



COUNCIL ON HIGHER EDUCATION
HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY COMMITTEE

**NATIONAL REVIEW OF
THE
POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN
EDUCATION**

2006

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Programme Purpose

The PGCE is as a 120 NQF credit, Level 6 qualification. The *Norms and Standards for Educators* (February, 2000) defines the PGCE as:

... a generalist educator's qualification that 'caps' an undergraduate qualification. As an access requirement candidates are required to have appropriate prior learning which leads to general foundational and reflexive competence. The qualification focuses mainly on developing practical competence reflexively grounded in educational theory.

Students entering the programme are thus assumed to have acquired the appropriate level of subject content knowledge in the Bachelor's degree. In order to prepare competent teachers within the limited period of one year of full-time or two years of part-time study, a PGCE programme should:

- Consolidate subject knowledge and develop appropriate pedagogical content knowledge.
- Cultivate a practical understanding of teaching and learning in a diverse range of South African schools, in relation to educational theory, phase and/or subject specialisation, practice and policy.
- Foster self-reflexivity and self-understanding among prospective teachers.
- Nurture commitment to the ideals of the teaching profession and an understanding of teaching as a profession.
- Develop the professional dispositions and self-identity of students as teachers.
- Develop students as active citizens and enable them to develop the dispositions of citizenship in their learners.
- Promote and develop the dispositions and competences to organize learning among a diverse range of learners in diverse contexts.

It is assumed that students who achieve the exit level outcomes will be competent *novice* teachers who will still need time, experience and appropriate support to develop as fully-fledged extended professionals.

Criterion 1: The National, Institutional and Unit Context¹

The programme is an integral part of the offerings of the higher education institution at which it is located and it complies with all the national policies and regulations regarding the provision of higher education qualifications in South Africa. The unit offering the PGCE has goals, objectives and forms of internal organisation to support the programme.

Minimum standards

- i. *Public Providers:* The programme is part of the institution's programme and qualification mix (PQM), as approved by the DoE, and meets the criteria laid down in the Criteria for the Recognition and Evaluation of Qualifications for Employment in Education;
- ii. *Private Providers:* The provider is registered with the DoE in terms of the requirements of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) and the Regulations for the Registration of Private Higher Education Institutions, 2002 and Annexures to the Regulations (Regulation No. 1564 of Government Gazette No. 24143, 13 December 2002) and meets the criteria laid down in the Criteria for the Recognition and Evaluation of Qualifications for Employment in Education. .
- iii. The qualification complies with the minimum credit value of the Norms and Standards for Educators (Government Gazette No. 20844, 4 February 2000) and the purpose of the qualification and its phase/ subject specialism(s) are clearly stated. The programme meets national requirements pertaining to programmes which are at present being developed within the context of the NQF (Refer to National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 as amended by Education Laws Amendment Act No. 100 of 1997 and No. 48 of 1999).
- iv. The qualification and all specialisations are registered by SAQA on the NQF.
- v. The programme is accredited by the Universities and Technikons Advisory Council (AUT), SAQA, or the HEQC.
- vi. PGCE phase/ subject specialisations and programme outcomes take cognizance of national / regional professional priorities and are congruent with the national Norms and Standards for Educators, the relevant national curriculum (RNCS and/or the new FET curriculum), and the professional dispositions of the SACE Code of Ethics.²
- vii. The programme is part of the institution's planning, approval, resource allocation and quality assurance process.

¹ 'Unit' refers to the operational organizational structure offering the programme. In most cases this will be a Department or School.

² In particular, appropriate professional dispositions include commitment to learners' personal development and welfare as both individuals and citizens.

- viii. The unit³ offering the PGCE has an organisational structure that enhances the fulfilment of its stated mission, goals and objectives and provides for the effective participation of faculty and learners in matters of importance.
- ix. Franchising arrangements for programme delivery are not permissible.

