

CHAPTER 2

EXCLUSION

The purpose of exclusion is due to the following reasons:

- (a) **To increase access**
The Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) enrolment plan caps the number of funded full-time equivalent students enrolled at public tertiary institutions. Poor performing students, therefore, deny space to new entrants, straining access to the University.
- (b) **For financial viability**
Poor performing students hamper throughput. A lower success rate has implicit reputational risks and diminishes earnings from teaching output units.
- (c) **To sustain academic reputation**
If poor performing students are allowed to stay in the system, there will be a constant growth in student numbers which -
 - cannot be accommodated in laboratories and other facilities already overburdened;
 - compromise the quality of the teaching and learning of all other students; and
 - negatively impact on the accreditation of qualifications by professional and other accreditation bodies.

2.1 DEFINITIONS

In this chapter, unless otherwise indicated –

- 2.1.1 **"academic exclusion"** refers to readmission refusal from a specific qualification, department or faculty for a set period of time due to the student's failure to comply with the minimum progress requirements as described in this chapter. The exclusion may be in the form of:
 - (a) Exclusion from a specific academic qualification, in which case the student may be eligible for admission in another academic qualification within the same department, faculty or in another faculty at TUT.
 - (b) Exclusion from the faculty, in which case the student may be eligible to be admitted in another academic qualification in another faculty at TUT. Such candidates may be referred to Student Development and Support (SDS) for career counselling and will need to meet the admission requirements for the alternative academic qualification selected.
- 2.1.2 **"academic exclusion criteria"** refers to the specific criteria (norms) applied in determining whether a student should be excluded from further participation in the qualification.
- 2.1.3 **"academic intervention"** refers to any programme, supportive or developmental action before exclusion takes place, either prescribed (compulsory) or recommended (voluntary) by the department or faculty. Such interventions can also be prescribed or recommended by Student Development and Support on behalf of the department or faculty. Academic interventions may take place before exclusion or as an exclusion or probation condition.
- 2.1.4 **"academic performance"** is the relative success or failure of a student to comply with the requirements of the academic qualification for which he or she is registered, within the limited time prescribed for the qualification.
- 2.1.5 **"academic probation"** refers to the conditional grace period in the exclusion process which provides the student the opportunity, through specific conditions and interventions, to comply with the academic performance requirements, in order to avoid final exclusion.
- 2.1.6 **"academic qualification(s)"** refers to learning programmes that lead to qualifications described in the various parts of the official Prospectus of the University. For the purpose of this chapter, qualifications are divided into two groups:



- (a) All undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications that are based on the accumulation of credits and have a clearly defined structure based on modules/subjects to be passed before the qualification can be awarded (this includes structured master's degrees).
- (b) Research-based postgraduate master's and doctoral degrees.

2.1.7 **"condition of re-admission"** refers to the stipulations set by the Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee (FAEAC) for the re-admission of a student. This may include referral for academic intervention, career counselling, performance level requirement, limited module/subject load or any relevant condition that will be recorded and communicated to the student after/during the meeting.

2.1.8 **"re-admission to studies"** refers to the specified scenarios where students who appealed and are granted permission by the Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee (FAEAC) to register for the next academic term or who after a period of two years are granted permission by the Head of the Department to register.

2.1.9 **"student"** refers to any student registered in previous academic periods with TUT for any of the University's official modes of delivery.

2.1.10 **"TUT Student Tracking System (TUT-STTS)"** refers to an integrated University monitoring system that provides a facility to regularly calculate and monitor student progress.

2.2 COMMITTEES

2.2.1 **Composition of the Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee (FAEAC) (Arcadia, Arts, Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria and Soshanguve campuses):**

- Executive Dean of the faculty or delegated person (Chairperson);
- Head of the Department;
- Academic section head of distant campuses (where applicable);
- One (1) senior academic (or section head) per academic department;
- A senior representative(s) of the Registrar's Office designated for the relevant faculty;
- Faculty Administrator/Secretary from the faculty who will be responsible for all secretarial duties; and
- One (1) fully registered member of the Student Faculty Council (SFC), without any conflict of interest, e.g. personally excluded or under exclusion appeal or similar circumstances.

