



Policy

Student Recruitment, Admission and Selection

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ACRONYMS

APS	Admissions Points Score
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HEQC	Higher Education Qualifications Council
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
MBA	Masters in Business Administration
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SADC	South African Development Community
SAQA	South African Qualification Authority

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to regulate and provide clear guidelines based on good practice and regulations for the recruitment, selection and admission of prospective students, both nationally and internationally, to advance the strategic objectives of MANCOSA as articulated in the vision and mission statements.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the recruitment, selection and admission of students to all programmes offered by MANCOSA which lead to a qualification, and applies to all persons who represent MANCOSA in the recruitment, selection and admission of prospective students.

3. PRINCIPLES

MANCOSA adheres to the following principles:

- Is committed to equitable, fair, transparent, and consistent admission procedures.
- Is committed to recruiting students who can benefit from its academic offerings regardless of class, race, gender, sex, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, political or religious beliefs, culture, language and social or economic background.
- Is committed to ensuring equity of opportunity and success in the different fields and levels of study through high quality teaching, appropriate facilities and effective academic and other support that MANCOSA can reasonably provide as a distance education institution.
- Recognises that access to higher education entails more than just physical access, but also epistemological access or substantive access to the construction of knowledge.
- Recognises that as a distance learning institution, it has a particular responsibility to provide educational opportunities for students throughout South Africa and Africa.
- Values the participation and contribution of international students in providing a rich and diverse intellectual, educational and social environment at MANCOSA.
- Nationally, in the light of widening higher education access, MANCOSA has undertaken, in line with equity targets in the National Plan for Higher Education (Ministry of Education, 2001a)¹ and other relevant legislation, to continue to improve its educational service accessibility and enable student success to a wide range of students. It has also taken account of the White Paper for Post School Education and Training (November 2013).

It is essential that every applicant demonstrates sufficient academic accomplishment to succeed at MANCOSA. This policy outlines the requirements and a procedure for all programmes offered and makes provision for the admission of students through a Recognition of Prior Learning process. This process takes into consideration prior learning, work experience and foreign qualifications – in particular those from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, as well as relevant entry examinations that test cognitive ability and suitability to the area of intended study. (Cf. The Recognition of Prior Learning Policy).

4. STUDENT RECRUITMENT

- MANCOSA provides accurate information on its programme requirements regarding application, selection and admission procedures, fee structures, social and support facilities and contact details.
- Marketing materials comply with MANCOSA's corporate identity, are relevant, accurate at the date of publication, not misleading, accessible and provide information that enables prospective students to make informed decisions about their options.
- Policies and procedures are transparent and applied fairly, courteously, consistently and expeditiously.
- The Alumni Association and its members may play a supportive role in the recruitment of prospective students.

¹ Hereafter: NPHE (2001)

5. STUDENT SELECTION

Integral to MANCOSA's commitment to excellence is the provision of a uniform recruitment, selection and admission process that is fair, clear and explicit and that supports, where practically possible, broad and diverse access for those with the potential to benefit from higher education.

MANCOSA is mindful of the complexities involved in student recruitment, selection and admission, which involves: the promotion and marketing of programmes to prospective students, organisations, industries, education advisors, life-orientation teachers and other relevant stakeholders and the identification and selection of applicants for specific programmes of study.

All applications are processed by the MANCOSA Student Enrolment Department and referred to the Admission and Selection Committee for final approval.

5.1 Minimum Admission Requirements

Minimum admission requirements represent the minimum qualifications which applicants are normally expected to fulfil in order to gain entrance into an academic programme of their choice.

Entry requirements, which may change from time to time, are published on the MANCOSA website, the annual prospectus and calendars.

5.2 General Admission Requirements

The admission of an individual applicant is at the discretion of MANCOSA, subject to:

- a. There being reasonable expectation that the applicant will benefit from the opportunity to undertake the programme.
- b. Meeting the requirements of the award to which the programme leads (where applicable – requirements are outlined against each award).
- c. Satisfying the requirements of the particular programme of study defined in terms of the threshold skills and knowledge required for admission.
- d. The candidate having the requisite personal, social, academic and professional knowledge and skills where the successful completion of the programme of study will contribute to higher level of confidence and effectiveness in the work context.

