UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA

UFS·UV
DIRECTORATE FOR INSTITUTIONAL
RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC PLANNING (DIRAP)
DIREKTORAAT VIR INSTITUSIONELE
NAVORSING EN AKADEMIESE BEPLANNING (DINAB)

21 April 2015

**HEQSF reference number:** H06/14694/HEQSF

**Qualification reference number:** 5310

**Authorised Qualification name:** Bachelor of Agriculture

Directorate: Accreditation

Council on Higher Education

P.O. Box 94

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PRETORIA

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Email: heqsfonline@che.ac.za

Dear Colleagues

**RESPONSE TO THE DEFERRAL OF THE HEQSF-ALIGNMENT AND ACCREDITATION**

**HEQSF review comment**

*"None of the modules are considered to be compulsory and all are considered to be electives. The Institution is advised to clearly state which modules are compulsory in each year of study and which are the electives. For example, it is expected that the fundamental sciences are compulsory which all students on the programme are expected to do. The major component of the learning activity is WIL. The Institution is advised to assess the practical ability of students in a more structured manner other than just the production of practical reports. There is an increase of 48 credits (480 hours) compared to the former programme. This is close to an average of an additional 6 months in a 3-year programme. The Institution needs to provide a rationale for this increase in credit value."*

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**Response**

*None of the modules are considered to be compulsory and all are considered to be electives. The Institution is advised to clearly state which modules are compulsory in each year of study and which are the electives. For example, it is expected that the fundamental sciences are compulsory which all students on the programme are expected to do.*

It was difficult to express how the curriculum design is implemented and managed on the prescribed format. Student have specific streams (specialisations) they can follow, for which the institution makes provision for different module codes to ensure students stay within their stream, even though the core of the curriculum remains the same. Because the upload did not allow us to indicate modules as compulsory and elective as well as the fact that the total tally at the end of the modular section will not reflect how the curriculum worked, it was loaded as electives. No space was provided to specify the rules of combination for the constituent modules and, where applicable, progression rules from one year to the next.

This Bachelor of Agriculture qualification makes provision for seven fields of interest, namely:

I. Irrigation Management
II. Animal Production Management
III. Mixed-farming Management
IV. Crop Production Management
V. Agricultural Management
VI. Wildlife Management
VII. Agriculture Economics

Students are required to complete 64 credits in the first year that are compulsory in all the fields of study after which students continue to select the modules applicable to their field of study. In the second and third year a compulsory modules are also included across the fields. The table below illustrates the structure of the curriculum:

| UFS Module Code | UFS Module Description | Credits | Total Credits | NQF Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **YEAR 1** | | | | |
| Core compulsory modules to award 64 credits | | 64 | | |
| AGEC1514 | Economic Management of Resources | 16 | 128 | 5 |
| AGRI1514 | Biological principles in Agriculture | 16 | 128 | 5 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGRI1554 | Physical and mechanised Principles in Agriculture | 16 | 128 | 5 |
| AGRI1534 | Chemical Principles in Agricultural | 16 | 128 | 5 |
| Choose four modules in the applicable stream to award a minimum of 64 credits | | 64 | | |
| ANIG1624 | Introduction to animal wildlife and grassland sciences | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| AGEC1624 | Agricultural Finance | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| AGRI1624 | Mathematical and Biometrical Principles in Agriculture | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| AGRI1664 | Microbiological principles in Agriculture | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| SCCS1624 | Introduction to soil, crop and climate sciences | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| LMER1514 | Mercantile Law | 16 | 128 | 5 |
| AGEC1534 | Business functions for Agribusiness | 16 | 128 | 5 |
| EACC1614 | Accounting | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| AGEC1514 | Economic Management of Resources | 16 | 128 | 5 |
| AGRI1624 | Mathematical and Biometric principles in agriculture | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| EBUS1624 | Business Functions | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| AGEC1624 | Agricultural Finance | 16 | 128 | 6 |
| **YEAR 2** | | | | |
| Core compulsory module to award 16 credits | | 16 | | |
| AGEC2614 | Farm Planning and Management | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| Choose four modules in the applicable stream to award a minimum of 48 credits | | 48 | 144 | |
| ANIG2614 | Introductory Ruminant Production | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| SOIL2614 | Soil classification, evaluation, and land use planning | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| CLIM2614 | Fundamentals of Agrometeorology | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| GRAS2614 | Grassland Ecology | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| AGEC2614 | Farm planning and management | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| GRAS2614 | Grassland Ecology | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| CROP2614 | Concepts in crop production | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| Choose four modules in the applicable stream to award a minimum of 64 credits | | 64 | 144 | |
| ANIG2624 | Introductory Monogastric, Wildlife and Aquaculture Production | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| CLIM2624 | Agrometeorology for farming systems | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| CROP2624 | Crop Production Principles | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| AGEC2624 | Introduction to Agricultural Marketing | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| AGEG2624 | Engineer principles in Agriculture Practices | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| SOIL2624 | Sustainable soil and water management | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| ETXA2608 | Engineer principles | 32 | 144 | 6 |
| AGEG2624 | Engineering principles in agricultural practises | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| AGEC2624 | Introduction to agricultural marketing | 16 | 144 | 6 |
| **YEAR 3** | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Core compulsory module to award 8 credits | | 8 | | |
| AGMA3762 | Seminar: Integrated Agricultural Management | 8 | 136 | 7 |
| Choose four modules in the applicable stream to award a minimum of 64 credits | | 64 | 136 | |
| AGEG3714 | Hydraulics | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGMA3714 | Business Management and Entrepreneurship. | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGMA3734 | Agribusiness Management | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| ANIG3714 | Cattle production systems | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| CLIM3714 | Climate data analysis for agrometeorological services | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| ANIG3734 | Poultry production systems | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| SOIL3714 | Soil fertility and fertilization | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| GRAS3714 | Applied veld management and veld evaluation | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGEC3714 | Managerial economics | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGEC3734 | Agribusiness management | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGMA3714 | Business management and Entrepreneurship | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| CROP3714 | Summer grain, oil and protein-rich crops | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| Choose four modules in the applicable stream to award a minimum of 64 credits | | 64 | 136 | |
| AGEG3724 | Irrigation Systems and Irrigation Surveying | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGMA3724 | Innovation Management. | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGMA3744 | Strategic Agricultural Management | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| ANIG3724 | Sheep and goat production systems | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| ANIG3744 | Pig production systems | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| GRAS3724 | Intensive Pasture Production | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| CLIM3724 | Climate Change and Variability | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| CROP3724 | Vegetable crops | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| SOIL3724 | Soil contaminants and management | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGEC3724 | Resource economics | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGEC3744 | Agricultural policy and development | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGMA3724 | Innovation Management | 16 | 136 | 7 |
| AGMA3762 | Seminar in Integrated Agricultural management | 12 | 136 | 7 |