In addition, the following minimum standard applies in the case of programmes offered through distance education:

- x. The provider and programme management team can provide a rationale for the use of distance education for the delivery of the programme/course to the intended target learners.

Criterion 2: Programme Design

It is a fundamental requirement that programme design reflects the necessary and enabling features for a PGCE to achieve its purpose.⁴ The curriculum is suited to its purpose, internally coherent, and mindful of the needs of students.

Minimum standards

- i. Programme design is internally coherent and in alignment with the prescribed level and purpose of a PGCE.
- ii. The programme is located within a conception of teacher education as a continuum ranging from the initial professional education of teachers through to continuing professional development.
- iii. The programme includes consideration of teachers' conditions of service and national policy, particularly as these pertain to issues such as safety in schools and learner conduct.
- iv. Timetable design provides for one year full-time study or two years of part-time study during which it enables an appropriate mix between academic learning and school experience to serve a productive relationship between learning area or disciplinary content, pedagogical content knowledge, and practice in the relevant phase/ subject specialist area. The number of contact hours is explicitly stated and justified/ supported in the programme outline.
- v. The purpose of the programme informs the statement of applied competence. The curriculum is explicit with respect to exit level outcomes and related assessment criteria, content, level, credits, rules of combination and relative weight.
- vi. Curriculum design is coherent, reflecting alignment of explicit outcomes, curriculum choice, teaching and learning methods, assessment, and modes of delivery.

³ All minimum standards apply to additional sites of delivery and tuition centres.

⁴ as outlined on page 1 of this document.

- vii. The programme has intellectual credibility in terms of the relation between theoretical, practical and experiential knowledge.
- viii. Curriculum choice, teaching and learning methods, modes of delivery and learning materials cater for the learning needs of the target student intake. Opportunities are provided for learner input.
- ix. Relevant forms of learner support have been incorporated into the programme design.
- x. Mechanisms and processes are in place to ensure that all conditions for programme delivery are met, and that there is equivalence of provision in the case of a programme offered by different modes of delivery and / or at different sites. In such cases, the arrangements are institutionally approved and supported. In cases where decentralised tutor-based learner support systems are in place, these are properly managed and quality assured by the provider.

In addition, the following minimum standards apply in the case of programmes offered through distance education:

- xi. An adequate level of investment has been made in quality programme development, course design and course material.
- xii. The provider has explicitly designed systems for administering and teaching learners at a distance and has planned for contingencies in order to meet its stated aims in terms of academic quality and standards.

Criterion 3: Student Recruitment, Admission and Selection

Recruitment, access and selection procedures and documents are clear and accurate, attentive to diversity, current legislation and national needs in education, and apt for a programme whose main purpose is to develop professional competence and commitment among graduates intending to become teachers. The number of students selected takes into account the programme's intended learning outcomes and its capacity to offer good quality education.

Minimum standards

- i. Appropriate policies, procedures and regulations are in place for student admission, selection and assessment. These are communicated to all PGCE students, and academic and administrative staff, and implemented consistently across the institution and programme.
- ii. Admission and selection criteria and processes are clearly documented. Prospectuses and other recruitment documents are clear, accurate and informative about the programme, its areas of specialisation, formal admission requirements, academic standards and completion requirements, and mode of delivery.
- iii. Marketing and advertising are consistent with DoE and SAQA regulations.
- iv. Recruitment strategy endeavours to attract a diverse range of suitable candidates for the profession.

- v. Selection criteria are commensurate with the programme's academic and professional requirements, within a framework of widened access and equity.
- vi. The number of students selected takes account of the programme's intended learning outcomes, its capacity to offer sound professional preparation in the selected areas of specialisation, and the needs of schools and other relevant parts of the education system.
- vii. Enrolment practices include provision of accurate, helpful information – including information about funding opportunities - as well as efficient handling of finance and registration information.
- viii. While the general admission requirement of a national first degree or equivalent qualification is applied, provision is made for a flexible RPL entry route within the framework of national guidelines for higher education institutions. Admission through an RPL route may not exceed 10% of the total number of students on any programme.⁵

In addition, the following minimum standards apply in the case of programmes offered through distance education:

- ix. Detailed and up-to-date information is available regarding the demands of the mode of delivery and the support services available. Provision is made for a potentially diverse and geographically widely distributed student body.
- x. The provider has developed detailed learner profiles that identify the characteristics and situation of learners and this is used to inform teaching and learning strategy.

