TASK TEAM MEMBERS

- **Convenor**: Prof D Singh
- **University Registrar**: Prof L Molamu
- **ODL Coordinator**: Dr P Prinsloo
- **DCCAD**: Dr A van Schoor
- **Admissions and Registrations**: Mr V Balmakund
- **CHS**: Prof L Cornwell
- **CHS**: Dr B Zawada
- **CAES**: Dr M Linington
- **CSET**: Prof A Geertsema
- **Student Affairs’ Directorate ARCSWID**: Ms G Zikhali
- **Student Affairs’ ARCSWID registration**: Ms V Ndlovu
- **CSET**: Prof I Alderton
- **CLAW**: Prof K Pillay; secundus Prof MK Havenga
- **SRC**: Mr N Siwela
- **SRC**: Mr M Qwabe
- **CEMS**: Ms I Crous
- **CEMS**: Mr B Sibindi
- **Library**: Mr T Constable
- **IODL**: Mrs Z Ntuli, Ms L Shabalala
- **RMC**: Mr T Mvubu
ADOPTION REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMA AND DEGREE QUALIFICATIONS

MINUTE OF DISCUSSION: MEETING HELD ON 9 APRIL 2010 [including follow-up actions]

Present: Prof D Singh, Dr P Prinsloo, CAES, CSET, CHS, CL, ARCSWID, DCCAD, Library, DSAR

1 BACKGROUND

1. Taking cognizance of the direction provided at the STLSC at its meeting in March 2010 and the Enrolment Planning and Management Working Group, the focus of this meeting was on:

1.1 identifying possible generic admission requirements for admission to undergraduate qualifications, specifically diploma and degree study; and

1.2 using the admission requirements responsibly to continue to support the value of open access whilst giving due regard to access for success and improved throughput.

2. The minimum admission requirements for admission to diploma and degree studies as set out in the Ministerial Policy is as follows:

2.1 Degree studies

The minimum admission requirements as prescribed by the Policy are:

(i) An NSC; AND

(ii) A minimum achievement rating of 4 (50-59%) in the language of learning and tuition of the University; AND

(iii) A minimum achievement rating of 4 (50-59%) in FOUR subjects chosen from the recognized NSC 20-credit subjects.

2.2 Diploma studies

The minimum admission requirements as prescribed by the Policy are:

(i) An NSC; AND

(ii) A minimum achievement rating of 3 (40-49%) in the language of tuition and learning of Unisa; AND

(iii) A minimum achievement rating of 3 (40-49%) in FOUR subjects chosen from the recognized NSC 20-credit subjects.
RECOMMENDATIONS

3. REGARDING THE MINIMUM ADMISSION REQUIREMENT FOR LANGUAGE

3.1 In respect of pupils exiting school with the National Senior Certificate (NSC):

3.1.1 It is recommended that the minimum admission requirement in respect of the language of tuition and learning be placed at a minimum achievement rating of 4 (i.e. 50-59%) for BOTH the degree and diploma qualifications. The mark may be achieved in either ‘home language’ or 1st additional language.

3.2 In respect of pupils exiting school with the Senior Certificate (SC) (previous Grade 12 school - leaving qualification):

3.2.1 It is recommended that the minimum admission requirement be the same as for NSC school-leavers i.e. pupils must have achieved a minimum mark of 50% HG in English or Afrikaans in order to be admitted to degree or diploma studies. The mark may be achieved in either 1st or 2nd language categories.

3.3 In respect of students with foreign school-leaving qualifications:

3.3.1 It is recommended that students who hold a school leaving qualification which is neither the SC nor the NSC provide proof that they have achieved the required level of language competence – i.e. a minimum achievement score of 50% - in either English of Afrikaans.

3.3.2 Students who have not completed English or Afrikaans in their school-leaving qualification will be required to pass the TOEFOL test with a minimum achievement score of 50%.

However, based on the HESA equivalence setting activities, it is proposed that:

- Students with O-Levels will be required to achieve, at least, a C-symbol in either English or Afrikaans to be admitted to degree/diploma studies.

- Students with A-Levels will be required to achieve, at least, an E-symbol in either English or Afrikaans to be admitted to degree/diploma study.

