

NCV - FAQ

Why was the curriculum changed? How are these programmes different from the 'old' ones (N1 – N3)?

The NATED (N1 – N3) programmes, while beneficial in some ways, did not really provide for the development of thinking and problem-solving skills. They also did not have enough of an integrated approach (they did not cover enough of the full range of skills needed by anyone wanting to enter the job market today – focusing too exclusively on a specific skill). There was a separation of practical and theory and the life skills required for employment were not taken care of. Because of this these programmes were of a short duration, which made them popular, but as a result of this they did not provide sufficient practical skills required by the job market.

Research has shown that the learning of a practical skill on its own is not sufficient to meet the workplace challenges of the 21st century. The ability to think logically and problem solve is an important requirement of any job.

The new programme therefore are of a year-long duration (per level), allowing for enough time to provide for thorough practical and theoretical learning. In addition the programme helps students to develop the skills to become competent in analysis, reading, writing and logical thinking. This is done through the fundamental portion of the NC(V) programmes which each NC(V) student, in every field of study is required to complete. The Fundamental component includes Language (of instruction: i.e. English); Mathematics/Mathematical Literacy; and Life Orientation.

NC(V) also offers a strong practical focus with much more 'hands-on' training and even practical experience opportunities than was available through the former N1 – N3 Nated programmes – ensuring that a student who has completed an NC(V) programme is properly equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to enter the world of work successfully.

What does the NC(V) cost and is there any financial assistance available?

NC(V) prices are available on request at your nearest public FET College. The Department of Education has established the Department of Education FET Colleges Bursary Scheme to assist deserving and motivated students who wish to enter NC(V) programmes, but face severe financial challenges. Funding of the Bursary Scheme comes directly from the National Department of Education and each FET College is allocated a certain amount for bursaries annually. Applications for bursaries can be made at your chosen public FET Colleges.

Applicants will be required to complete a Means Test (designed by the national administrators of the bursary fund – National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and candidates who qualify for a bursary will then be considered by the College's Bursary Committee within the confines of the available budget.

Does the NC(V) lead to higher education / can you access University studies after completing an NC(V)?

Yes. The National Department of Education is presently in discussions with Higher Education South Africa (HESA) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) to formalise this access.

What will the student be qualified to do after three years?

Students will essentially have the following options:

Access work opportunities in a work environment or a sector relevant to his/her vocational specialisation (e.g. bank/insurance company after doing the Finance, Economics and Accounting programme)

Pursue further training opportunities

Become self-employed

Who is NC(V) for?

NC(V) programmes are for anyone wanting to obtain the necessary certificated skills to enter a specific career field.

Why should I follow the NC(V) route when I already have a Grade 12/Matric? Isn't NC(V) Level 4 equivalent to Grade 12.

Yes, strictly speaking in terms of the National Qualifications Framework, NC(V) Level 4 is an NQF Level 4 qualification, and Matric/grade 12 is equivalent to NQF Level 4. However, NC(V) represents a career choice. It is not comparable to Matric/grade 12 because it is focused on helping you to develop marketable skills in your chosen vocational field. NC(V) should be seen as a qualification that helps a person to access a career in their desired field because of its strong focus on practical training that encompasses all skills that a person needs to succeed in the workplace of the 21st century – by making sure that they know what to expect in a real work environment. A person who has completed the NC(V) is therefore seen to be more employable.

Will all levels (NQF levels 2, 3 & 4) of exams be external?

Yes, all of the final exams are set by the National Department of Education.

Who will provide the Certificates for each of the levels?

The National Department of Education will issue statements of results.

Will colleges continue to offer short courses?

Yes. College will continue to do so in the interest of being responsive to community needs. However, these courses will not be funded by the National Department of Education.

What is happening to the N4 – N6 programmes?

These courses are currently being phased out. However an equivalent qualification is currently being developed and will be launched as soon as it is complete.

How will artisans be catered for?

The Department of Education and Department of Labour have agreed that there will be three routes to artisanship. These are: Learnerships, the National Certificate (Vocational) and Workplace Artisan Training. All of these routes will be completed with the requisite trade test to obtain artisanship.

Will there be additional exams for students who fail programmes that are being phased out?

Yes. There will be additional exams for learners to work themselves out of the system. These opportunities will be provided in the year following the phasing out of the specific level of the programme.

How did the National Department of Education arrive at the 14 priority programmes?

The skills reports completed by the SETAs as well as by different research institutions were reviewed. The high demand skills that were identified were then clustered into the different sectors of economic activity identified by the AsgiSA. The NC(V) programmes are matched against these sectors, vis, Tourism, Finance, Electrical Infrastructure Construction and so on.

Do these programmes respond to the needs of industry?

Yes. The various stakeholders were engaged at different stages of the curriculum writing process. These include: the SETAs, business, industry, professional bodies and related interest organisations. In addition, reference persons were used to review the relevance of the curriculum content.

How does the National Certificate (Vocational) link to SETA programmes?

The NC(V) is not a unit standard-based qualification but the content for subjects has been designed using unit standards. For this reason, much of the content in the vocational subjects overlaps with outcomes in unit standards.

Will the SETAs recognize subjects/levels passed in the National Certificate (Vocational)?

The SETAs will take a decision whether they will recognize subjects passed based on the learning outcomes contained in the corresponding Department of Education subject guidelines.

Where can I go to enter an NC(V) programme?

The listed NC(V) programmes are available from Elangeni College. Contact them on Tel: 031-7166700 for details on a campus near you.