5.3 General Considerations

- a. In considering individual applicants for admission to a programme of study, MANCOSA will seek evidence of personal, professional and educational experiences that indicate ability to meet the demands of the programme.
- b. Benchmark qualifications and criteria for admission as specified for admission to a programme must be applied except in instances where the candidate seeks entry on the basis of certified or non-certified prior learning.
- c. Claims for credit for recognised prior learning (RPL) should be made by the student at the point of registration and in accordance with the academic regulations.

6. CERTIFICATION ALIGNMENT

All certifications attained through MANCOSA are aligned with the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF). MANCOSA offers programmes at various NQF levels.

7. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

MANCOSA is aligned to the minimum statutory² requirements for South African applicants:

To be considered for admission to MANCOSA for an undergraduate programme leading to a Bachelor's Degree, an applicant must be in possession of one of the following:

- A NQF level 4 qualification.
- "A" level certificate or National Senior Certificate (NSC) with Degree Acceptance or with a minimum achievement rating of 4 (Adequate Achievement, 50% - 59%) in four subjects chosen from the following designated 20-credit NSC subjects:
 - Accounting
 - Information Technology
 - Agricultural Sciences
 - Languages
 - Business Studies
 - Life Sciences
 - Dramatic Arts
 - Mathematical Literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Economics
 - Engineering Graphics and Design
 - Music
 - Geography
 - Physical Sciences
 - History
 - Religion Studies
 - Consumer Studies
 - Visual Arts.

7.1 Extended Studies Programme

MANCOSA recognises that students from socially and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds may have National Senior Certificate results that do not reflect their potential to succeed in higher education. Performance in the National Senior Certificate Examinations is therefore not used as the sole admissions criterion. MANCOSA is working to offer an Extended Studies Programme that will provide an alternative access route for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It will also provide such students with a carefully designed learning programme and supportive learning environment to enhance their chances of success at MANCOSA and they could register for one of the certificate programmes on offer.

7.2 International Student Admissions Requirements

To be considered for admission to MANCOSA for programmes leading to a degree, an international student should have:

- An appropriate educational qualification deemed by MANCOSA to be equivalent to the National Senior Certificate that meets the minimum performance requirements of the NSC.
- Where English is not a first language or where the applicant has completed studies in a language other than English, evidence such as Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or letter from the applicant's School Principal will be required.

² Government Gazette Vol 482, No 27961, 18th August 2005

- In the case of foreign students, qualifications that are not awarded by a University are normally required to be evaluated by SAQA³ for an equivalent NQF⁴ rating. Applications will be evaluated thereafter.

7.3 Certificate Programmes

Any of the following qualifications apply:

- National Senior Certificate with the appropriate subject combinations
- A National Vocational Certificate⁵ level 4 qualification with a 50% pass in English
- International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE)
- Or an equivalent level 4 qualification.

Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements as outlined above but have considerable work and other experience may apply for RPL consideration in order to be admitted on the programme.

7.4 Bachelor Degree Programmes

For Bachelor Degree programmes the applicant must satisfy one of the following requirements:

- A *National Senior Certificate* (NSC) with the appropriate subject combinations
- "A" levels or a
- NQF level 4 qualification
- Higher certificate.

Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements as outlined above but have considerable work and other experience may apply for RPL⁶ consideration in order to be admitted on the programme.

7.5 Honours Programmes

The minimum requirement for admission into an Honours degree is an appropriate Bachelor's Degree/ Advanced Diploma in an appropriate field of study. The Student Admission and Selection Committee may at its discretion and with good reason admit into Honours and Masters studies any applicant who, in its opinion has attained an appropriate level of competency, regardless of formal qualifications achieved by the applicant. (This is usually through entry via RPL to a maximum of 10% of the cohort.)

7.6 Postgraduate Diploma Programmes

The minimum requirement for admission into a Postgraduate Diploma is an appropriate Bachelor's Degree/ Advanced Diploma with proven proficiency in English.

- Applicants that do not meet the minimum requirements as outlined above but have considerable work experience may apply for RPL consideration in order to be admitted onto the programme, for undergraduate studies applicants must be at least 23 years of age and for postgraduate studies applicants must be at least 25 years of age. Please refer to MANCOSA's RPL Policy.

7.7 Master of Business Administration Degree Programmes

Applicants must meet one of the minimum entry requirements to gain admission to the MBA degree programme.

