

Admission requirements and selection criteria for undergraduate programmes

This document applies to candidates who wish to study in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in 2027. Please consult the [Faculty Yearbook](#) for information about the different degree programmes we offer.

1. All programmes are selection programmes

All programmes in our Faculty are selection programmes. Unfortunately, you do not automatically gain access to our Faculty by meeting the minimum requirements. There is a selection process based on the Faculty's general admissions requirements, the specific requirements of certain programmes, your matric subjects and your results from the final exam, as well as other factors detailed in our admissions policy.

2. Why don't I get in automatically if I meet the minimum requirements?

The minimum requirements are the lowest cut-off point for being **considered** for selection. In addition to your school exam results, we also look at which subjects you took, the programme(s) you've applied for, your socio-economic status, and any other factors that are relevant to ensure the excellence, diversity and potential of our student group.

3. How many places are available in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences?

We typically have **1200** places available in the Faculty for first-years – 1100 for newcomers and 100 for students who have already started studying at a different faculty or university.

The 1200 places for newcomers are allocated as follows:

- 650 places in programmes with general selection – of these, 550 are allocated to mainstream programmes and 100 to Extended Curriculum Programmes (see section 7)
 - BA (Humanities)
 - BA (Language and Culture)
 - BA (International Studies)
 - BA (Human Resource Management)
 - BA (Development and Environment)
 - BA (Political, Philosophical and Economic Studies)
 - B in Data Science (Focal area: Geoinformatics)
- 350 places in programmes with programme-specific selection
 - 60 students for BA (Drama and Theatre Studies)
 - 50 students for BA (Law)
 - 60 students for BA (Visual Arts)
 - 100 students for B in Social Work
 - 80 students for programmes in the Department of Music
 - Higher Certificate in Music
 - Diploma in Practical Music

- Advanced Diploma in Practical Music
- BA (Music)
- BMus

4. Requirements for admission

It is important that you consult the [Faculty Yearbook](#) and look at the detailed information under “Undergraduate Programmes”. We only give a summary here, and certain programme-specific requirements might not be mentioned here.

4.1 A Grade 12 certificate

The Faculty accepts the Grade 12 examination results of the National Senior Certificate (NSC), International Examination Board's National Senior Certificate (IEB NSC) and the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI).

4.2 And if I don't have any of these certificates?

If you didn't write one of these exams, we will do the following:

- i. If you have a South African Senior Certificate received in 2007 or earlier, we use the average percentage in their final school examination for the selection process.
- ii. If you wrote the Cambridge, Home School, International Examination Board's International Secondary Certificate (IEB ISS), School of Tomorrow or other Grade 12 exam, and/or you are an international applicant, we will refer your certificate to the SU International Services Centre. They use a conversion table to calculate a comparable average for use in the selection process.

4.3 Results and subject requirements

- Your results in your final school exam must meet the admissions requirement for the programme(s) you are applying for as indicated in the [Yearbook](#).
- The Faculty looks at the specific subjects you did at school, and these are a determining factor in your consideration for admission. Please look at the list of specified subjects in the [Yearbook](#).
- Remember, the fact that you meet the minimum requirement, is in no way a guarantee that you will be admitted. This is just the starting point of the selection process.

5. Should I write the National Benchmark Tests (NBTs)?

NBT results are normally *not* needed for applicants who wrote the NSC or SACAI exams, but some programmes may require you to write NBTs. Please check the [Yearbook](#) for the admission requirements of the programmes you want to apply for.

If any of the following applies to you, you have to write the NBTs before **30 September** of the year before you want to come and study at SU:

- You have an American High School Diploma;
- You have an IEB International Secondary Certificate;
- You are from the School of Tomorrow; or
- You are from any online schooling system.

6. The application process and what we do after you apply

6.1 Closing date

Your application must be submitted electronically by **31 July** of the year before you intend to study at SU. We will accept late applications only in exceptional cases and if there are places available after all applications from on-time applicants have been considered. It is important that your application be **complete**. Applications missing supporting documents that are only provided after 31 July, are seen as late applications.

6.2 How is my application processed?

Applications for **programmes with their own programme-specific selection process** are handled according to the relevant programme's selection policy. This selection process, however, takes time to complete, so you will receive *conditional acceptance to another* programme that follows the Faculty's general selection process, as long as you meet the relevant programme's requirements. If you then later receive an offer for a programme with its own selection process, you may choose to decline the first conditional offer and accept the new offer on or before **30 September**. Unfilled places in programmes with programme-specific selection processes may be transferred to programmes that only follow the Faculty's general selection process.

Applications for **programmes that don't have their own selection process** but use the Faculty's general selection process are handled as follows:

- i. We decide on the lowest average mark for the given year that will be used to extend provisional offers.
- ii. If your final marks in grade 11 are equal to or higher than the cutoff mark, and they meet the requirements of the programme(s) you are applying for, you are selected automatically and you will receive a *conditional offer*. You need to accept this by **30 September**, or it will lapse. Your *final offer* will only be provided once your final results for grade 12 become available in January.
- iii. If you already have a **National Senior Certificate (NSC)** with an average equal to or higher than the cut-off mark and your marks meet the Faculty's minimum admission requirements, as well as any relevant programme-specific requirements, you will automatically receive a *final offer* of acceptance. You must accept this offer by the date indicated in the offer letter.
- iv. After 31 August, we begin doing final selection based on the following factors:
 - The number of available places;
 - Your academic merit;
 - Your socio-economic status; and
 - The diversity balance of the total applicant group.

If your application is successful, the Faculty will inform you that you have been selected and conditionally admitted.

6.3 May I accept more than one offer at a time?

No, if you receive and accept an offer from our Faculty and then want to accept an offer from another faculty, you must first decline our original offer before accepting the offer from the other faculty. If you later decide to revert to the original programme in our Faculty, you must submit a request to that effect by **31 October** of the year before you want to register at SU. We will consider your request if there are still places available

6.4 Other important dates

30 September

Date by which to accept your conditional offer.

31 October

If you declined an offer and want to ask that it be re-issued

25 January of the year in which you want to start studying

Due date for requesting to be admitted to an extended curriculum programme if, based on your final Grade 12 results, you were not admitted to the mainstream programme (see point 7 below).

7. What is the “Extended Curriculum Programme”?

The Extended Curriculum Programme, like the name says, is an extension of the following programmes:

- BA (Humanities)
- BA (Language and Culture)
- BA (International Studies)
- BA (Human Resource Management)
- BA (Development and Environment)

In these programmes, you complete the curriculum over 4 years instead of 3, and students take additional modules in academic literacy and other relevant content.

We fill the places in an ECP with candidates who have grade 12 averages that fall immediately below the cut-off point for the mainstream programme. The cut-off point is not fixed and can shift from year to year, based on the cut-off point for the mainstream programme. The same factors mentioned in section 6.2 are also used for selection here.

7.1 Can I change over to a mainstream programme if my final marks are higher?

No. If you accept your admission into an ECP, you cannot change over to a mainstream programme based on your final results.

7.2 And what happens if my final marks are too low?

If you were conditionally accepted into a mainstream programme, but your final marks do not meet the requirement for admission to that programme, you may request to be admitted to an ECP. Submit your request to askfass@sun.ac.za by **25 January** of the year in which you intend to register at SU. Please make the subject of your email "FASS: Reconsideration for ECP". We will consider your request if there are spaces available after all students who were accepted initially finish registering.

8. Is there a waiting list?

We do not have a waiting list. Historically, the Faculty receives many more applications than the number of spaces available.