



**education**

Department:  
Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# **NATIONAL CERTIFICATES (VOCATIONAL)**

## **SUBJECT GUIDELINES**

### **BUSINESS PRACTICE**

#### **NQF LEVEL 2**

September 2007



## 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 transfers 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.

# **BUSINESS PRACTICE – LEVEL 2**

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## 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 the student meets all the assessment requirements.

Students with special education needs (LSEN) must be catered for in a way that eliminates barriers to learning.

## 2 SUBJECT LEVEL FOCUS

The student will develop the necessary skills to organise an office environment effectively.

## 3 ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1 Internal assessment (50 percent)

#### 3.1.1 Theoretical component

The theoretical component forms 40 percent of the internal assessment mark.

Internal assessment of the theoretical component in Business Practice Level 2 takes the form of observation, class questions, group work, informal group competitions with rewards, individual discussions with students, class, topic and semester tests and internal examinations. Lecturers can observe students when marking exercises from the previous day and asking class questions.

Assignments, case studies and tests can be completed at the end of a topic. Tests and internal examinations must form part of the internal assessment.

#### 3.1.2 Practical component

The practical component forms 60 percent of the internal assessment mark.

Practical components include applications and exercises. All practical components must be indicated in a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE).

Internal assessment of the practical component in Business Practice Level 2 takes the form of assignments, practical exercises, case studies and practical examinations in a simulated business environment.

Students may complete practical exercises daily. Assignments and case studies can be completed at the end of a topic. Practical examinations can form part of internal practical assessment.

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

- A. Presentations (lectures, demonstrations, group discussions and activities, practical work, observation, role-play, independent activity, synthesis and evaluation)
- B. Exhibitions by students
- C. Visits undertaken by students based on a structured assignment task
- D. Research
- E. Task performance in a “Structured Environment”

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

For the purposes of assessment, “Structured Environment” refers to a simulated workplace or workshop environment. A practicum room should be available at each campus for practical assessments.

- **Evidence in practical assessments**

All evidence pertaining to evaluation of practical work must be reflected in the students’ Portfolio of Evidence (PoE). The tools and instruments constructed and used to conduct these assessments must be clear from the evidence contained in the Portfolio of Evidence (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 (40 percent) and the practical component (60 percent) of the internal continuous assessment (ICASS).

### 3.1.4 Moderation of internal assessment mark

Internal assessment is subjected to internal and external moderation procedures as set out 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 and moderated externally. A practical component will also be assessed.

External assessment details and procedures are set out in the *Assessment Guidelines: Business Practice (Level 2)*.

## 4 WEIGHTED VALUES OF TOPICS

TOPICS	WEIGHTED VALUE
1. Professional Behaviour in a Business Environment	25%
2. Health, Safety and Security in the Workplace	20%
3. Structure of an Organisation as a Workplace	30%
4. Personal Behaviour in a Workplace	10%
5. Time and Work Processes	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## 5 CALCULATION OF FINAL MARK

Internal assessment mark: 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, reporting, moderation and verification purposes.

## 6 PASS REQUIREMENTS

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

## 7 SUBJECT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

On the completion of Business Practice Level 2, the student should have covered the following topics:

- Topic 1: Professional Behaviour in a Business Environment
- Topic 2: Health, Safety and Security in the Workplace.
- Topic 3: Structure of an Organisation as a Workplace.
- Topic 4: Personal Behaviour in a Workplace
- Topic 5: Time and Work Processes

### 7.1 Topic 1: Professional Behaviour in a Business Environment

**Subject Outcome 1:** Explain and apply professional behaviour in a business environment.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Describe dress code according to established and familiar policy.
- Motivate why it is important to honour working hours and explain the possible effects of not doing this.

- Explain the importance of a positive attitude and indicate qualities of a positive attitude in a familiar context.
- Describe good work practice in terms of keeping colleagues informed about work activities such as work in progress, absence from work or workstation and leave.
- Motivate why listening skills are important in the workplace and provide examples of the effects of applying positive and negative listening skills.
- Describe regulations regarding smoking in the workplace with reference to both legal requirements and established policy.
- Compile and apply a professional code of conduct in a familiar business environment.

**Subject Outcome 2:** Interpret body language in a business environment.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Motivate why it is important to interpret body language correctly in the workplace and provide examples from a selected business context.
- Motivate why good posture and eye contact are important in the workplace and provide examples from a selected business context.
- Explain the proper use of a handshake as a greeting in a business setting and compare the meaning of different handshakes used in South Africa with examples of when it is appropriate to use each handshake.
- Motivate why it is important to respect other people's space and why it is inappropriate to touch other people in a business environment, with examples of the consequences if one ignores business etiquette.
- Describe positive and negative body language in a familiar context.
- Describe, with examples, behaviour that could be considered as sexual harassment in the workplace.

