

**FORMAL DEGREE/DIPLOMA/CERTIFICATE  
PROGRAMME CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE  
MANUAL**

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MANUAL: SAPSE-004 (95/10)

SECOND EDITION

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Department of Education  
Private Bag X895, PRETORIA, 0001  
Republic of South Africa

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**PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION**

The updating of this manual forms part of the adjustment to the SAPSE information system. Due to the fact that technikons are allowed to award vocationally oriented degrees it was necessary to change the classification structure for qualification type and course level accordingly.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

In this manual a system is developed for the classification of formal post-secondary degrees/diplomas/certificates offered by South African post-secondary education institutions.

May 1982

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In this manual a system is developed for the classification of formal post-secondary degrees/diplomas/certificates offered by South African universities and technikons. The classification scheme used includes the qualification type, course level, fields of study and credit values of instructional offerings. The tables which have in fact to be submitted each year in respect of formal qualifications are given in Chapter 1 of manual *SAPSE-010: Information Survey Manual*.

**CHAPTER 2: QUALIFICATION TYPE****2.1 Definition**

Qualification type is defined as the levels at which an institution offers formal awards or recognition. Note that only qualifications at the post-secondary level are relevant. The following categories should be used: .....

**2.2 Universities**

1. **Undergraduate Diploma or Certificate** - A diploma or certificate which does not have a bachelor's degree as prerequisite for admission to the programme.
2. **General Academic First Bachelor's Degree** - A first bachelor's degree with a duration of three years. A first bachelor's degree is one for which a matriculation exemption certificate is a minimum prerequisite for admission to the programme.
3. **Professional First Bachelor's Degree** - A first bachelor's degree with a duration of four or more years.
4. **Post-graduate Diploma or Certificate** - A diploma or certificate with a bachelor's degree as prerequisite for admission to the programme.
5. **Post-graduate Bachelor's Degree** - A bachelor's degree with a first bachelor's degree as prerequisite for admission to the programme.
6. **Honours Degree**
7. **Master's Degree**
8. **Doctoral Degree**

### 2.3 Technikons

1. **National Certificate** - 1 year study (M+1) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent.
2. **National Higher Certificate** - 2 years study (M+2) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 1 year study after obtaining an appropriate national certificate or equivalent.
3. **National Diploma** - 3 years study (M+3) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 1 year study after obtaining an appropriate national higher certificate or equivalent.
4. **Post-diploma Diploma** - 1 year study after obtaining an appropriate national diploma or equivalent.
5. **National Higher Diploma** - 4 years study (M+4) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 1 year study after obtaining an appropriate national diploma or equivalent.
6. **Baccalaureus Technologiae Degree** - 4 years study (M+4) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 1 year study after obtaining an appropriate national diploma or equivalent (a baccalaureus technologiae degree contains more fundamental scientific content than a national higher diploma).
7. **Master's Diploma in Technology** - 5 years study (M+5) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 1 year study after obtaining an appropriate national higher diploma or equivalent.
8. **Magister Technologiae Degree** - 5 years study (M+5) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 1 year study after obtaining an appropriate baccalaureus technologiae degree or equivalent.
9. **Laureatus in Technology** - 7 years study (M+7) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 2 years study after obtaining an appropriate master's diploma in technology or equivalent.

10. Doctor Technologiae Degree - 7 years study (M+7) after obtaining a senior certificate or equivalent, or 2 years study after obtaining an appropriate magister technologiae degree or equivalent.

## CHAPTER 3: ENTRANCE LEVEL

### 3.1 Definition

The entrance level of an instructional programme is defined as the minimum academic prerequisite for admission to the programme. The levels to be distinguished are as follows: <sup>1)</sup>

### 3.2 Universities

1. Below Senior Certificate
2. Senior Certificate
3. Matriculation Exemption Certificate
4. Undergraduate Diploma or Certificate
5. General Academic First Bachelor's Degree
6. Professional First Bachelor's Degree
7. Post-graduate Diploma or Certificate
8. Post-graduate Bachelor's Degree
9. Honours Degree
10. Master's Degree
11. Doctoral Degree

### 3.3 Technikons

1. Below Senior Certificate
2. Senior Certificate
3. National Certificate
4. National Higher Certificate
5. National Diploma
6. Post-diploma Diploma
7. National Higher Diploma
8. Baccalaureus Technologiae Degree
9. Master's Diploma in Technology
10. Magister Technologiae Degree
11. Laureatus in Technology
12. Doctor Technologiae Degree

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<sup>1)</sup> N.B. If no specific academic prerequisite is set, use Code 1.