*Compulsory Credits: 408 (depending on specialisation)*

*Total Credits: 408*

*Total Credits on NQF 5: 64*

*Total Credits on NQF 6: 208*

*Total Credits on NQF 7: 136*

*The major component of the learning activity is WIL. The Institution is advised to assess the practical ability of students in a more structured manner other than just the production of practical reports.*

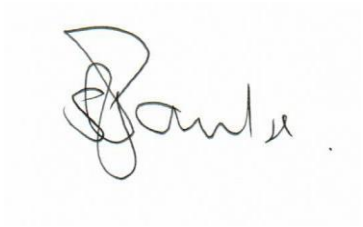
The institution notes the concern by the accreditation panel. Students are not only assessed on their practical ability in the form of a practical report, but also through other formative and summative assessment opportunities. The Practical Reports are merely a method to ensure students document practical activities each week as well as to serve as a mechanism for the lecturers to ensure students are still on track in terms of performance. This encourages students to grasp the concepts much better; and by relating fundamental agricultural and scientific principles to real-life examples, they can realise the relevance of the subject material. This approach assists the students to develop many facets of active learning skills. The Practical Reports form part of the continuous assessment component within the specified modules and is topped with formative assessment opportunities (semester tests) and a summative assessment (examination at the end of the semester) to calculate the final grade.

*There is an increase of 48 credits (480 hours) compared to the former programme. This is close to an average of an additional 6 months in a 3-year programme. The Institution needs to provide a rationale for this increase in credit value.*

The revised curriculum was designed in such a way that students enrol for a core in the first semester in the first year of study accounting for 68 credits of the 128 credits for year one. The second semester in the first year introduces the specialisation area of choice to the students awarding 68 credits. In the second year of study, students continue with the field of specialisation based on the module that students major in a specific field of study, accounting for a minimum of 128 credits. An additional core module was added to the benefit of the student in terms of general farm management, applicable to all fields of specialisation awarding an initial 16 credits. In the third year of study it is expected of the students to continue with the area of specialisation accounting for a minimum of 128 credits. In addition, a student is required to do a presentation (seminar) accounting an additional 8 credits to the total for the year. Furthermore, the Section A only worked on the total minimum credits of the qualification, which did not make provision for the major credits to be applicable from the second year of study. The UFS is comfortable that the structure of the qualification is better than it used to be and that the additional 48 credits do not increase the workload of the student dramatically, but rather structuring it more coherently and on the basis of progression.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support in relation to the response in relation the comments made by the accreditation panel. We trust that you will find this response adequate to validate its accreditation and HEQSF alignment.

Kind regards



Ms SJ Paulse

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