

MASTERSTART INSTITUTE (PTY) LTD

Private Higher Education Institution

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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1. Introduction

MasterStart Institute (Pty) Ltd. (hereafter referred to as MSI) commits itself to the pursuit of academic excellence within the higher education sector and aims to contribute to the achievement of national objectives for higher education by promoting accessibility to higher education in South Africa. MSI does not unfairly discriminate or cause barriers to entrance to study in any way. Our portfolio of programmes is built around unlocking people's potential to grow, adapt, and develop their careers in a fast-changing world through access to higher education and learning programmes.

2. Purpose

This policy provides a framework for all student admission processes and clarity on the principles that inform admission requirements, learner eligibility, and application processes. MSI is committed to non-discrimination of any sort regarding student admission to our higher education programmes.

3. Organisational Scope

This policy outlines the expectations and responsibilities regarding student application for registration and admissions. It applies to all students, academics, professional partners, and staff contracted to provide, promote and maintain the high standards of teaching and learning and administration at MSI. This policy covers the admission requirements for Higher Certificates.

4. Policy Statement/ Application

MSI is committed to a fair and transparent admissions process and endeavours to do so by providing clarity to the student admission requirements. All Admissions are individually reviewed to comply with all higher education regulations as prescribed in legislation while making sure not to exclude any potential student unnecessarily. Any student who applies for admission to any qualification at MSI will be subjected, without fear of unfair discrimination, to a fair admission process aligned with all relevant institutional and national legislation.

5. Glossary

- 5.1 **CHE:** The Council on Higher Education.
- 5.2 **DHET:** The Department of Higher Education and Training.
- 5.3 **Government Gazette:** These are general and government notices by its various departments underpinned by legislation. It publishes regulations and notices regarding acts, laws, regulations, etc.
- 5.4 **HEQSF:** Higher Education Quality Committee.
- 5.5 **SAQA:** The South African Qualification Authority.
- 5.6 **USAF:** Universities South Africa

6. Policy Principles

The following principles underpin the admissions policy:

- MSI will give each application fair consideration when reviewing any academic qualifications and information presented;
- In certain instances, admission requirements may be specific to a qualification or course depending on the requirements of the programme;
- Admission of prospective students who have the potential to successfully complete the qualification within the prescribed time for the programme may be considered.
- Non-standard admissions principles can be applied in the admissions process to applications. These are reviewed on a case-by-case basis;
- Should MSI receive more applications than it has places available, students will receive priority to attend the next programme intake;
- MSI provides equal access to all programmes¹;
- MSI reserves the right to reject an applicant or withdraw an acceptance offer due to misconduct;
- The admission policy does not discriminate against any student or applicant based on race, colour, age, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, belief, ethnic and social origin, pregnancy, conscience, culture, birth or disability.
- MSI will provide applicants with appropriate and timely feedback.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following documents and policies and must always be considered as guiding principles to enhance the entire student learning experience:

- Government Gazette, Vol 751, No 32131 of 11 July 2008 and;
- Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009;
- Higher Education Act 101 of 1997
- DHET's published statutory admission requirements
- White Paper for Post-School Education and Training – 20 November 2013
- White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education – July 1997
- Ministerial guidelines for DHET enrolment targets (2019/2020)
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- RPL and CAT Policy
- Student Manual
- Grievance Policy
- Academic Regulations/ Code of Conduct
- Student registration contract
- Terms and conditions

7. Admission Requirements to Gain Entrance into a Higher Certificate

The minimum requirements for admission into the Higher Certificate are:

¹ All processes are equal, but only students who meet the minimum entrance criteria will be admitted.

- A National Senior Certificate (NSC) with endorsement for admission into a Higher Certificate;
- The National Certificate Vocational (NCV) at NQF Level 4;
- A relevant Further Education and Training (FET) NQF Level 4 qualification;
- An equivalent Higher Certificate or NQF level 5 qualification;
- Mature age exemption for people above the age of 23 years as set out in the Higher Education Regulations;
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)²
- Foreign qualification that is equivalent to the NSC as determined by SAQA;
- Additional admission criteria may apply based on the specific Higher Certificate applied for.

8. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

MSI values an applicant's capability to perform tasks related to a specific role and the interdisciplinary nature of those skills. Additionally, MSI acknowledges prior learning and experience as valid qualifications for meeting minimum entrance requirements, depending on the extent and scope of those skills and prior learning. MSI Institution is governed by the policy documents published by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), and the Council on Higher Education (CHE).

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is essential to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as it helps address historical inequalities in higher education. Learning can occur through various mediums, including formal, informal, and non-formal settings such as:

- Formal education and training programs
- Formal and informal on-the-job education and training
- Work experience (experiential learning)
- In-house education and training

When applicable, this learning should be recognised. The key distinction between RPL and current learning assessments is that previous learning is formally acknowledged and accepted. This means the student is not required to repeat the same learning. Through assessment, the prior learning is credited (exempted), with the credit being recorded and reported against the qualification.

Students can apply formally for RPL and pay the applicable fee. The application will then be reviewed, and feedback provided.

9. Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)

Students may apply for credit transfer if they have successfully completed a comparable module or subject at another registered and accredited higher education institution. Students are required to have achieved a pass mark of at least 50 percent at an equivalent NQF level.

² Students opting for this route of entry are required to apply for RPL as set out in MSI's RPL and CAT Policy.

Credit transfer is evaluated based on the equivalence of learning content in the curriculum, the depth of study, and the credits allocated to the module or subject. Equivalence means there is approximately 80 percent alignment or overlap between the two modules or subjects under review. To be eligible for credit regarding historical learning or previous studies, the module or subject for which credit was applied must have been completed no more than five years ago. In consultation with the programme coordinator and module leaders, the Head of Academics will evaluate each application and provide feedback to the student. The decision is dependent on various factors as outlined in the CAT Policy. A maximum of 50% of the credits from a completed qualification may be transferred to another qualification. However, these transferred credits may not constitute more than 50% of the credits required for the new qualification. Applying for a CAT transfer of credits carries a cost per module. Please refer to the guidelines in the CAT Policy.

10. Mature Age Exemption

Mature age exemption refers to any student who did not pass a Senior Certificate or National Senior Certificate with endorsement, which means the student is legally required to apply for a matriculation exemption through the Matriculation Board (Universities South Africa). Mature age exemption is offered to students who are 23 years and older and lasts for the full-time duration of study plus an additional two years. A matriculation exemption is a legal requirement for all first-qualification studies at South African universities and Private Higher Education Institutions. The exemption certificate application and process carry a specified fee; please visit <https://mb.usaf.ac.za/faqs/> for more information.

Prospective students can apply for admission into MSI's Higher Certificate after following the processes outlined by the Matriculation Board. After successfully completing the Higher Certificate, the students will be granted access to further qualifications such as diplomas and degrees.

11. Admission of International Students

Students with foreign qualifications must first be evaluated by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) to verify their qualifications. Students can visit <https://www.saga.org.za> for more information.

12. Language of Tuition

The language of instruction at MSI is English. Therefore, MSI will not provide a translator for a learner who does not understand English. If a translator is required, it will be at the learner's expense. Students who are not competent in reading, writing, and speaking English proficiently are encouraged to undertake additional English tuition.

13. Admission Appeals and Grievances

Applicants can appeal the admission decision by emailing the sales representative or account manager for further information. Appeals must be submitted in writing and within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the admission feedback.

Should a query arise, students will be informed of their rights to appeal against an admission decision.

14. Policy Life Cycle

This policy should be reviewed by the Academic Board every two years.