## CHAPTER 4: STUDY TIME, SUBSIDY TERMS AND FIELDS OF STUDY

### 4.1 Minimum Preparatory Study

The minimum number of years (to the nearest tenth of a year) of full-time post-secondary study that should have been completed before a candidate can commence studies for the degree/diploma/certificate under consideration.

### 4.2 Minimum Total Time

The minimum total number of years (to the nearest tenth of a year) of full-time post-secondary study needed for completion of the instructional programme leading to the particular degree, diploma or certificate.

### 4.3 Minimum Experiential Time

The minimum number of years (to the nearest tenth of a year) of full-time study needed for completion of the experiential part of the instructional programme leading to the particular degree, diploma or certificate. The term "experiential" is defined as follows:

- i) Directed Experiential Learning - Those methods which afford the learner an opportunity of acquiring or applying previously acquired knowledge and skills in a supervised situation that approximates or duplicates the conditions under which the knowledge/skills will be used. The instruction is typically individualised, with a high degree of interaction between the student and the supervisor.

Examples: Hospital internship, apprenticeship.

- ii) Independent Experiential Learning - Those situations in which the learner acquires knowledge or skills through independent experiences there is no formal interaction between the learner and a teacher/agent, but interaction does take place between the learner and individuals encountered in the education experience, as well as between the learner and the actual surroundings.

Example: Architectural student working in architect's office.

For the present purposes experiential training is applicable only in relatively few cases. The qualifications to which experiential training applies and the minimum formal time should be determined in consultation with the Director-General of Education.

#### 4.4 Minimum Formal Time

The difference between the "minimum total time" and the "minimum experiential time".

#### 4.5 Major Fields of Study

In general the major field(s) of study for a degree/diploma/certificate instructional programme can be categorised by one or more second-order CESM categories. The major field(s) of study for a degree/diploma/certificate instructional programme of a particular student is(are) the subject area(s) in which the students may specialise in the final year of (full-time) study. Where a major field of study consists of a set of second-order CESM categories, not just one but all relevant (second-order) codes must be listed.

## CHAPTER 5: COURSE LEVEL

### 5.1 Definitions

#### 5.1.1 Instructional Offering

An instructional offering is a generic term to indicate any component of the formal instructional programme of a student, e.g. subject courses (year, semester or otherwise), topics, theses and dissertations.

#### 5.1.2 Course Level

The intended level of complexity of the material associated with an instructional offering or the level of comprehension required of the students who undertake the instructional offering. However, it is not necessarily based on the year of study (that is, progress towards a degree/diploma/certificate) of the students enrolled for the instructional offering. For example, an elementary statistics course that happens to have an unusually large proportion of third-year students enrolled does not become an advanced course by virtue of the advanced academic level of the participants.

The following guidelines should be used for the classification of instructional offerings into categories:

### 5.2 Universities

1. Lower Undergraduate - instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with university undergraduate diplomas or certificates. All undergraduate offerings which can be taken towards a degree are excluded. Not included is preparatory/remedial instruction.

2. **Intermediate Undergraduate** - instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with a general academic first bachelor's degree. All offerings which can be taken for such degrees, as well as those offerings which can be taken towards a professional first bachelor's degree and which are not included in the next category, are included.
3. **Higher Undergraduate** - instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with the fourth (and subsequent) year(s) of a professional first bachelor's degree. Not included are offerings which can also be taken towards a general academic first bachelor's degree.
4. **Preparatory Post-graduate** - postgraduate instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with first degrees or undergraduate diplomas or certificates. Included are all post-graduate offerings which are at present subsidised on the same basis as undergraduate study. Excluded are any offerings which can also be taken for a first bachelor's degree. Such offerings are either Intermediate or Higher Undergraduate.
5. **Lower Post-graduate** - instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with honours degrees. Included are all post-graduate offerings which are at present subsidised on the same basis as honours degree study.
6. **Intermediate Post-graduate (Non-research)** - non-research instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with one-year master's degrees. Included here are all post-graduate non-research offerings which are at present subsidised on the same basis as master's degree study. However, in those cases where a diploma has the same curriculum as an honours degree the instructional offerings of each are separately classified according to the entrance qualifications.