- Students presenting with the IGSE or HIGSE school-leaving qualifications will be required to achieve the minimum scores prescribed for the O-Levels and A-Levels respectively.

4. The proposed rule with regard to the language admission requirement is predicated upon the understanding that 50% is the minimum pass mark for University studies.

5. The Committee did not accept the proposal that the minimum achievement rating in the language of tuition and learning for admission to degree studies be higher than that required for diploma studies and raised to 5 (i.e. 60-69%) as there was (i) not sufficient evidence from DSAR to indicate the school-leaving language results results of the current cohort of NSC students studying at Unisa; and (ii) there was a very strong view that to raise admission requirements to 60% for language would serve to exclude many
students from gaining access to the University. The Committee concluded that the Unisa value proposition was strongly biased in favour of promoting access and providing opportunity as far as possible rather than constraining admission.

6. However, cognizant of the importance of success and throughput of students, and acknowledging that many Unisa graduates did not initially succeed because of poor language competencies and the fact that they registered for too many modules at a time, the Committee recommended the following:

   To introduce an ‘Extended Curriculum’ applicable to NSC, SC and Foreign School-Leavers who meet the minimum admission rating of 4 but attain marks between 50-59% in the language requirement.¹

6.1 It is recommended that students who, despite meeting the minimum admission requirement for the language of tuition and learning, attain a minimum achievement rating of 4 (50-59%) in the language of tuition and learning of Unisa should be placed on an extended curriculum and only allowed to register for a maximum of 2 modules per semester.

6.2 It is further recommended that students on the extended curriculum must be required to pass at least, 3 modules in the first academic year of study. If this success rate is not achieved, the student will be excluded from the University for academic non-performance. The prescribed rules for re-admission after academic non-performance will apply.

6.3 Students on the extended curriculum must be provided with added tutorial support, that nature of which will have to be determined by the Academic Portfolio.

7. MINIMUM ACHIEVEMENT RATING FOR OTHER SUBJECTS, I.E. OTHER THAN THE LANGUAGE SUBJECT

   In respect of the required minimum achievement rating for the other modules (i.e. other than those subjects considered for the language requirement), the Task Team was of the view that no further limitations should be imposed. In other words, the minimum achievement scores set by the Ministerial policy should be implemented.

8. However, it is also agreed that Colleges may after careful consideration increase the admission requirements (to a required achievement score higher than the Ministerial standard) with regard to specific qualifications. The increased admission requirements as proposed by each College is set out below:

   • COLLEGE OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE

      Specific Requirement/s

      In respect of NSC school-leavers, where the prospective student has taken mathematics literacy in Grade 12, then for degree studies the student must attain a minimum achievement rating of 6 (70-79%) in maths

¹ This ‘extended curriculum’ will also serve the purpose of promoting responsible open admission. The ROAP discussions will, accordingly, fall away.
literacy and for diploma studies the student must attain a minimum achievement rating of 5 (60-69%) in maths literacy.

- **COLLEGE OF LAW**

  **Specific Requirement/s**

  Given that the module Accounting for Lawyers is offered by CEMS, the rule required by CEMS with regard to Maths Literacy should be applied in CL.

- **COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCE**

  **Specific Requirement/s**

  To be provided by 21 April 2010 – no submission received.

- **COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

  **Specific Requirement/s**

  To be provided by 21 April 2010 – no submission received.

- **COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY**

  **Specific Requirement/s**

  Bachelor of Science

  (i) NSC: A minimum achievement rating of 4 (50-59%) in Mathematics (not Maths Literacy)

  SC: A minimum achievement of an E symbol (HG); or a D symbol (SC) at matriculation level

  (ii) Minimum mark of 50% in English at school-leaving OR in CSS101H

  (iii) If the student intends registering for ASTRONOMY, APPLIED MATHEMATICS, MATHEMATICS, or STATISTICS

  - NSC: Minimum achievement rating of 5 in Mathematics

  - SC: D symbol (HG); or A symbol (SG) in Mathematics

  (iv) If the student intends registering for CHEMISTRY

  - NSC: Minimum achievement rating of 5 in Physical Science

  - SC: Pass in Physical Science or equivalent

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2 26 April 2010

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(v) If the student intends registering for COMPUTER SCIENCE, or INFORMATION SYSTEMS, or ND: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- Have access to an internet facility. After registration access to myUnisa on a regular basis is compulsory.
- NSC: (i) Minimum achievement rating of 4 in Computer Application Technology or Information Technology; OR (ii) passed computer studies; OR (iii) hold an Industry Standard qualification such as the ICDL in Computer Literacy.

