



education

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SUBJECT GUIDELINES

BUSINESS PRACTICE

NQF Level 3

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BUSINESS PRACTICE – LEVEL 3

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INTRODUCTION

A. What is Business Practice?

Business Practice introduces students to the business environment and selected business sectors. The subject focuses on skills, knowledge, values and attitudes in relation to the student's own context and experience of the world of work.

B. Why is Business Practice important in the Office Administration programme?

A sound knowledge of business practice will serve students as a usable foundation in an office environment. The subject prepares students for the world of work in general and for planning and organising work in a business environment in particular. The practical components of business practice will increase students' competence levels in such a way that they will be productive in positions for which office skills are required.

C. The link between the Business Practice Learning Outcomes and the Critical and Developmental Outcomes

In Business Practice, students develop the skill to plan before commencing any work. Students learn to understand and adapt to the social environment by meaningfully interpreting office practices which they will come across in their future lives. They develop the logical thought processes so that instead of relying on set rules, they are able to apply basic office principles to new and unfamiliar situations. Students also develop a systematic approach to problem solving.

D. Factors that contribute to achieving the Business Practice Learning Outcomes

Students interested in commerce or the business world will benefit by doing Business Practice. This subject focuses on the skills necessary for the office or personal assistant function of any business and is essential for any student exploring management as a future career opportunity. Students will acquire the core skills of handling information, technology and communication and secretarial skills, practices and procedures in a business environment. Students will also develop the ability to communicate effectively in an office environment and the ability to be creative and people-centred in an office environment.

Students who have specific characteristics such as thoroughness, accuracy and orderliness will enjoy Business Practice.

1 DURATION AND TUITION TIME

This is a one year instructional programme comprising 200 teaching and learning hours. The subject may be offered on a part-time basis provided all of the assessment requirements are adhered to.

Course preparation should consider students with special education needs (LSEN).

2 SUBJECT LEVEL FOCUS

The general/overall aim of the subject at this level is to equip the students with the necessary skills to contribute towards the effective functioning in an office environment.

3 ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Internal assessment (50 percent)

All marks are systematically processed and accurately recorded to be available as hard copy evidence for, amongst others, purposes of moderation and verification, as well as for purposes of reporting.

3.1.1 Theoretical Component

The theoretical component of Business Practice will form 40 percent of the internal assessment. Weekly assessments are necessary on all theoretical work and this can be done by short assessments that can be incorporated in the year mark. Short assessments are important but cannot replace the final assessment of each topic or the semester assessment. The theoretical component can be assessed individually or in groups using a variety of assessment instruments.

3.1.2 Practical Component/Application Component

The practical component of Business Practice will form 60 percent of the internal assessment. All practical components must be indicated in a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE).

Practical assessment will be done in the simulated enterprise (SIM) and evidence will be placed in the PoE as evidence. Integration of practical work and theory will be assessed throughout the year in the form of tasks, case studies and practical application exercises.

- **Some examples of practical assessments include, but are not limited to:**

- Presentations (lectures, demonstrations, group discussions and activities, practical work, observation, role play, self activity, judging and evaluation)
- Use of aids
- Exhibitions
- Visits
- Guest speaker presentations
- Research
- Structured environment

- **Definition of the term “Structured Environment”**

Structured environment for the purposes of assessment refers to an actual or simulated workplace, or workshop environment. It is advised that a practicum room is available on each campus for practical assessment.

- **Evidence in practical assessments**

All evidence pertaining to evaluation of practical work must be reflected in the students' Portfolio of Evidence. The tools and instruments constructed and used for the purpose of conducting such assessments must be clear from evidence contained in the PoE.

3.1.3 Processing of internal assessment mark for the year

A year mark out of 100 is calculated by adding the marks of the theoretical component and the practical component of the internal continuous assessment.

3.1.4 Moderation of internal assessment mark

Internal assessment is subject to both internal and external moderation procedures as contained in the *National Examinations Policy for FET College Programmes*.

3.2 External assessment (50 percent)

A national examination is conducted annually in October or November by means of a paper/s set internally and marked and moderated externally.

Details in respect of external assessment are contained in the *Assessment Guidelines: Business Practice* (Level 3).

4 WEIGHTED VALUES OF TOPICS

TOPICS	WEIGHTED VALUE
1. Employment relations in an organisation	15%
2. Function in a business environment	20%
3. Selected business environment	25%
4. Resolving conflict in the workplace	15%
5. Induction of new staff in the workplace	15%
6. Plan and conduct basic research	10%
TOTAL	100

5 CALCULATION OF FINAL MARK

Internal assessment: Student's mark/100 x 50 = a mark out of 50 (a)

Examination mark: Student's mark/100 x 50 = a mark out of 50 (b)

Final mark: (a) + (b) = a mark out of 100

All marks are systematically processed and accurately recorded to be available as hard copy evidence for, amongst others, purposes of moderation and verification, as well as for purposes of reporting.