Criterion 4: Staffing

Policy and procedures for staff appointments, promotion and development are legitimate and fair, promote the achievement of equity plans, and encourage a staff complement that exemplifies best professional practice in teaching, assessment, inquiry and professional service. The academic and support staff complement is of sufficient size and seniority for the programme. The institution and/or other recognised agencies contracted by the institution provide opportunities for staff development.

Minimum standards

- i. Recruitment and employment of staff adhere to the stipulations of the Labour Relations Act, 1996, Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Act, 2002, and the Employment Equity Act, 1998. Appropriate administrative procedures are in place for the selection, appointment, induction and payment of staff members.

⁵ Exceptions are permissible in cases where RPL admission is consistent with the institution's policy and practice for RPL.

- ii. Where applicable, relevant labour legislation and regulations on health and safety in the workplace are observed.
- iii. Policies and procedures for academic staff appointments, promotions and development enable and encourage a competent, committed teaching staff who:
 - have an understanding of their specialist fields as well as of the conditions of education in South Africa
 - can interpret and develop learning materials and courses
 - apply the institution's assessment policies in the context of the PGCE programme
 - use an appropriate range of formative and summative assessment approaches at the exit level of the programme.
- iv. All core permanent academic and professional staff teaching on the PGCE have recognized relevant qualifications at NQF level 7 or higher, and appropriate professional experience. There are appropriately qualified senior staff to provide intellectual and professional leadership in the programme.
- v. The staffing on the programme is in line with the equity programme of the institution.
- vi. Staff composition is balanced and consonant with the range of phase and subject specializations offered in the programme and the numbers of students in each, as well as with the practical and theoretical components of the PGCE.
- vii. Workloads allow sufficient time for the development of curricula and materials, marking of assessment and the necessary learner support. Where decentralised learner support is offered, or where marking of assessment involves external people, there are appropriate resources in place for the recruitment, training, monitoring and payment of necessary part-time and contract staff.
- viii. There are clear procedures for assuring, acknowledging and developing the performance quality of associate, off-campus and part-time staff, and for promoting their understanding of and commitment to the programme and its purpose.
- ix. Through a variety of forums (e.g. informal meetings, research, conferences, formal learning) staff are able to reflect on matters concerning teacher education, national policy and teaching, and on learning and assessment issues pertaining to the programme. Staff responsible for students' academic development have opportunities to advance their disciplinary knowledge.
- x. Core academic and professional staff engage in scholarly activity and use research and/or other forms of structured inquiry to enhance their practice in the field of teacher education.
- xi. Programme faculty members have formal opportunities to provide input on issues affecting admissions, progress of students, resource allocation, curriculum design and evaluation, and research.
- xii. The institution provides orientation, induction and professional development opportunities for both new academic staff members as well as part-time staff.
- xiii. Where possible and appropriate, the programme offers professional development opportunities to associate teachers involved in school experience.
- xiv. There are sufficient numbers of administrative, technical and academic development support staff for the effective running of the programme and its

- activities, both on campus and at various sites of practice (such as school experience).
- xv. Support staff are adequately qualified for their duties, and have opportunities for staff development.

In addition, the following minimum standard applies in the case of programmes offered through distance education:

- xvi. Staff are trained, monitored and supported for the specialised distance education roles they perform, including the design, management and delivery of the programmes.

Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning

The institution gives recognition to the importance of the promotion of student learning. Teaching and learning policies, strategies, methods and materials take account of the purpose of the PGCE programme being that of preparing competent teachers who will themselves be involved in teaching. In systematically enabling student learning and in developing students' capacity to enable others to learn, teaching and learning strategies are also appropriate for the institutional type (as reflected in its mission) and consonant with the mode(s) of delivery, student composition, and programme design. There are mechanisms to ensure the appropriateness of teaching and learning methods.

Minimum standards

- i. The institution's central operating policies, procedures and resource allocation recognise the importance of student learning and support the programme in enabling learning pertinent to the professional competence of teachers.
- ii. Programme-specific teaching and learning policies and strategies are consonant with the programme design, outcomes, mode(s) of delivery, learning materials, assessment criteria, and student profile.
- iii. Students are provided with guidance on how the different components of the programme (theory and practice in particular, but also, for example, subjects, courses and/or modules, and their learning guides) contribute to the learning outcomes of the programme.
- iv. Programme teaching and learning strategies support the professional imperative to ensure that prospective teachers can enable systematic learning for others, under diverse conditions. For example:
 - The range of teaching methods (including, where appropriate, instructional technology) and the learning material are congruent with the relevant practical, foundational and reflexive competences for teachers, and exemplify the qualities of the "envisaged learners".
 - Students are able to develop their specialist knowledge and professional dispositions by being provided with an appropriate mix of academic and experiential learning opportunities, in a variety of teaching and learning contexts.

- Within the stipulated time for the programme, the mix and balance of student learning opportunities and contexts support the development of identity as a teacher (dispositions, values, commitment).
 - Pedagogy contributes to transformation by developing the capabilities of individual students for personal enrichment as well as for academic and professional requirements.
- v. There is systematic curriculum development and revision of learning materials, and these processes are responsive to the needs of students and the profession. Curriculum development at programme and course levels includes strategies for developing the literacy, numeracy, cognitive skills and pedagogical content knowledge necessary for the students to become competent teachers.
 - vi. Appropriate curriculum initiatives include a focus on HIV-AIDS, in order to develop an informed understanding of the pandemic and its impact on schooling, and to develop the competences to cope responsibly with the effects of the pandemic in learning sites.
 - vii. There are procedures for monitoring, evaluating and improving teaching and learning.
 - viii. There are mechanisms for identifying weak and “at risk” students and for offering appropriate additional academic support.
 - ix. The quality requirements for programme delivery take into account all delivery modes.

In addition, the following minimum standards apply in the case of programmes offered through distance education:

- x. The design of the programme encompasses the aims and intended learning outcomes, the scope of the learning materials, and the strategies for teaching at a distance.
- xi. The programme makes provision for the development of increasingly sophisticated levels of independent study from learning resources provided.
- xii. The institution has proven systems and technologies for materials development and delivery for distance learning.
- xiii. Learning materials, teaching and learning support strategies and modes of assessment are designed in order to give distance students a reasonable chance of achieving the intended learning outcomes.

Criterion 6: Programme Coordination and Work-based Learning⁶

The programme is effectively coordinated in a way that facilitates the achievement of its purpose and intended outcomes, with due attention to mode/s of delivery and school-based activities. The programme provides students with systematic, well-supported opportunities to experience and demonstrate integrated competence in an authentic setting.

Minimum standards

With regard to the programme generally:

- i. The PGCE programme is suitably coordinated and defined within the faculty/departmental and institutional system. An appropriately qualified senior academic with relevant experience manages the programme within the framework of an agreed-upon mandate.
- ii. The programme coordinator provides intellectual leadership and ensures that the academic coherence and professional integrity of the programme are maintained (e.g. through appropriate procedures for curriculum development and review; consultation with staff, associated teachers, students, SACE and other professional bodies; systematic tracking of policy developments in areas such as the school curriculum and teacher development).
- iii. The programme coordinator contributes to the achievement of the programme purpose by effectively coordinating programme delivery and assessment, annual planning, and advising the institution on resource allocation and staffing needs.
- iv. Opportunities are created for student input and participation in relevant aspects of programme coordination.
- v. Programme coordination ensures that regular and effective communication takes place with the students. This includes providing reliable information on the various aspects of the programme.

