



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

MHETI PRESS STATEMENT ON ADMISSION OF LEARNERS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS DURING THE 2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

Last week the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture announced both the Grade 12 legacy and National Senior Certificate Ordinary Level (Grade 11) results. First, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the learners on their achievements and inform them that the Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation warm-heartedly welcomes all those who met the admission requirements of our tertiary institutions, including TVET Centers, Colleges, Institutes and universities. Secondly, to all Grade 11 learners who are proceeding to the newly introduced Advanced Subsidiary Level, you are a critical mass of pioneers who will make or break this important reform, expectations are high for you to excel and deliver the expected change envisioned with this national undertaking.

Based on the outcome of the National Education Conference of 2011, the then Ministry of Education was tasked to review the curriculum for basic Education in order to respond to the challenges and need of the Namibian society. The new curriculum was developed to direct Basic Education towards the realization of Vision 2030 that envisages the transition of Namibia from a literate society to a knowledge –based society where knowledge is constantly being acquired, renewed and applied to improve quality of life.

This transition to the knowledge-based society requires leaders in both Basic and Higher Education to take bold and brave decisions based on a careful analysis of the challenges of the old system and that will ensure quality and sustainability based on the long term goals as expressed in the National Curriculum for Basic Education (NIED 2016).

The Basic Education Reform represents the most comprehensive and important review of the Basic Education system in the country since independence. This reform that started in 2015 saw the introduction of new school leaving qualifications for learners known as National Senior Certificate Senior Certificate Ordinary Level and the National Advanced Subsidiary (NSSCAS), thereby bringing the country's Basic Education System in line with others in the Southern African region and beyond.

The implementation of the transformed curricula effectively responds to the needs of the Namibian society and the changing higher education landscape dictated by the 4th and 5th industrial revolutions.

It is essential to understand that the differences between NSSCO and NSSCAS are more than mere content. The philosophy of the NSSCAS qualification fosters the development of higher order thinking skills- a critical requirement for success in the new curricula and world of work. Likewise, NSSCAS examinations require more extended responses from learners, while there is also less scaffolding of questions. Students performing well in this type of assessment, have a far better chance of success at University level, especially when considering the demands of the new curricula and a knowledge based society.

The core to this reform is the need to focus on quality and ensure that our learners progressively accumulate the requisite skills and knowledge from primary to senior secondary education phases. As you are aware, 'our Education System is a continuum, starting from Early Childhood Development to Tertiary Education level and even beyond. It is thus a well-known fact that any curriculum reform targeted at any stage or level of the education system inadvertently calls for changes at different levels and by different institutions. The implemented changes in the school curriculum mean that, there now exist two exit levels to tertiary education institutions, namely the National Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary (NSSCO) level, which until this year was only achievable after twelve years of formal Basic Education, and the new Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level.

In the development of the new curriculum, numerous consultations have been conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and I am happy to inform you that the Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation and all our stakeholders have participated and thus embraced this reform. As I have indicated before, the main aim of this reform is to improve the quality of our learners leaving the Basic Education system.

I wish at this point to particularly express my gratitude to Tertiary Education Institutions, which notwithstanding many constraints, understood the challenges and complexities that underlie this transition year, and have put mechanisms in place to accommodate the NSSCO and AS certificate holders.

In implementing this reform, we should be mindful that it has always been the practice that different institutions for example Vocational Training Centres, and different study programmes offered at College up to university level have Faculty and sometimes Department specific admission requirements, for example medicine, engineering.

Thus, as it has always been the case, some programmes will allow admission with NSSC Ordinary level qualification, whereas others dictate that the learners should have attained Higher Level or AS level qualification, the highest exit level in senior secondary education.

While we strive to provide diversified and equitable opportunities for our learners, we also strive to ensure that we maintain balance at all levels of our education system. By this I mean that the numbers exiting from NSSC Ordinary and AS levels to Higher Education should always be manageable and sustainable.

We are informed that **113,361 (One Hundred and Thirteen Thousand, Three Hundred and Sixty-One)** learners, comprising of **23,118 (Twenty-Three Thousand One Hundred and Eighteen)** NSSC Higher Level, **68,595 (Sixty-Eight Thousand Five Hundred Ninety-Five)** NSSC Ordinary (old) and **21,648 (Twenty-One Thousand Six Hundred Forty-Eight)** NSSC Ordinary (new) candidates registered for 2020 National Examinations.

We are also informed that **6,448 (Six Thousand Four Hundred and Forty-Eight)** full-time candidates, excluding part-time candidates, achieved C or better grade at Ordinary Level or 3 or better at Higher Level. This

cohort may qualify for admission to tertiary institutions. Our Higher Education Institutions are now busy finalising admissions from this cohort. Very important to note is that specific institutions and different levels of qualifications have specific minimum requirements and quotas, aimed at ensuring quality within the allowed capacity.

In conclusion I wish to encourage all learners who have excelled in their new NSSC Ordinary level examination to proceed to AS as a priority choice and invite those willing to pursue tertiary education to properly research and inform themselves with requirements of different institutions and programmes of their choice.

And I thank.