2.2.2 **Composition of the Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee (DAEAC):**

- Head of the Department (Chairperson);
- Departmental Administrator/Secretary;
- Section heads and/or senior lecturing staff (as determined relevant by the Chairperson);
- Guardian/Coordinator (where applicable);
- Co-opted Subject Coordinators (as determined relevant by the chairperson); and
- One (1) fully registered member of the Student Faculty Council (SFC), without any conflict of interest, e.g. personally excluded or under exclusion appeal or similar circumstances.

2.2.3 **Composition of the Distant Campus Academic Appeals Committee (DCAEAC) (Emalahleni, Mbombela and Polokwane campuses):**

- Campus Director or delegated person (Chairperson);
- Heads of Academic Sections;
- One (1) senior academic per department;
- One (1) representative from Academic Administration;
- One (1) administrator (as appointed by the Campus Director and will be responsible for all secretarial duties); and
- One (1) fully registered member of the LSRC, without any conflict of interest, e.g. personally excluded or under exclusion appeal or similar circumstances.



2.2.4 Composition of the Faculty Postgraduate Exclusions Appeals Committee (FPGEAC): (eMalahleni, Mbombela and Polokwane campuses) (There is no departmental committee for postgraduate students)

- Executive Dean of the Faculty or delegated person (Chairperson);
- Head of the Department;
- Supervisor;
- Co-supervisor;
- A senior representative of the Registrar's Office designated for the relevant faculty;
- Faculty research officer(s) who will be responsible for all secretarial duties;
- One (1) fully registered postgraduate student from the specific faculty nominated by the Postgraduate Student Forum, not having any conflict of interest; e.g. personally excluded or under exclusion appeal or similar circumstances; and
- The excluded student (by invitation to state his or her reasons).

2.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.3.1 The Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee evaluates all appeal applications, collates relevant documentation and provides additional supporting evidence (e.g. class attendance, behavioural record, specific contextual factors) where relevant when making a recommendation on an exclusion appeal. The recommendations of the Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee will be approved by the Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee.

2.3.2 The Distant Campus Academic Appeals Committee evaluates all appeal applications, collates relevant documentation and provides additional supporting evidence (e.g. class attendance, behavioural record, specific contextual factors) where relevant when making a recommendation on an exclusion appeal. The recommendations of the Distant Campus Academic Appeals Committee will be approved by the Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee.

2.3.3 The Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee reviews and monitors the Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee and Distant Campus Academic Appeals Committee recommendations and makes a final ruling on all the academic exclusions or appeal thereof by a student. Decisions of this committee are considered final and to be implemented by the University.

2.3.4 The Faculty Postgraduate Exclusions Appeals Committee reviews and monitors recommendations of departments (supervisors) and makes a final ruling on all academic exclusions of research-based master's and doctoral degree students. Decisions of this committee are considered final and to be implemented by the University.

2.4 RULES FOR STUDENTS REGISTERED FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND SPECIFIED POST-GRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS (see rule 2.1.6(a))

2.4.1 General rules and principles

The following general rules and principles must be observed:

2.4.1.1 Documented records of poor class and/or tutorial attendance may be used as evidence during an exclusion meeting.

2.4.1.2 The guiding principle is that a full-time student is allowed twice the minimum duration of a qualification. For example, a maximum of six (6) years to complete a three-year qualification, two (2) years for a one-year qualification, and eight (8) years for a four-year qualification.

2.4.1.3 Evening-class, part-time, block or distant education students, and students who annually register for fewer than the required number of modules/subjects, and who submit valid reasons, will be considered for a proportionally extended time period in order to complete the qualification.

2.4.1.4 This chapter enables TUT to, where possible, identify and refer students for various interventions to improve their academic performance in order to avoid exclusion.