With regard to work-based learning specifically:

- vi. The institution, the student and the school have entered into a formal agreement that includes clear guidelines on ethical and educational considerations. Each party (the school, the student, and the provider) is informed through explicit guiding instructions of its role and responsibilities.
- vii. The design, duration and the learning outcomes of work-based learning are aligned with the Norms and Standards for Educators.
- viii. Students are placed in appropriate learning environments.
- ix. Regular and effective communication takes place between the institution, students, and the school.
- x. A mentoring system enables the student to experience a variety of well-structured teaching practices.

⁶ The term 'Work-based learning' is synonymous with what is variously known as 'School Experience', or 'Teaching Practice', or simply 'TP'.

- xi. University staff engage with the relevant persons at schools to generate a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all those who are involved with student teachers' school experience.
- xii. The school experience component of the PGCE contains an appropriate mix of assessment opportunities to enable the student to recognise strengths and weaknesses in his/her work.
- xiii. School experience is effectively monitored.
- xiv. The coordination, the infrastructure and the mentoring system promote professionalism.

Criterion 7: Student Assessment

Assessment policies and procedures are explicit and appropriate for the programme purpose, mode(s) of delivery, exit level outcomes and integrated professional competence. There are clear, educationally sound policies for internal formative and summative assessment; co-assessment of practical competence in schools or other learning sites, and the appointment and responsibilities of external examiners. There are mechanisms for the monitoring of student progress; ensuring the validity and reliability of assessment practices; recording of assessment results; settling of disputes; maintaining the rigour and security of the assessment system; RPL; and for the development of staff competence in assessment.

Minimum standards

- i. Assessment is integral to the programme design, teaching and learning strategies, to student and staff development, and to the improvement of the curriculum and learning materials.
- ii. Assessment policies, procedures and practices match and support the programme purpose, and are thus responsive to the fact that students are themselves learning to become competent assessors.
- iii. There are clear procedures for both formative and summative assessment; and the mix, balance, assessment criteria and weighting of assessment activities are consonant with the exit level outcomes and integrated professional competence (as required by the Norms and Standards for Educators and National Framework for Teacher Education). Such procedures are made explicit to staff and students.
- iv. A range of appropriate assessment tasks (including at least one integrated assessment procedure and, when appropriate, RPL) is used effectively to measure students' attainment of the intended learning outcomes.
- v. Procedures exist and are followed to ensure that assignments/ tests/ projects are returned in sufficient time to allow students to benefit from academic feedback.
- vi. The practical competence of students in the selected area/s of specialisation is assessed in an authentic setting and there are clear procedures for experienced teachers in associate schools to serve as co-assessors.
- vii. Assessment records are thorough, accurate and systematically used to generate data for grading, selecting and predicting, and review. A system is in operation for maximising the accuracy, consistency, fairness and credibility of results,

including consistency of marking, and concurrence between assessors and external examiners on the nature and quality of the evidence of achievement of learning outcomes. Where more than one assessor is involved, internal moderation checks are undertaken to ensure the reliability of the assessment procedures.

- viii. The assessment of student learning achievements at the exit level of the qualification is subject to external examination by appropriately qualified academics. External examiners are properly informed about the course they examine (curriculum and assessment), and review in full 10% of the written work being assessed, and conduct a random check of a further 20%.
- ix. Completed external examiner reports are returned to the relevant academic member of staff and also to the programme coordinator. Problems are discussed with the lecturer concerned and the programme coordinator monitors the implementation of agreed improvements.
- x. Measures are taken to ensure the security of the assessment system. Assessment results are recorded securely and reliably.
- xi. Policies for ensuring the integrity of certification processes for the qualification obtained through the programme are effectively implemented.
- xii. There is a fair and effective procedure for settling student disputes regarding assessment results, and students are acquainted with this procedure. Breaches of assessment rules are dealt with effectively and timeously.
- xiii. Student progress is monitored and appropriate action is taken, where applicable.
- xiv. Provision is made for the development of staff competence in assessment.

