adhere to the specified readmission conditions;
- Students whose appeals are rejected by the NAS PG Appeals Committee may escalate to the Senate Research Committee. The decision of the Senate Committee is final.

3 MASTER'S DEGREES

3.1 Admission (Also consult General Academic Regulations G30-G41)

- a. The candidate must have a Postgraduate Diploma, MTech or honours degree with a minimum of 60% (see departmental websites for specific departmental requirements) in the broad area of specialisation that he/she wishes to pursue for a master's programme.
- b. A minimum of 120 credits at NQF level 8 will be required.
- c. The student will be given conditional acceptance to a master's programme, but in order to align the student's completed training with the outcomes expected of a BScHons graduate, the student will be expected to undertake additional coursework at NQF levels 8 registered for non-degree purpose.
- d. Additional coursework may be prescribed by the head of department concerned.
- e. The programme of study must be recommended by the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee, Faculty

Board and for approval by the Subcommittee of the Senate.

- f. Confirmation of candidature will be based on the successfully completion of the additional module requirements during the one year of registration of these modules.

3.1.1 Procedure

- a. The candidate must submit an official application form, together with a motivation, matriculation certificate, academic record and a short CV. The CV should include details of relevant work experience and, where applicable, any publications.
- b. The head of department has to identify and prescribe modules as set out in 1 above.
- c. The application is submitted via the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee and the Faculty Board, to the Subcommittee of the Senate for approval.

3.2 Renewal of registration

- a. As long as progress is satisfactory, renewal of the registration of a master's student will be accepted for the second year of the study.
- b. Registration for a third and subsequent years will only take place when the Student Administration of the Faculty receives a written motivation that is supported by the relevant head of department and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

3.3 Examinations and pass requirements

- a. The examinations in the ancillary modules should be successfully completed prior to the registration in the major subject/s, unless the Faculty Board decides otherwise.
- b. General Academic Regulation G37 applies to the calculation of marks.
- c. In order to obtain the MSc degree Coursework, the candidate must pass all prescribed modules, including the examination in the major subject/s, as well as the dissertation.

3.4 Duration of studies (Consult General Academic Regulation G32)

3.5 General

Candidates are required to familiarise themselves with the General Academic Regulations regarding the maximum period of registration and the requirements on the submission of a draft article for publication.

3.6 Qualification with distinction (Consult General Academic Regulation G40)

4 DOCTORAL LEVEL

4.1 Admission (Also consult General Academic Regulations G42 - G55)

- a. The candidate must have a master's degree and should have obtained at least 60% (see departmental websites for specific departmental requirements) for the master's dissertation.
- b. Since the PhD is clearly more demanding of a wider (philosophical) scientific background, the selection of candidates for the PhD degree must be stringent, and could include outside evaluation of the dissertation work by nominees selected by the head of department and recommended by the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee, evidence of peer-reviewed publication, appropriate work-related experience (i.e. in a research environment) and, where necessary, formal coursework (prior to admission to the PhD programme) registered for non-degree purpose to address shortcomings in the academic background.

4.1.1 Procedure

- a. The candidate must submit an official online application form, together with all relevant documentation.
- b. The head of department will submit a motivation to support the application.

4.1.2 Senate of the University of Pretoria guidelines for Senate discretionary admissions

- a. As the University has a finite capacity in most undergraduate fields (its limits have already been reached or those admitted are selected from a large number of applicants), the University's policy on the recognition of prior learning only applies to student cases at postgraduate level (including postgraduate diplomas).
- b. Furthermore, as the University's strategic objective is to be an internationally recognised research university, admission to postgraduate study by means of the recognition of a prior learning pathway is the exception rather than the rule.

4.1.2.1 Senate may -

- a. grant a graduate of another higher education institution (either in the Republic or elsewhere) a status at the University that is equivalent to the status the student had at such other higher education institution.
- a. admit a person, who
 - a. has passed examinations at another university or institution (either in the Republic or elsewhere) which Senate deems equivalent to, or higher than the examinations prescribed for a degree at the University, which are set as a prerequisite for admission to a particular postgraduate study programme, or for the admission of such a person as a research student; or
 - b. in another manner has reached a standard of competence Senate considers adequate for the purposes of postgraduate study or research at the University, as a student for a postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate.