7. **Intermediate Post-graduate (Research)** - research instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with a master's degree.
8. **Higher Post-graduate (Non-research)** - non-research instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with a doctor's degree.
9. **Higher Post-graduate (Research)** - research instructional offerings at a level of comprehension usually associated with a doctor's degree.

### 5.3 Technikons

1. **Lower Pre-diplomate:** Two levels are distinguished:
  - (i) **Level 1** - Instructional offerings on first year tertiary level (M+1) for which a senior certificate or equivalent is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on national certificate level.
  - (ii) **Level 2** - Instructional offerings on second year tertiary level (M+2) for which a Level 1 instructional offering is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on national higher certificate level.
2. **Intermediate Pre-diplomate (Level 3)** - Instructional offerings on third year tertiary level (M+3) for which a Level 2 instructional offering is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on national diploma level.
3. **Preparatory Post-diplomate (Level 4)** - Instructional offerings for 1 year for which a approved first diploma, certificate or equivalent qualification is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on post-diploma diploma level.

4. Lower Post-diplomate/Higher Undergraduate (Level 4) - Instructional offerings on fourth year tertiary level (M+4) for which a Level 3 instructional offering is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on national higher diploma/baccalaureus technologiae degree level.
5. Intermediate Post-diplomate/Intermediate Post-graduate (Level 5) (Non-research) - Non research instructional offerings on fifth year tertiary level (M+5) for which a Level 4 instructional offering is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on master's diploma in technology/magister technologiae degree level.
6. Intermediate Post-diplomate/Intermediate Post-graduate (Level 5) (Research) - Research instructional offerings on fifth year tertiary level (M+5) for which a Level 4 instructional offering is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on master's diploma in technology/magister technologiae degree level.
7. Higher Post-diplomate/Higher Post-graduate (Level 7) (Non-research) - Non-research instructional offerings on seventh year tertiary level (M+7) for which a Level 5 instructional offering is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on laureatus in technology/doctor technologiae degree level.
8. Higher Post-diplomate/Higher Post-graduate (Level 7) (Research) - Research instructional offerings on seventh year tertiary level (M+7) for which a Level 5 instructional offering is a prerequisite. It is associated with a level of comprehension on laureatus in technology/doctor technologiae degree level.

**CHAPTER 6: CREDIT VALUES****6.1 Definition**

The basic assumption is that the total credit for all instructional offerings of a full-time student is usually one (1) per year.

**6.2 Determining of Credit Values**

In determining the credit values of the instructional offerings of a particular post-secondary institution, the following approach should be adopted:

1. List the minimum number of years (or parts thereof) of full-time study as approved by the appropriate Government authority for the different formal degrees, diplomas and certificates.<sup>1)</sup>
2. For each qualification (i.e. degree, diploma or certificate) that requires the completion of a certain period of experiential training before the qualification is awarded, ascertain the credit for the experiential training part. The credit for the experiential part is equal to the minimum experiential time expressed in years (or parts thereof).<sup>1)</sup>
3. Determine the minimum credit for formal instruction for each qualification by deducting the credit for experiential training from the minimum years of full-time study for that particular qualification.<sup>1)</sup>
4. Distribute the credit for experiential training over the minimum years of full-time study for the particular qualification according to practice. This yields the credit for experiential training pertaining to each year of study.

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1) The minimum total time, the minimum experiential time and the minimum formal time are as listed in Table 1.1 of manual SAPSE-010.

5. Also determine the credit for formal instruction in each year of study by deducting the credit for experiential training in that year from 1.
6. The credit for formal instruction in each year of study should then be divided among all the formal instructional offerings (non-experiential) in that year of study. The credit must be assigned to each instructional offering in such a way that it reflects the fraction of the academic year which the offering counts towards the qualification for which it is offered. Interchangeable offerings in particular should carry the same credit. This then gives the credits for individual instructional offerings. Note that, strictly speaking, an instructional offering should have a separate credit value for each qualification towards which it may be taken.
7. Credits for formal instruction and experiential training should be given to three decimal places.
8. In June of each year the total credits towards the degrees/diplomas/certificates of all students who have qualified for graduation during the previous academic year are calculated. For each approved qualification the average number of credits per graduate should agree with the minimum time period of full-time study for that particular qualification. If the difference is more than 2%, the credits for instructional offerings should be adjusted.
9. In some cases a particular instructional offering will span more than one year. This is usually the case with doctoral theses. In the case of a doctoral thesis for a two-year doctoral degree that consists entirely of a thesis, the thesis will carry a credit of 2. However, when specifying the credit of such an instructional offering for a student who is enrolled in a particular year, only that part of the credit which he will in all probability complete should be regarded as the credit for which he is enrolled. (See Chapter 4 of manual SAPSE-005).

