



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

STUDENT ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. POLICY PARTICULARS

DATE OF APPROVAL BY SENATE: 27 August 2010

DATE OF APPROVAL BY COUNCIL: 9 September 2010

COMMENCEMENT DATE: October 2010

REVISION HISTORY: First version produced in 2010

REVIEW DATE: Every three (3) years (unless an urgent amendment is necessary)

POLICY LEVEL: All university staff and students

RESPONSIBILITY:

- IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING: Registrar's Division, Student Recruitment Office, Deans, Teaching & Learning Committee, Office of DVC: Academic & Student Affairs
- REVIEW AND REVISION: To be initiated by the Teaching & Learning Committee

REPORTING STRUCTURE: Teaching & Learning Committee → Faculty Boards → IPC → Senex → Senate → Council

Rhodes University Student Admissions Policy

1. Purpose of the policy

The *Higher Education Act* Number 101 of 1997 proclaims the desirability of pursuing “excellence”, promoting “the full realisation of the potential of every student”, ensuring “representativity and equal access”, redressing “past discrimination” and the “appreciation of diversity”.

Section 37 of the *Act* stipulates that the governing body of a University “determines the admission policy”, the “entrance requirements in respect of particular higher education programmes” and “the number of students who may be admitted for a particular higher education programme and the manner of their selection”.

The governing body, however, “must publish the admission policy and make it available on request”. Furthermore, the admission policy “must provide appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities and may not unfairly discriminate in any way”.

In accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Act, the purpose of the Student Admissions Policy is to

- A Set out Rhodes University’s principles and approach relating to the admission of students to the University;
- A Provide information and guidance to prospective applicants, parents, university staff and others, on the university’s requirements for admission to Rhodes University;
- A Support and advance the University’s strategic objectives as articulated in the University’s mission and vision statement, and in relation to its enrolment planning, size and shape goals, and social equity and other commitments.

2. Scope of application of the policy

This policy applies to all applications for admission to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at Rhodes University. It does not apply to re-admission requirements, appeals against admission, admission by transfer and registration rules as these are regulated by other relevant and specific policies of the university.

3. Principles

Rhodes University

- 3.1 Is committed to equitable, fair, transparent, and consistent admission procedures and processes.
- 3.2 Is committed to recruiting students of high quality and potential who can benefit from its academic offerings regardless of class, race, gender, sex, marital status, ethnic origin,

disability status (subject to the provisions of the university's student disability policy), sexual orientation, age, political or religious beliefs, culture, language, social or economic background.

- 3.3 Acknowledges the need to redress the inequities and imbalances of the past and for its student body to reflect progressively the demographics and diversity of the South African society.
- 3.4 Is committed to advancing the objectives of equity of access, opportunity and success.
- 3.5 Is committed to ensuring equity of opportunity and success in the different fields and levels of study through outstanding teaching, appropriate facilities and effective academic and other support that the University can reasonably provide.
- 3.6 Recognizes that access to higher education entails more than just physical access, but also epistemological access or substantive access to the construction of knowledge.
- 3.7 Recognizes that its location in the town of Grahamstown/Rhini in the Eastern Cape Province places on it a special responsibility to provide educational opportunities for students from the town and province.
- 3.8 Values the participation and contribution of international students in providing a rich and diverse intellectual, educational and social environment at Rhodes University.

It follows that the overarching goal of this admissions policy is to achieve academic access and success based on social equity. Firstly, it seeks to achieve social equity with respect to the composition of the student body at Rhodes University. Secondly, it seeks to address the broader issue of social equity in our community, in South Africa, and even further afield by identifying the specific strategies and mechanisms which will facilitate the admission of students who have the potential and promise of becoming leaders in the realization of a just and equitable social order.

“Social equity” in the context of this policy thus functions as a means of redress. It recognizes that because of injustices which have occurred against members of various groups (based on race, colour, religion, creed, gender, disability, etc) academic accomplishment cannot serve as the sole criterion for admission to the institution. It is essential that every applicant demonstrates sufficient academic accomplishment to succeed at Rhodes, but additional criteria will be used to determine which applicants merit admission to the University. These criteria will include, but not be limited to, the school attended, geographic origin, race, gender, family income level, home language, civic involvement, special talents and abilities, nationality, hardships overcome (e.g., emotional, psychological, familial or material).

4. *Minimum admission requirements*

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

Faculties and academic departments may, in addition to the minimum admission requirements, set faculty-specific or department-specific criteria and require specific levels of achievement.

Entry requirements, which may change from time to time, are published annually in the *Rhodes University Student Handbook* or on the university website.