- 2.4.1.5 Students may submit an appeal on the prescribed appeal application form to the Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee providing complete evidence of aspects to be considered for re-admission. The Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee will make a recommendation based on the portfolio of evidence available and this may include records of interventions attended at Student Development and Support.
- 2.4.1.6 The Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee will prepare a complete record of appeal applications and recommendations. This is to be recorded on the prescribed template provided by the Registrar's Office and submitted to the Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee for ratification.
- 2.4.1.7 Both the Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee and the Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee will utilise the guidelines for special considerations and extenuating circumstances (see **rule 2.6**).
- 2.4.1.8 The Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee will make a final decision and record it in the prescribed format and submit decisions to Student Development and Support and the Registrar's Office.
- Please note that these decisions are final and no further appeal, whether on departmental, faculty or institutional level will be considered.
- 2.4.1.9 The Registrar's Office will officially communicate the outcome to the student and the academic department will provide written feedback to re-admitted students, clearly stipulating all conditions.
- 2.4.1.10 Students who change from one qualification to another in a different faculty will have the same maximum time as other first time entering students in the same qualification. If the student registers for a different qualification in the same faculty, the maximum period will be decreased proportionally with the time required to pass modules/subjects common to the two qualifications.
- 2.4.1.11 A single uniform exclusion approach, with standard operating procedures and guidelines, shall be applied throughout the institution by all faculties and learning sites of TUT.
- 2.4.1.12 Students who are excluded may apply for readmission after a period of two (2) years.
- 2.4.1.13 Applications for readmission of students received before the end of the two-year exclusion period will only be considered by the Departmental Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee and Faculty Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee if proof of academic success/development can be provided.
- 2.4.1.14 Closing dates for appeals, according to the academic core calendar, will be strictly applied. If a student has neglected to appeal on time, such appeals will only be considered during the appeal process of the next academic term.

2.4.2 SPECIFIC RULES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF PROBATION AND EXCLUSION-BASED DECISIONS

- 2.4.2.1 A student who achieves 50% or more of the maximum number of credits required after each year of study may proceed uninterrupted. The maximum number of credits for each year of study is specified in the faculty parts of the prospectuses.
- 2.4.2.2 A student who achieves more than 30% (this percentage will gradually increase after the second year – see tables 1 - 4) but less than 50% of the maximum number of credits (as listed in the faculty Prospectus) for the specified period of study will be placed on academic probation. Students on probation are informed by the academic department in writing and are referred to Student Development and Support for counselling and/or academic interventions. The Department may further set compulsory conditions for the student to continue with his or her academic qualification. It is highly recommended that faculties monitor the process, specifically for first-year students, after one (1) semester and introduce academic interventions where feasible to avoid probation or even exclusion.



- 2.4.2.3 A student who has been previously placed on academic probation and achieves less than 30% (this percentage will gradually increase after the second year – see tables 1 - 4) of the maximum credits for the specific period is excluded from further study, but may appeal based on evidence of extenuating circumstances and proof of completed academic interventions recommended during the probation period if applicable.
- 2.4.2.4 A student, who has failed the same module/subject during two (2) different study periods, will be placed on probation. Failing that same subject(s)/module(s) on a third attempt, will result in exclusion with the right to appeal.
- 2.4.2.5 A student who has previously been placed on probation, but will not be able to complete the remainder of the course in the maximum allowable time, even if taking a maximum load, will be excluded. The student may appeal based on evidence of extenuating circumstances and proof of completed academic interventions recommended during the probation period.
- 2.4.2.6 Faculty exclusion committees must compile a table for each qualification in their faculty based on percentages indicated in tables and for extended qualifications according to approved Report 151 and Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF) qualification requirements.
- 2.4.2.7 Tables 1 - 4 below indicate the credits associated with pass, probation and exclusion.

*** Calculation formula:**

Credits as a percentage is calculated as a % of the maximum number of credits that could be achieved after the corresponding number of years of study. For example, the minimum credits to avoid probation for a Report 151 programme after three (3) years of study will be 50% of 3 multiplied by 1,00 (max per year) = 1,50. For a Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF) programme the credits will be 50% of 3 multiplied by 120 (max per year) = 180.

TABLE 1: Credit weight requirements for a one (1) year qualification

Year of Study	NO EXCLUSION		PROBATION		EXCLUSION	
	Minimum credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action
1	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	30% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 30%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
2	100% of required credits for the relevant qualification or excluded.					