**Subject Outcome 3:** Meet people in a business setting.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Explain why first impressions are important in a business environment.
- Explain and apply established procedures for dealing with unexpected guests.
- Greet guests in the reception area according to established and familiar procedures.
- Welcome guests visiting a manager or superior according to established and familiar procedures.
- Introduce people to each other in a business-like manner.
- Demonstrate different ways of closing an interaction with a customer in a familiar context.

**Subject Outcome 4:** Explain and apply basic business ethics in the business environment.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Discuss the concept of ethics in relation to one's own business environment.
- Outline the meaning of ethical business practices with examples from a familiar context.
- Explain the concept of ethical values in the workplace, with relevant examples.
- Explore sources of ethical values with examples from a selected business environment.
- Describe personal attitudes and factors that affect ethical values in the workplace, with examples from a familiar business context.
- Explore the concept of ethical diversity at a basic level of understanding, using realistic examples from a business context.

## **7.2 Topic 2: Health, Safety and Security in the Workplace**

**Subject Outcome 1:** Identify potential hazards in the workplace.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Identify potential hazards and remove, reduce or report hazards in terms of own level of authority or capacity.
- Explain and give instructions relating to exposure to dangerous substances and hazards in the workplace and explain why they pose a potential threat to the work environment.
- Identify the kinds of work that require protective clothing and explain legal requirements for its use.

- Follow health and safety instructions in situations that require lifting and handling of materials.
- Explain the importance of each employee being vigilant and reporting hazards and violations of health, safety and security procedures with reference to a possible chain of events that could result from not reporting a violation.

**Subject Outcome 2:** Explain how to limit damage to persons or property in the event of an accident or emergency.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Identify the location of fire extinguishers, hoses and alarms in a specific work context.
- Explain the difference between different types of fire extinguisher and identify the use for each correctly.
- Demonstrate the use of a fire extinguisher competently.
- Explain and follow established procedures to identify fires and other emergencies promptly and correctly.
- Identify and report dangerous occurrences accurately and in time according to established policy.
- Report injuries involving individuals promptly to the relevant authority.
- Explain why it is the responsibility of every employee to maintain the safety and security of a selected work environment.

**Subject Outcome 3:** Contribute to the maintenance of security in the workplace.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Explain and follow security procedures competently.
- Identify security risks and actions to deal with these risks within the limits of own authority.
- Identify and report potential security risks outside own authority using familiar and established procedures.
- Note and follow established procedures when suspicious behaviour is observed within limits of own authority.

**Subject Outcome 4:** Explain emergency procedures in the workplace.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Identify established policies for emergencies in a building.
- Explain emergency procedures in a familiar context.
- Identify the locations of the planned assembly points and the shortest routes to such points in a familiar context.
- Interpret the emergency signs in a building correctly.
- Demonstrate actions to assist an injured or sick person in an emergency in a limited range of familiar contexts.
- Explain universal precautions for dealing with HIV/AIDS in a workplace emergency.

### 7.3 Topic 3: Structure of an Organisation as a Workplace

**Subject Outcome 1:** Identify the core business activities of a selected organisation.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Explain the concept of core business with an example from the relevant industry.
- Name specific core business activities with reference to the selected organisation.
- Describe the relationship between the different activities for the selected organisation.
- Describe a system or process in a selected work unit in the correct sequence.
- List examples of ways in which the core business adds value to the organisation.

**Subject Outcome 2:** Identify support functions in a selected organisation.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Explain the concept of support functions with examples from the relevant industry.
- Name specific support functions with reference to the selected organisation.

- Explain the relationship between one support unit and the other business units of the selected organisation at a basic level of understanding.
- List five examples of how the support unit adds value to the organisation.

**Subject Outcome 3:** Explain the role of a selected department and its contribution to the effectiveness of the organisation.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Explain the main function of the selected department or section in relation to core business or support.
- Investigate the structure of an organisation.
- Explain, at a basic level of understanding, the roles of at least two other departments or sections that interact with the selected section or department.
- Identify the most senior person in the department with, where applicable, the title of his or her position.
- Identify the line from the senior person in the department or section to the board of directors.
- Describe, with examples, the effect on the organisation if a department or section does not function effectively.
- Identify, with examples, the value that the department adds to the organisation.