The regulation provides two alternative routes with regard to the admission of students at postgraduate level in cases where they do not comply with the prescribed requirements:

- i. A first possibility is via the academic route where a student has proven himself/ herself on the basis of academic achievement.
- ii. The second possibility refers to a standard of competence that would make a student eligible to continue with postgraduate studies.

4.2 Duration of studies

The doctorate is conferred on a student only if one of the following periods has expired:

- a. At least four years after complying with all the requirements for a three-year bachelor's degree.
- b. At least three years after complying with all the requirements for a four-year bachelor's degree.
- c. At least two years after complying with all the requirements for a bachelor's degree of five years or more.
- d. At least two years after complying with all the requirements for a master's degree.
- e. With the exception of a shorter period that may be approved by the Dean, at least 12 months since registration for the doctorate at this University has expired.

4.3 Residence

The relevant head of department may set specific residential requirements for students who are required to live on campus.

4.4 Renewal of registration

Subject to other faculty regulations, a student for a doctorate must complete his or her studies within three years after first registering for the degree. Under special circumstances, the Dean, on the recommendation of the relevant head of department or the Postgraduate Committee, may give approval for a limited fixed extension of this period.

4.5 Curriculum

The curriculum for the PhD degree consists of the following:

- a. Theoretical knowledge of the major subject/s and such additional modules as may be prescribed.
- b. A thesis.

4.6 Examinations and pass requirements

4.6.1 In order to obtain the PhD degree, the candidate must:

- a. Consult the General Academic Regulations G54 that apply to compliance with the degree requirements;
- b. pass the examinations.

4.6.2 Article for publication (Also consult General Academic Regulation G51)

- a. The submission and acceptance of an article suitable for publication in an accredited publication, based on the thesis, is a prerequisite for the conferment of a doctoral degree.
- b. Before or on submission of a thesis for examination, a student must submit proof of submission of an article issued by an accredited journal, to the Head: Student Administration. The submitted article should be based on the research that the student has conducted for the thesis, and the affiliation of both the student and the supervisor should be listed as the University of Pretoria.
- c. The supervisor must support the student in taking the paper through all the processes of revision and resubmission that are necessary and/or appropriate in order to prepare an article that is ready for publication.
- d. The journal article must have been accepted by the journal for before the doctoral degree may be conferred.

4.7 General

Candidates are required to familiarise themselves with the General Academic Regulations regarding the maximum duration of study and the requirements to submit an article/s for publication.

General Academic Regulations and Student Rules

The [General Academic Regulations \(G Regulations\)](#) and [General Student Rules](#) apply to all faculties and registered students of the University, as well as all prospective students who have accepted an offer of a place at the University of Pretoria. On registering for a programme, the student bears the responsibility of ensuring that they familiarise themselves with the General Academic Regulations applicable to their registration, as well as the relevant faculty-specific and programme-specific regulations and information as stipulated in the relevant yearbook. Ignorance concerning these regulations will not be accepted as an excuse for any transgression, or basis for an exception to any of the aforementioned regulations. The G Regulations are updated annually and may be amended after the publication of this information.

Regulations, degree requirements and information

The faculty regulations, information on and requirements for the degrees published here are subject to change and may be amended after the publication of this information.

University of Pretoria Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) verification project

The higher education sector has undergone an extensive alignment to the Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF) across all institutions in South Africa. In order to comply with the HEQSF, all institutions are legally required to participate in a national initiative led by regulatory bodies such as the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), and the South African Qualifications

Authority (SAQA). The University of Pretoria is presently engaged in an ongoing effort to align its qualifications and programmes with the HEQSF criteria. Current and prospective students should take note that changes to UP qualification and programme names, may occur as a result of the HEQSF initiative. Students are advised to contact their faculties if they have any questions.