TABLE 2: Credit weight requirements for a two (2) year qualification

Year of Study	NO EXCLUSION		PROBATION		EXCLUSION	
	Minimum credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action
1	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	30% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 30%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
2	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	30% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 30%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
3	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	40% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 40%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
4	100% of required credits for the relevant qualification or excluded.					



TABLE 3: Credit weight requirements for a three (3) year qualification

Year of Study	NO EXCLUSION		PROBATION		EXCLUSION	
	Minimum credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action
1	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	30% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 30%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
2	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	30% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 30%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
3	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	33% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 33%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
4	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	40% - 49,9%	Probation, provided that the student is able to complete in maximum allowable time	Less than 40%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
5	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	44% - 49,9%	Probation, provided that the student is able to complete in maximum allowable time	Less than 44%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
6	100% of required credits for the relevant qualification or excluded.					

TABLE 4: Credit weight requirements for a four (4) year qualification

Year of Study	NO EXCLUSION		PROBATION		EXCLUSION	
	Minimum credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action	Credits as %*	Action
1	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	30% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 30%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
2	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	30% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 30%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
3	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	33% - 49,9%	Probation and academic intervention	Less than 33%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
4	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	35% - 49,9%	Probation, provided that the student is able to complete in maximum allowable time	Less than 35%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
5	50% or more	Not excluded. No intervention.	38% - 49,9%	Probation, provided that the student is able to complete in maximum allowable time	Less than 38%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
6	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	42% - 49,9%	Probation, provided that the student is able to complete in maximum allowable time	Less than 42%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
7	50% or more	Not excluded No intervention	46% - 49,9%	Probation, provided that the student is able to complete in maximum allowable time	Less than 46%	- Excluded - May appeal - Extenuating
8	100% of required credits for the relevant qualification or excluded.					

2.5 GENERAL RULES AND PRINCIPLES FOR STUDENTS REGISTERED FOR RESEARCH-BASED POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS (see rule 2.1.6(b))

2.5.1 Academic probation is not applicable to postgraduate students.

2.5.2 The period of study allowed for a research master's degree is a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of three (3) years.



- 2.5.3 The period of study for a doctoral degree is a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of five (5) academic years.
- 2.5.4 A student who has already been registered for the maximum number of years and who has not yet completed his or her studies will only be re-admitted after a successful appeal against his or her exclusion.
- 2.5.5 The student needs to submit his or her appeal on the prescribed template to his or her research supervisor.
- 2.5.6 The supervisor, in consultation with the Head of the Department compiles a recommendation for the Faculty Postgraduate Exclusions Appeals Committee for consideration of re-admission. The committee will consider the application based on the reasons provided by the student, past progress and the possibility that the student will complete the qualification by the end of the following year.
- 2.5.7 The study period can be extended for a maximum period of one (1) year. However, students may appeal again for further extension.
- 2.5.8 There will be no official closing date to submit appeals, however, a student must appeal within fourteen days after he or she has been notified of his or her exclusion.

2.6 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The exclusion committees may consider the following extenuating circumstances for relaxing the minimum credit weight required (where applicable, the applicant should provide circumstantial evidence):

- 2.6.1 International/national sport or cultural engagement. The level and frequency of engagement should be verified in writing by the Director of Sport and Recreation or the Director of Student Governance and Leadership Development.
- 2.6.2 A low pass rate in a particular module/subject.
- 2.6.3 General academic record/history of the applicant.
- 2.6.4 Lecturer evaluation and reports.
- 2.6.5 Incidents of physical health, as substantiated by original copies of medical certificates and/or reports.
- 2.6.6 Incidents of psychological health. A proper diagnosis, substantiated by original and appropriate medical and psychological reports, or verified in writing by the Campus Head, Academic Department or Student Development and Support, should be included.
- 2.6.7 Death in the immediate family (parents, guardians, siblings), substantiated by death certificates.
- 2.6.8 Applicants are required to submit evidence to the department within two (2) weeks of the incident, or within two (2) weeks of returning to campus.