6 PASS REQUIREMENTS

The student must obtain at least fifty (50) percent in ICASS and fifty (50) in the examination.

7 SUBJECT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of Business Practice Level 3 the student should have covered the following topics:

- Topic 1: Employment relations in an organisation
- Topic 2: Function in a business environment
- Topic 3: Selected business environment
- Topic 4: Resolving conflict in the workplace
- Topic 5: Induction of new staff in the workplace.
- Topic 6: Plan and conduct basic research

7.1 Topic 1: Employment relations in an organisation

7.1.1 Subject Outcome 1: Identify and explain the roles of the various stakeholders in an organisation.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Identify different stakeholders correctly.
- Explain the roles of identified stakeholders correctly.

7.1.2 Subject Outcome 2: Identify and explain organisational employment policies and procedures.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Identify relevant employment policies and procedures correctly.
- Provide a satisfactory explanation of the mechanics of grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- Utilise grievance procedures correctly

7.1.3 Subject Outcome 3: Identify and explain employment related agreements.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Correctly identify various types of employment related agreements
- Explain relevant conditions of employment in an organisation.

7.2 Topic 2: Function in a business environment

7.2.1 Subject Outcome 1: Describe safety principles for general operation of electrical equipment.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Describe and apply safety principles for general operation of electrical equipment.

7.2.2 Subject Outcome 2: Describe various filing systems

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- File documents correctly (index, alphanumeric)

7.2.3 Subject Outcome 3: Explain the importance of all staff understanding the functions and use of office equipment

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Explain the importance of all staff understanding the function and use of office equipment.

7.2.4 Subject Outcome 4: Describe the extent of own responsibility in the office.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Describe the extent of his/her own responsibility in the office.

7.2.5 Subject Outcome 5: Explain the importance of being sensitive to other people's cultures and needs

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Describe issues requiring confidentiality and explain the importance of maintaining confidentiality regarding each issue.

7.2.6 Subject Outcome 6: Decide how one can contribute to the overall effectiveness of the team.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Work effectively in a team given a particular team of people.

7.2.7 Subject Outcome 7: Prioritise work

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Decide how work should be prioritised and give reasons for making the decision when given a particular workload

7.2.8 Subject Outcome 8: Operate office equipment effectively

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Use the fax machine, photocopier and switchboard effectively

7.2.9 Subject Outcome 9: Maintain security surrounding documentation and equipment and give reasons for doing so.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Motivate and maintain security surrounding documentation and equipment

7.2.10 Subject Outcome 10: Describe the range of office consumables that may be replenished.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Describe the range of office consumables which may be replenished, and replenish when necessary

7.2.11 Subject Outcome 11: File documents using a recognised filing system and ensure easy access to all relevant persons, while securing the files against unauthorised access.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- File documents using a recognised filing system
- Provide access to relevant persons using established procedures
- Secure files against unauthorised access
- Provide examples of situations where it is acceptable to deviate from established procedures with motivations.

7.2.12 Subject Outcome 12: Analyse and distribute business information, ensuring that individual needs are met.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Analyse and distribute business information by using faxes and messages.

7.2.13 Subject outcome 13: Make arrangements to repair equipment that is not in good working order.

Learning outcome

The student should be able to:

- Arrange the repair of equipment that is not in good working order.

7.2.14 Subject outcome 14: Suggest ways in which one could learn how office technology operates.

Learning outcome

The student should be able to:

- Suggest how one could learn to use new office technology entering the workplace

7.3 Topic 3: Selected business environment

7.3.1 Subject Outcome 1: Explain the structure and roles of different types of organisations within their own industry in South Africa.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Name and explain the various types of organisations, using terminology accepted within their own industry.
- Explain the roles of the different types of organisations in the context of the business environment.
- Identify business activities common to all organisations within the business sector, using readily available information.
- Identify two examples of companies in each business sub-sector from advertisements in the media.
- Identify four of the main players in the business field. List and categorise their products or services

7.3.2 Subject Outcome 2: Explain the concept of a market as applied to a selected business sector.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Identify the principles of trade that define markets at a basic level of understanding.
- Differentiate the basic principles for marketing products from the basic principles for marketing services.
- Explain the role of a selected business sector in the national economy in the context of the business environment.
- Explain the value chain in the way business is conducted in the sector and illustrate with examples.

7.3.3 Subject Outcome 3: Identify and describe the role of professional bodies (associations or regulatory authorities) in or affecting a selected business sector

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Explain the reasons for the existence of professional bodies, associations and regulatory authorities within or affecting this sector in the context of the roles that they play.
- Identify three professional bodies, associations or regulatory authorities for each of the sub-sectors.
- Outline the benefits of belonging to a selected professional body, association or regulatory authority within the sector from the perspective of both the organisation and the individual.
- Access information about two of the professional bodies, associations or regulatory authorities from its website or an industry publication.