**Subject Outcome 4:** Investigate the different types of work done in the department.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Categorise the work done in the department according to its purpose.
- Discuss the importance of each category of work with reference to the efficiency of the department.
- Identify the different roles in the department and write an outline of the kind of work done in at least three positions.
- Identify the work in the department as part of a set of related systems, each with a role and a value.

## 7.4 Topic 4: Personal Behaviour in the Workplace

**Subject Outcome 1:** Maintain personal hygiene, grooming and dress code to project a professional image and enhance the company image.

**Learning Outcome:**

The student should be able to:

- Apply personal cleanliness with relation to:
  - body odour,
  - fresh breath,
  - well-manicured hands,
  - trimmed moustache or beard,
  - appropriate hairstyle and tasteful make-up, and
  - immaculate uniform or dress

**Subject Outcome 2:** Decide whether to interact with people when ill and follow company procedure when absent due to illness.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- List a range of illnesses and decide whether to interact with people if infected with these illnesses.
- Follow company procedures when absent due to illness.
- Report absence by submitting doctor's certificate and leave forms.

**Subject Outcome 3:** Identify possible unforeseen circumstances to plan alternative action in advance.

**Learning Outcome:**

The student should be able to:

- Identify lack of resources, change in company policy and interruptions beyond control.

**Subject Outcome 4:** Evaluate own current skills and identify skills development areas for likely future work requirements.

**Learning Outcome:**

The student should be able to:

- Evaluate own skills and identify areas for skills development.

**Subject Outcome 5:** Set measurable, achievable objectives for own skills.

**Learning Outcome:**

The student should be able to:

- Set measurable, achievable objectives for own skills development, consistent with needs identified and in line with the organisation's objectives and policies.

**Subject Outcome 6:** Prioritise objectives and plan activities to achieve objectives.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Prioritise objectives.
- Plan successive activities to achieve objectives.

**Subject Outcome 7:** Review progress made and reschedule activities at regular intervals.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Review progress made.
- Reschedule activities at regular intervals to contribute to the achievement of planned objectives.

## 7.5 Topic 5: Time and Work Processes

**Subject Outcome 1:** Create, use and maintain a task list.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Explain the value of using and maintaining a task list in terms of a specific work context.
- Identify tasks to create a task list.
- Identify steps or stages in a familiar set of tasks.
- Sort and prioritise tasks according to type and deadlines.
- Schedule time needed to complete tasks to allow for specified deadlines.
- Record information and documentation required on the task list and flag for further action.
- Receive and capture additional information online or manually.
- Report completed tasks to the appropriate authority and check off the task list.
- Draft an action plan to ensure that outstanding requirements are completed on time.

**Subject Outcome 2:** Use and maintain a diary.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Explain the purpose of keeping a personal diary and an organisational diary system as a self-management tool.
- Record relevant information in the diary or system and update regularly.
- Use diary entries to create an action plan.

**Subject Outcome 3:** Plan and follow a work schedule

**Learning Outcomes:**

The student should be able to:

- Name and record regular daily, weekly and monthly activities on a work schedule.
- Draw up a roster to ensure that all the activities are completed on time.
- Inform internal clients of the aspects of the work schedule that affect them.
- Follow and adjust the schedule when necessary to allow for unexpected interruptions.

## **8 RESOURCE NEEDS FOR THE TEACHING OF BUSINESS PRACTICE – LEVEL 2**

### **8.1 Physical resources**

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

#### **8.1.1 Practicum room**

- A simulated enterprise in which students can gain practical experience within an office environment
- Necessary electronic equipment for an office, for example adding machine, cash registers calculators and filing cabinets
- Computer and data projector to electronically project data

#### **8.1.2 Media centre**

- Computers and printers for students to complete assignments or case studies and do research
- Access to the Internet
- Trading magazines, daily newspapers and subject-related reference books
- Subject-related DVDs or videos
- List of guest speakers
- List of website addresses for subject-related research
- Legislation or acts for use by lecturers during lessons and students for research purposes
- Research software, for example Encarta
- Stockroom to store video or DVD machines, televisions, etc.
- Security for stockroom

#### **8.1.3 Class room**

- Flash disk for facilitator to store information
- White board or black board
- Desks for students big enough to work on alone as well as in groups
- Chairs

### **8.2 Human resources**

The lecturer should have an applicable three-year diploma or four-year degree in education. The lecturer must also have been declared competent as an assessor and/or moderator and be trained in outcomes-based education.

### **8.3 Other resources**

- Text books
- Lever arch file for each student to serve as Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)
- Subscription fees for Internet, industry magazines and newspapers