4.1 Bachelor's Degree

4.1.1 Minimum statutory requirements for South African applicants:

To be considered for admission to Rhodes University for an undergraduate course leading to a degree, an applicant must be in possession of a *National Senior Certificate* (NSC) with

- A 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	Mathematics
Economics	Mathematical Literacy
Engineering Graphics and Design	Music
Geography	Physical Sciences
History	Religion Studies
Consumer Studies	Visual Arts

- A a minimum achievement rating of 4 in English as Home Language or First Additional Language (English is the Language of Teaching and Learning at Rhodes University).

4.1.2 Admission into a degree programme is normally based on the applicant's Admission Points Score (APS) and the combination of subjects taken for the NSC. The table below indicates how the admission points are calculated:

NSC Rating	Percentage	RU APS for English	RU APS for Life Orientation	RU APS for other subjects
7	90 – 100	16	4	8
	80 – 90	14	3	7
6	70 – 79	12	2	6
5	60 – 69	10	1	5
4	50 – 59	8	0	4
3	40 – 49	0	0	0
2	30 – 39	0	0	0
1	0 – 29	0	0	0

A minimum Admission Points Score of 40 is normally required for automatic admission to Rhodes University. Each year the minimum Admission Points Score will be determined by the University, tabled at the Institutional Planning Committee and submitted to the Senate for approval.

Applicants whose admission points fall in the range 30 – 39 are encouraged to apply for admission provided they are able to support their case on the strength of hardships (e.g., emotional, psychological, familial or material) that they have overcome. Where an applicant's Admission Points Score falls below the minimum specified for automatic admission, performance on the National Benchmark Tests will be considered, along with other indicators, to inform decisions at the Dean's discretion.

4.1.3 International students

To be considered for admission to Rhodes University for course leading to a degree, an international student should have

- A An appropriate educational qualification deemed by Rhodes University to be equivalent to the National Senior Certificate with the minimum performance requirements as set out in 4.1.1 above.
- A Where the applicant has completed studies in a language other than English, evidence such as Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) will be required.

4.2 Postgraduate studies

- 4.2.1 The minimum requirement for admission into an Honours degree is normally an undergraduate degree in an appropriate field of study or its equivalent (NQF level 7 qualification) as approved by Senate.
- 4.2.2 The minimum requirement for admission into a Master's degree is normally an Honours degree in an appropriate field of study or its equivalent (NQF level 8 qualification) as approved by Senate.
- 4.2.3 The minimum admission requirement into a doctoral study programme is normally a Master's degree in an appropriate field of study or its equivalent (NQF level 9 qualification) as approved by Senate.
- 4.2.4 The minimum admissions requirements as set out in 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 above notwithstanding, Senate has the discretion to admit into Honours, Master's and doctoral studies any applicant who, in its opinion has attained an appropriate level of competency, regardless of formal qualifications achieved by the applicant.

5. Extended Studies Programme

Rhodes University recognizes that students from socially and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds may have National Senior Certificate results that do not reflect their potential to succeed at university. Performance in the National Senior Certificate Examinations is therefore not to be used as the sole admissions criterion. The Extended Studies Programme provides an alternative access route for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It also provides such

students with a carefully designed learning programme and supportive learning environment to enhance their chances of success at Rhodes University.

6. *Financial Aid*

The University recognizes that there are students with academic merit who are unable to pursue university studies because of lack of financial means. The University will work closely with the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and other funding agencies to secure funding for academically talented students who lack financial resources to study at Rhodes University. The University Council will also continue to set aside funds to assist financially needy students.

7. *Recognition of prior learning*

- 7.1 Applicants who do not meet the minimum admission requirements as set out in 4 above may nevertheless be eligible for admission to the university on the basis of life or work experience in accordance with the university's policy on Recognition of Prior Learning. Applicants who wish to gain admission to Rhodes University on the basis of prior learning will be assessed by academic experts with appropriate assessment experience to determine their competence levels in their intended area of study.
- 7.2 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 to enter at the level at which they are applying.

8. *Implementation, Monitoring and review of policy*

- 8.1 The Teaching and Learning Committee of Senate is responsible for monitoring recruitment and admissions policies and practices.
- 8.2 The Registrar's Division and Academic Deans are responsible for the implementation of the university's Admissions Policy.

9. Appendix

Regulatory framework underpinning the University's Admissions Policy:

9.1 National legislation

The University's Admissions Policy operates within the following legislative framework:

- (a) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)
- (b) Higher Education Act 1997 (Act No 101 of 1997)
- (c) National Qualifications Framework
- (d) Revised Policy on National Senior Certificate Minimum Admission Requirements (No. 751, 11 May 2008)

9.2 University policies

- (a) Equity Policy
- (b) Policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning
- (c) Policy on Teaching and Learning