7.3.4 Subject Outcome 4: Discuss the market position of a selected organisation in the relevant sub-sector

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Tabulate and compare a list of 10 of the products and/ or services marketed by a selected organisation with equivalent products and/ or services of competitor organisations.
- Describe the organisation's current competitive position, based on available audited data.
- Compare the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation with those of its two major competitors.
- Explain the opportunities and threats facing the organisation with reference to the external environment.

7.4 Topic 4: Resolving conflict in the workplace

7.4.1 Subject Outcome 1: Understand and explain different conflict situations in the workplace.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- List different conflict situations that occur in the workplace.
- Give examples of conflict situations and describe the conflicts.
- List role-players in conflict situations.
- List and discuss reasons why conflict occurs.

7.4.2 Subject Outcome 2: Identify and explain the difference between feelings and actual problems (contents) when dealing with conflict

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Discuss behaviour of different people in a conflict situation.
- Discuss own feelings when in a conflict situation.
- Discuss own behaviour when in a conflict situation.
- Demonstrate reaction in a conflict situation.

7.4.3 Subject Outcome 3: Handle and resolve conflict in the workplace.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Identify and explain methods to resolve conflict.
- Demonstrate conflict situation and possible methods of resolving the conflict by means of a role-play.

7.5 Topic 5: Induction of new staff in the workplace

7.5.1 Subject Outcome 1: Understand and explain why new staff must be orientated in the workplace

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Explain the importance of familiarising new staff with the workplace.
- Explain the importance of checking that new staff understand their responsibilities.
- Explain the difference between introducing a new staff member to the workplace and inducting a new staff member.

7.5.2 Subject Outcome 2: Make decisions about induction practice and act accordingly.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Welcome new staff to the organisation and familiarise them with relevant site facilities
- Introduce new staff to fellow workers.
- Explain basic work routines and organisational procedures in the area of work in sufficient detail to enable understanding of what is required.
Range of basic work routines: location of facilities, responsibilities, work procedures
- Encourage new staff to ask questions and seek clarification
- Where necessary, assist new staff in the initial performance of allocated work activities.

7.5.3 Subject Outcome 3: Demonstrate the ability to learn from own actions and adapt performance.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Suggest ways to improve the existing induction programme

7.6 Topic 6: Plan and conduct basic research

7.6.1 Subject Outcome 1: Plan a simple research project

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Plan a simple research project.

7.6.2 Subject Outcome 2: Gather and collate data relevant to the research question or problem.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Gather and collect qualitative research methodologies that include case studies, interviews, observations, focus groups and content analysis.
- Quantitative methodologies may include interviews, structured questionnaires and historical data collection.

7.6.3 Subject Outcome 3: Analyse the data obtained from the research.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Analysis range: Analysis methods may include ranking, response frequencies, trends, and ranges sorted by demographics, type of information, organisational structure or any other logical and useful division. More complex statistical and research techniques are excluded.

7.6.4 Subject Outcome 4: Prepare and present a report and recommendations based on the findings of the research.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Prepare and present a report and recommendations based on the findings of the research:
Range: In addition to the written report, an oral presentation including slides showing appropriate graphics is expected.

7.6.5 Subject Outcome 5: Evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of the research.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness and utility of the research:
Range: Evaluation includes the effectiveness of the selected techniques with reference to research purpose.

8 RESOURCE NEEDS FOR THE TEACHING OF BUSINESS PRACTICE - LEVEL 3

8.1 Physical resources

The following teaching aids should be made available, if possible:

- **Practicum room: (Simulated room - SIM)**
 - A simulated enterprise in which students can gain practical experience within an office environment.
 - With a simulated office environment and necessary electronic equipment, e.g. adding machine, cash registers calculators, filing cabinets
 - Computer and data projector to electronically project data must be available to facilitator; or
 - The facilitator must provide students with examples to be completed in practical assignments.
 - The latest developments in electronic equipment must be available.

- **Media centre**

- Availability of computers and printers for students to complete assignments/case studies and do research.
- Access to Internet for students.
- Trading magazines, daily newspapers and subject related reference books for research by students.
- Subject related DVDs/videos
- List of guest speakers
- List of website addresses for subject related research.
- Legislation/Acts for use by lecturers during lessons and by students for research purposes.
- Research software e.g. Encarta.
- Stock room to store video/DVD machines, televisions, etc.
- Security for stock room

- **Class room**

- Flash disk for facilitator to store information.
- White board, black board
- Desks for students big enough to work on alone and in groups
- Chairs

8.2 Human resources:

- **Lecturer/facilitator**

- Applicable 3 year diploma; or
- Applicable 4 year degree; and/ or
- Diploma/degree in education
- Declared competence as assessor and/or moderator
- Trained in OBE

8.3 Other Resources:

- Text books
- Lever arch file for each student to serve as portfolio of evidence
- Subscription fees for Internet, industry magazines, newspapers.
- Computer disk for each student