



education

Department:
Education
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NATIONAL CERTIFICATE (VOCATIONAL)

SUBJECT GUIDELINES

BUSINESS PRACTICE

NQF Level 4

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BUSINESS PRACTICE – LEVEL 4

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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 student with the necessary skills to plan and coordinate meetings and events in the 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 into 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

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 task 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 student’s Portfolio of Evidence. The assessment instruments used for the purpose of conducting such assessments must be part of the 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 4).

4 WEIGHTED VALUES OF TOPICS

TOPICS	WEIGHTED VALUE
1. Personal effectiveness in a business environment	20%
2. Organisational ethics	15%
3. Cultural awareness in dealing with customers and colleagues	15%
4. Efficient time management	15%
5. Working as a project team member	15%
6. Analyse new developments reported in the media	20%
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 percent (50) in the examination.

7 SUBJECT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of Business Practice Level 4 the student should have covered the following topics:

- Topic 1: Personal effectiveness in a business environment
- Topic 2: Organisational ethics.
- Topic 3: Cultural awareness in dealing with customers and colleagues
- Topic 4: Efficient time management
- Topic 5: Working as a project team member.
- Topic 6: Analyse new developments reported in the media

7.1 Topic 1: Personal effectiveness in a business environment

7.1.1 Subject Outcome 1: Plan and organise work.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Understand and explain the business environment in relation to people, legislation, and documentation.
- Describe planning aids and use it with regard to scheduling techniques, time management and work prioritisation, to plan and monitor work.

Range: Diaries, schedules, action plans.

- Identify and prioritise routine and unexpected tasks according to organisational procedures.
- Change work plans accordingly where changes in priority occur.
- Promptly report anticipated difficulties in meeting deadlines to the appropriate person.
- Ask assistance, where necessary, to meet specific demands and deadlines.

7.1.2 Subject Outcome 2: Establish and maintain good working relationships.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Describe teamwork; relationship and conflict management as well as communication styles in relation to the specific organisational culture and context.
- Provide information to internal and external customers with regard to routine requirements and on-off requests.
- Request information and advice from the appropriate people.
- Meet commitments to others within agreed timeframes.
- Use communication methods and styles appropriate to the individual situation.

Range: Written, verbal, electronic.

- Acknowledge any communication difficulties and take action to resolve them.
- Utilise opportunities to promote the image of the department and organisation to internal and external customers.
- Adhere strictly to confidentiality and data protection requirements.

7.2 Topic 2: Organisational Ethics

7.2.1 Subject Outcome 1: Describe codes of conduct in the business environment.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Explain the purpose of a code of conduct.
- Identify and explain the principles of a code of conduct.
- Explain the relationship between the code of conduct and successful marketing.
- Explain the implications of a code of conduct on an organisation.

7.2.2 Subject Outcome 2: Adhere to a code of conduct.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Source and obtain codes of conduct.
- Read, study and explain a code of conduct.
- Implement a code of conduct.
- Identify deviations from the code and take remedial actions to comply.

7.2.3 Subject Outcome 3: Identify and understand ethical issues in the business environment.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Identify and explain ethical issues.
- Compile and implement a code of conduct to manage a specific ethical issue.
- Identify deviations from the code of conduct and take remedial action to comply.

7.3 Topic 3: Cultural awareness in dealing with customers and colleagues

7.3.1 Subject Outcome 1: Understand the importance of being knowledgeable about the culture of overseas visitors.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Explain the importance of being knowledgeable about the culture of international visitors.
- Understand and explain the cultures of visitors and customers from:
 - Eastern and Western Europe, North and South America, Asia, Australia, Southern Africa.
 - Culture: Language (verbal/non-verbal), food and drink preferences, traditions/customs/lifestyles/beliefs.
 - Non-verbal communication: eye contact, gestures.
- Explain the importance of being knowledgeable about the culture of colleagues and managers/supervisors.

7.3.2 Subject Outcome 2: Understand the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Explain the concepts of verbal and non-verbal communication when dealing with tourists.

7.3.3 Subject Outcome 3: Interact with tourists using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication at all times.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Interact verbally and non-verbally with tourists: language; eye contact; gestures and body language.

7.3.4 Subject Outcome 4: Describe steps to prevent or resolve misunderstandings between visitors and staff.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Describe steps to prevent or resolve misunderstandings between visitors and staff.

7.3.5 Subject Outcome 5: Identify South Africa's main international tourist groups.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Identify South Africa's main international tourist groups and describe relevant aspects of their needs as customers.

Range: Groups: Eastern and Western Europe, North and South America, Asia, Australia, Southern Africa.

7.3.6 Subject Outcome 6: Identify the main population groups in South Africa.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Identify the main population groups within the community, workplace and province, and describe their cultures.

Range: Language (verbal/non-verbal), food and drink preferences, traditions/ customs/ lifestyles/beliefs.

7.3.7 Subject Outcome 7: Demonstrate consideration for cultural norms and differences of main population groups.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Demonstrate consideration for cultural norms and differences of main population groups when dealing with customers and people in the workplace.

7.3.8 Subject Outcome 8: Anticipate and deal with customers' needs within the context of their culture.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Anticipate and deal with customers' needs within the context of their culture.
Range: Local customers, domestic tourists, international tourists.
- Take appropriate action to resolve problems arising from cultural differences.

7.3.9 Subject Outcome 9: Assist colleagues to deal with cultural differences.

Learning Outcome

The student should be able to:

- Make suggestions to assist colleagues to deal with cultural differences, in order to improve customer service or working relationships.