## CHAPTER 7: DISTINCT INSTRUCTIONAL OFFERINGS

### 7.1 Definition

**Distinct Instructional Offerings** - Two instructional offerings are termed non-distinct if inclusion of one in a curriculum precludes the inclusion of the other (i.e. if credit may not be obtained for both) and if credit obtained for the one may be used to obtain (full or partial) exemption from having to obtain credit for the other, and vice versa. Those parts of the two offerings which allow mutual exemption are the non-distinct parts, whereas the remainders are the distinct parts. Two instructional offerings which have no non-distinct parts are distinct.

### 7.2 Examples

In Table 1.3 of manual SAPSE-010 the credits of all distinct instructional offerings and distinct parts of instructional offerings should be included in the totals. The credits of the non-distinct parts should also be included but should be counted once only for each group of non-distinct instructional offerings.

The underlying reason for this distinction is that in determining the total credits offered within a specific CESM category the credits for instructional offerings which differ superficially but not essentially should not be counted twice.

For example, at some universities psychology at the first level can be taken towards different degrees and is labelled accordingly, say -

Psychology I (or Psychology 110 & 120 in the case of semester instructional offerings) B.A.

Psychology I B.Sc.

Psychology I B.A. (S.W.)

However, essentially the same (sometimes identical) subject matter is covered in each instance, so much so, that a student may continue with

Psychology at second level for say, a B.A., irrespective of which first level psychology offering he/she has obtained credit for. Furthermore, it is obvious that only one of these offerings may be included in a degree curriculum. The three instructional offerings are thus non-distinct, and their credit value should only be included once in the relevant total. (If the credit values are different in respect of the different degrees, which is not unlikely, the weighted average should be calculated for inclusion in the total.)

Another example is the case of applied mathematics for engineering and science students at certain universities, particularly at second level. The engineers may follow a shortened offering, Applied Mathematics II A, which consists essentially of a selection of subject matter from the full Applied Mathematics II offering. Should they subsequently (after having obtained credit for Applied Mathematics II A) wish to continue with Applied Mathematics II, they need then obtain credit only for those parts of Applied Mathematics II which they have not yet covered. Thus Applied Mathematics II A and Applied Mathematics II are non-distinct offerings, and only the credit value of the latter should be included in the relevant total.

Conversely, certain instructional offerings are made up of selections of topics or sub-offerings. For example, Mathematics III might consist of a set of five topics chosen from a list of ten or more where all topics in the list are distinct in that any five may be included in the selection. In this case the total of the credit values of all these sub-offerings must be included in the relevant total.

Note, finally, that the fact that one offering precludes the inclusion of another in a curriculum is not in itself sufficient for the two to be labelled as non-distinct. For example, at some universities credit may not be obtained for, say, both Latin I and Special Latin; yet the two are distinct, since credit for Special Latin cannot be used to obtain exemption from Latin I. On the contrary, if the student has no previous training in Latin, Special Latin might well be required as a prerequisite for Latin I.

**CHAPTER 8: CREDIT/NON-CREDIT STATUS**

Many users will want to classify instructional offerings further by describing the appropriate credit/non-credit status of those offerings. Where it is necessary to distinguish offerings that carry credit toward the completion of a formal degree, diploma or certificate from those that do not, the distinctions outlined below should be used:

1. **For credit:** those offerings for which the institution grants credit towards a post-secondary degree, diploma or certificate.

**Not-for-credit:** those offerings for which no credit is granted by the institution. Certificates of various types may, however, be awarded for "not-for-credit" offerings. In such cases it is useful to make the following further distinctions with regard to the programme to which the instructional offerings contribute:

2. **No certificates issued.**
3. **Certificates of Attendance,** which merely certify that a person has attended a particular programme "regularly", are issued.
4. **Certificates of Competence/Proficiency,** which specify that a person has demonstrated a specified level of competence/proficiency in the programme (usually determined by means of class-based experiences and tests, but not examinations), are issued.
5. **Certificates of Successful Completion,** based on the results of a formal written and/or oral examination, are issued.