(vi) If the student intends registering for PHYSICS

- NSC: Minimum achievement rating of 5 in Mathematics (not Maths Literacy) and Physical Sciences
- SC: D symbol (HG) in Physical Sciences and Mathematics; or A symbol (SG) in Physical Sciences and Mathematics at school leaving.

(vii) If the student intends registering for the ND: ENGINEERING

- NSC: Minimum achievement rating of 4 in (i) Mathematics (not Maths Literacy); (ii) Physical Science; and (iii) and Engineering or Technology subject, or Computer subject
- SC: E symbol (HG) in Mathematics and Physical Science; or D symbol (SG) in Mathematics and Physical Science
- N3 Certificate: A minimum mark of 50% in Mathematics and Engineering Science. For Engineering: Chemical Industrial Chemistry N3 is also required.
- N4 Certificate: A minimum mark of 50% in mathematics and Engineering Science. For Engineering: Chemical Industrial Chemistry N4 is also required.

WAY FORWARD

9. The proposals will be submitted to the STLSC for the May 2010 meeting.

10. The final recommendations will be submitted to Senate in June 2010. Senate to provide guidance as to whether the decision may be applied for 2011 given that none of the information is contained in the Applications Brochure (myChoice@Unisa.ac.za). However, it is suggested that there will be no prejudice to Applicants and that the rule may be applied to new students in 2011.

11. The Admissions Policy may be amended to accommodate the changes. However, the Admissions Policy approved by Council provides that admission criteria per qualification is determined by the University Senate and contained in the relevant College Calendars. Therefore, once Senate approves the rule, it may be implemented by the University.
MEMO

From: The Executive Dean
College of Economic and Management Sciences

To: The Director
Office of the Academic Planner

CC: ODL Task team 1

24 April 2010

Dear Prof Havenga,

GENERIC UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIVERSITY

In 2008/2009 The College of Economic and Management Sciences (CEMS) developed a set of undergraduate admission requirements for the College which were conditionally approved by Senate on 17 March 2010.

ODL task team 1 was recently commissioned to develop a set of generic undergraduate admission requirements (if possible) for the University as a whole and their recommendations have now been circulated to Colleges for comments.

The comments of the College of Economic and Management Sciences, as formulated during its recent Tuition Committee meeting held on 20 April 2010, are as follows:

1. Principles to be considered in developing admission requirements.

(Please note that under the new NQF framework it is only necessary to develop requirements for the Higher Certificate, the Diploma and the Bachelor’s Degree.)

1.1 Statutory admission requirements

Statutory requirements for admission to the three types of qualifications are the minimum requirements for admission to higher education. It must be fulfilled and any deficiency may not be rectified other than by obtaining the required National Senior Certificate (NSC) for a specified qualification.

However, the statutory admission requirements allow for alternative admission possibilities to both the Diploma and the Bachelor’s degree. Besides the required NSC, candidates may also be admitted to Diploma studies based on an appropriate Higher Certificate and to Bachelor’s degree studies based on an appropriate Diploma.

(It would be prudent for Schools/Departments to have at least one Higher Certificate and one Diploma to serve as a mechanism for managing alternative admissions to Diplomas and Bachelor’s Degrees respectively.)

1.2 Generic versus specific requirements

The CEMS supports the notion of a generic set of admission requirements. However, provision should be made in cases where admission to a specific qualification justifies a deviation from the generic requirements (either a lower
or a higher achievement rating than the ratings set for the generic requirements). Obviously, approval should be sought through the various Tuition Committees and Senate, based on a well motivated request.

1.3 Criteria

The Task Team has proposed only one criterion for admission, namely the language of tuition.