7.4 Topic 4: Efficient time management

7.4.1 Subject Outcome 1: Identify time management profiles.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Identify current time management techniques and processes used by the student to manage him/her and his/her division/department/section to aid future time management of the section.
- Identify weaknesses in current work processes in terms of poor time management.
- Identify the top time wasters that impact on the organisation's productivity with a view to minimizing their negative influence.
- Identify and explain external forces that affect time utilization and provide examples of their effect on time management.

7.4.2 Subject Outcome 2: Understand the principles of time management.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Explain (with examples) the 80:20 principle of managing key tasks.
- Explain delegation as a means of utilizing time and human resources correctly with examples of good and bad practice.
- Use prioritisation a technique to manage the work of a team/group/section.
- Understand the principle of balance between the various aspects of one's life and plan appropriate time for them all so as to optimize one's life.

7.4.3 Subject Outcome 3: Draw up time efficient work plans to carry out the work of a department/division/section.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Understand and clearly define the organisation's objectives in terms of the work that has to be done by the department/division/section.
- Translate the objectives into work plans for the department/division/section.
- Identify the key activities required to complete a specific project. Analyse and assign time frames to all tasks and work procedures.
- Identify relevant persons to whom tasks can be delegated.
- Make plans to eliminate or manage time wasters in the department/division/section.
- Prioritise tasks in terms of urgency and importance for the department/ division/section.

7.4.4 Subject Outcome 4: Implement time efficient work plans.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Delegate tasks appropriately to get the work done.
- Apply proactive measures such as efficient information flow, meeting planning as well as effective management and administrative procedures in the daily work processes of the department/division/section to minimize time wasting.
- Implement plans once everybody involved were informed of their roles, duties and functions.
- Monitor progress with work plans on an on-going basis and amend where necessary.

7.5 Topic 5: Working as a project team member

7.5.1 Subject Outcome 1: Demonstrate an understanding of criteria for working as a member of a team.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Identify and explain criteria for working as a member of a team.
- Identify and explain behaviours conducive to working as a member of a team
- Identify and explain team dynamics.

7.5.2 Subject Outcome 2: Work autonomously and collaborate with other team members.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Give sufficient support to team members to achieve their work and project objectives.
- Consult with team members.
- Identify and apply authority levels for all team members.
- Collaborate with and reflect the needs of all team members.

7.5.3 Subject Outcome 3: Contribute to building relations between team members and stakeholders.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Explain the importance of building relations between team members and stakeholders.
- Identify and explain various stakeholders and their needs.
- Communicate with stakeholders in open and frank discussions.
- Honour and meet commitments to stakeholders.

7.5.4 Subject Outcome 4: Contribute positively to team coherence, image and spirit.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Identify and explain the needs and objectives of team members.
- Identify, explain and apply methods and techniques for building team coherence and spirit.
- Gain trust and support from colleagues through appropriate behaviour.
- Provide feedback that leads to constructive working relationships.

7.5.5 Subject Outcome 5: Respect personal, ethical, religious and cultural differences.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Identify and acknowledge the differences between team members.
- Explain the importance of showing respect.
- Treat team members in ways that demonstrate respect for individuals.
- Discuss promptly and openly behaviours that are of concern to individuals

7.6 Topic 6: Analyse new developments reported in the media

7.6.1 Subject Outcome 1: Analyse articles and reports from current print and electronic material.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Collect articles and reports on events, both global and national that could result in changes in a specific business sector or industry over a period of at least 6 months.
- Summarise the articles showing insight into how the reported events could impact on a business sector or industry in South Africa and/or internationally.
- Summarise and rank the events in a table to indicate the relative importance of each event for a business sector or industry in South Africa.
- Analyse controversial issues related to a business sector or industry and express own substantiated views in plain language.
- Interpret current events in the political and legislative environments and give indications of their possible impact on a specific business sector or industry.

7.6.2 Subject Outcome 2: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the latest innovations and developments in technology.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Describe innovations or developments in technology that could affect a specific business sector or industry and indicate how the innovation or technology could impact on the business sector or industry.
- Investigate and summarise the pros and cons of the innovation or technology in a table.
- Recommend as to whether the innovation should be further investigated and how it could add value to a particular organisation.

7.6.3 Subject Outcome 3: Analyse proposed business or industrial development that could impact on the physical environment.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Collect articles and reports on events, both global and national on proposed business or industrial developments that could impact on the physical environment over a period of at least 6 months.
- Summarise articles showing insight into how the reported events could impact on the physical environment in South Africa and/or internationally.
- Summarise and rank in a table to indicate the relative impact of each event on the physical environment.
- Analyse controversial issues related to a business or industrial development; express and substantiate own views in plain language.
- Discuss the sustainability of the proposed development from the point of view of both the developer and the environment.

7.6.4 Subject Outcome 4: Analyse labour issues in the media that could impact on a business sector or industry.

Learning Outcomes

The student should be able to:

- Discuss wage negotiations in a specific sector with reference to increases in salaries and trends in the sector.
- Analyse the sustainability of developments in a business sector or industry in relation to ongoing employment.
- Analyse incidents involving withholding of labour and other protests to identify the outcomes of the action.
- Identify the role of the Unions in a specific business sector or industry and indicate the issues addressed in their deliberations.
- Examine articles relating to unemployment and job losses in a business sector or industry and indicate possible reasons for a trend.
- Determine the impact of HIV/AIDS on a business sector or industry from reports in the media and indicate what (if anything) the business sector or industry is doing to manage the impact of the pandemic in the sector.

8 RESOURCE NEEDS FOR THE TEACHING OF BUSINESS PRACTICE - LEVEL 4

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 Outcomes Based Education (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