³The South African Qualification Authority

⁴The National Qualification Framework

⁵ Hereafter referred to as NVC

⁶ Recognition of Prior Learning

7.7.1 Direct Access

- Honours levels Degree Qualification
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Any equivalent NQF Level 8 qualification

In addition the following selection criteria will be followed:

- Have a minimum of three (3) years working experience, of which two years should be at an appropriate supervisory or managerial level.
- Be at least 25 years of age
- Submit an academic transcript of results, where applicable
- A letter of motivation written by the applicant
- Submit letters of recommendation from the applicant's employer, where applicable
- Submit an employer report detailing technical and soft skills, where applicable
- Attend an interview as deemed necessary by the Student Admission and Selection Committee.

Where required by the Academic and Selection Committee, the applicant may be required to:

- Attend an interview, for example, in the case of a business owner who is self-employed
- Undertake a Cognitive Ability Assessment which comprises a numerical and verbal component.

All RPL applications are subject to evaluation by the Student Admission and Selection Committee.

7.7.2 Alternative Access

Applicants who do not meet the minimum admission requirements as set out in 7.7.1 above may be eligible for admission on the basis of considerable life or work experience in accordance with MANCOSA's policy on Recognition of Prior Learning. Applicants who wish to gain admission to MANCOSA on the basis of prior learning will be assessed by the Certified RPL officer to determine their competence levels in their intended area of study. (Please refer to MANCOSA's RPL Policy).

Applications to the second or subsequent year of undergraduate study are welcome. Applicants in this category should provide evidence that they have completed an appropriate number of higher education credits to qualify for entry at the level to which they are applying.

7.8 RPL (Postgraduate and MBA)

It is possible in exceptional circumstances to gain entry into a programme on the basis of RPL. A small number of applicants who do not meet the minimum entry requirements will be considered for acceptance via RPL.

The applicant must:

- Be at least 30 years of age
- Have a minimum of 10 years relevant work experience
- Submit a Portfolio of Evidence (CV; transcripts and certificates; personal letter of motivation; letter of recommendation from employer; employer report detailing technical and soft skills; current job profile; detailed list of qualifications and work experience; proof of company registration in case of a business owner)
- Undertake a cognitive ability assessment
- Be available for a personal or telephonic interview on a date specified by MANCOSA.

All RPL applications are subject to evaluation by the Student Admission and Selection Committee.

7.9 RPL (Undergraduate)

It is possible in exceptional circumstances to gain entry into a programme on the basis of RPL. A small number of applicants who do not meet the minimum entry requirements will be considered for acceptance via RPL.

The applicant must:

- Be at least 23 years of age
- Have a minimum of 3 years work experience
- Submit a Portfolio of Evidence (CV; transcripts and certificates; personal letter of motivation; letter of recommendation from employer; detailed list of qualifications and work experience)
- Avail themselves for a personal or telephonic interview on a date specified by MANCOSA
- Undertake an English language proficiency test at the discretion of the Student Admission and Selection Committee.

All RPL applications are subject to evaluation by the Student Admission and Selection Committee.

8. APPEALS

Should an applicant not be admitted to a programme:

- The student must submit a written appeal stating their reasons for contesting the Admissions and Selection Committee's decision.
- Upon receipt of the written appeal the student file is drawn from filing and sent with the appeal letter to SENEX.
- The student is notified of the decision made by SENEX.

9. CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER SCHEME⁷ (CAT)

MANCOSA operates a Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme under which each undergraduate module or other course unit is assessed in terms of course content, topics, alignment and outcomes to see how credit can be applied to aligned modules.

- The student must prepare and submit on the MANCOSA Application for Credit Exemption form (form SR~11/CAT) full information with evidence on courses or modules that they would like considered for CAT.
- International students and students who have verifiable qualifications from other countries must normally have their qualifications reviewed by SAQA and submit the SAQA report and evidence with their completed Application for Credit Exemption form.
- The Student Admission and Selection Committee review the application for CAT and makes the final decision about granting the credit.
- Students who wish to take courses/modules at other institutions as part of their degree pathway may do so, subject to the written consent MANCOSA and the other institution.
- Credit will not be granted for any modules that have already contributed toward the award of another degree.
- Any credit awarded for courses/modules undertaken elsewhere will be clearly identified on the student's transcript.
- Credit will be granted for students who have participated in a study-abroad programme with a partner university provided it meets the criteria of the institution.
- Credit will not be granted for more than 50% of the qualification.

⁷ CAT

- Credits and requests for exemption must be completed by no later than the closing date of the respective registration period.
- Credit and exemption applications may have a time limit imposed depending on the type and nature of the module, for example giving credit to modules completed in the last five years.