The CEMS would prefer the use of more than one criterion in the development of additional admission requirements to fulfil its mandate to manage open access. Using both the language of tuition and mathematics/mathematical literacy as criteria opens up more possibilities to manage access than with only one criterion. The very strong correlation between Grade 12 performance in both the language of tuition and mathematics on the one side and University success on the other side must not be ignored. We are of the opinion that the use of an achievement rating of 3 or better for either mathematics of mathematical literacy for admission to both the Diploma and the Bachelor’s degree in addition to the proposed achievement rating of 4 or better for the language of tuition for admission to both the Diploma and the Bachelor’s degree as additional admission requirements for the University as a whole, would be more appropriate for the University. The CEMS therefore, does not support the use of only one criterion.

1.4 Achievement ratings

In the development of the statutory admission requirements, the cascading principle with respect to achievement ratings was used to develop requirements for the three levels of qualifications. This principle was not applied in the requirements proposed by the task team.

However, the CEMS will for the sake of consistency supports the task team’s proposal regarding the required achievement rating for the language of tuition for the three levels of qualifications.

1.4 Restricted enrolment

The task team proposes a restriction on candidates who do not comply with the additional admission requirements. The suggestion is that such candidates should not be allowed to enrol for five modules per semester (10 per year) during their first year of study.

Although this might be a possible access management tool, the CEMS does not support the proposal for the simple reason that it would jeopardise the required throughput rate and that it would cause an administrative nightmare to deal with queries from candidates in this regard.

1.5 Articulation and interventions

No intervention may be allowed where the minimum statutory admission requirements for a qualification are not met. Candidates who do not comply with the minimum statutory requirements for admission to the Bachelor’s Degree must be referred to an appropriate Diploma and likewise must candidates who do not comply with the statutory requirements for admission to the Diploma be referred to an appropriate Higher Certificate. Besides referrals to lower NQF exit level qualifications, remedial interventions should be available for all possible cases where candidates do not meet additional requirements for admission to the various qualifications. On this issue, the CEMS supports the proposal of the Task team.
2. Summary of the proposed admission requirements

2.1 The Higher Certificate

Accept the statutory admission requirements for admission to this qualification with either Afrikaans or English as NSC subjects at either home, first additional or second additional level specified as the language of tuition for UNISA. The CEMS require one additional requirement in that an achievement rating of 4 or better is required in cases where learners have elected Mathematical Literacy as a NSC subject instead of Mathematics. The CEMS is planning to provide for remedial support in cases where candidates do not meet this additional admission requirement.

2.2 The Diploma

Accept the statutory admission requirements for admission to this qualification with either Afrikaans or English as NSC subjects at either home, first additional or second additional level specified as the language of tuition for UNISA. Both the task team and the CEMS recognise the possibility to advise candidates who do not qualify for admission to this qualification based on their NSC to divert to an appropriate Higher Certificate. The task team proposed one additional requirement in that an achievement rating of 4 or better is required for the language of tuition. (This proposal does not follow the cascading principle, in which case an achievement of 3 or better would have been appropriate). The CEMS supports this proposal for consistency sake. In addition to this first additional admission requirement, the CEMS proposes a second additional requirement in that an achievement rating of 3 or better is required for Mathematics or in cases where learners have elected Mathematical Literacy as a NSC subject instead of Mathematics, an achievement rating of 5 or better. Both the task team and the CEMS provided for remedial support in cases where candidates do not meet additional admission requirement.

2.3 The Bachelor’s Degree

Accept the statutory admission requirements for admission to this qualification with either Afrikaans or English as NSC subjects at either home, first additional or second additional level specified as the language of tuition for UNISA. Both the task team and the CEMS recognise the possibility to advise candidates who do not qualify for admission to this qualification based on their NSC, to divert to an appropriate Diploma. The task team proposed one additional requirement in that an achievement rating of 4 or better is required for the language of tuition. The CEMS support this proposal. In addition to this first additional admission requirement, the CEMS proposed a second additional requirement in that an achievement rating of 4 or better is required for Mathematics or in cases where learners have elected Mathematical Literacy as a NSC subject instead of Mathematics, an achievement rating of 6 or better. Both the task team and the CEMS provided for remedial support in cases where candidates do not meet additional admission requirement.

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Executive Dean

College of Economic and Management Sciences