In addition, the following minimum standard applies in the case of programmes offered through distance education:

- xv. There are systems and processes in place to make possible individual academic support for learners by telephone, email, appointment, video-conferencing or online.

Criterion 8: Infrastructure and Library Resources

The programme has the facilities and resources for preparing competent, literate teachers who are able to use information technology, library and locally accessible curricular resources to support learning and deepen their own pedagogical content knowledge. Policies ensure the proper management and maintenance of library resources, including support and access for students and staff. Staff development of library staff takes place on a regular basis.

Minimum standards

- i. At all official sites of learning where the programme is offered, there are sufficient, suitable, properly equipped venues. Where appropriate, such venues

- include laboratories in addition to facilities for large class teaching and for small group seminars and tutorials.
- ii. Each member of the fulltime academic staff has an office, a personal computer and access to printing facilities. Appropriate provision is made to accommodate associate and part-time staff.
 - iii. Suitable and sufficient IT facilities, equipment and support are available at all sites of learning. This includes functionally appropriate hardware (computers and printers), software (programmes) and databases, and IT staff to provide training and support for the effective use of the facilities for teacher education.
 - iv. Administrative/ technical staff have suitable working space and adequate systems of technology and communication in order to support the programme.
 - v. Relevant, properly maintained and regularly updated library resources are available to support effective teaching, learning, curriculum development and research in teacher education.
 - vi. Appropriate use of the library and other locally accessible curriculum resources is built into the programme design and teaching and learning strategies. A library or resource centre education specialist supports and encourages appropriate library use. Resources complement the curriculum and make provision for independent student learning related to their fields of specialisation.
 - vii. Orientation workshops are presented to ensure that students are enabled to access all library resources including IT infrastructure and web-based resources.

In addition, the following minimum standard applies in the case of programmes offered through distance education:

- viii. All services offered to the learners are designed and efficient taking into account the location of the learners and the needs of the programme.

Criterion 9: Student Retention, Throughput Rates and Programme Impact

Student retention and throughput rates in the programme are monitored and analysed with a view to improving the programme and achieving its professional purpose in preparing competent teachers for South African schools. Students who complete the programme are employable in public or independent schools and are able to fulfil their responsibilities as novice teachers in their specialist phase and learning area/s or subject/s.

Minimum standards

- i. Seventy-five percent of full-time students who enter the programme complete it successfully within 1 year (part-time students complete within 3 years).
- ii. Over the past three years, the unit offering the programme has had access to, and has monitored and guided the analysis of information on retention and throughput rates of students.

- iii. Planning includes mechanisms (at faculty or departmental level) for improving retention and throughput rates, and for attaining appropriate demographic diversity and responding to patterns of teacher supply and demand.
- iv. Students who complete the programme successfully have attained the required level of professional competence to fulfil their responsibilities as novice teachers in the schools in which they have been employed.

Criterion 10: Programme Reviews

Insights and recommendations arising from regular programme reviews and impact studies are used to improve the programme's design, delivery and resourcing, and for staff development and student support, where necessary.

Minimum standards

- i. The institution has procedures and appropriate guidelines for periodic programme reviews, with accountability to Faculty Board and/or Senate.
- ii. User surveys are undertaken at regular intervals for feedback from academics involved in the programme, graduates, peers, external examiners, SACE and other professional bodies and employers, where applicable, to ascertain whether the programme is attaining its intended outcomes.
- iii. On an annual basis, the programme coordinator or the unit undertakes (in collaboration with programme staff) a systematic, focussed review of pertinent aspects of the programme in order to monitor its success in enabling students to achieve the required exit level outcomes and professional commitment.
- iv. Reviews form the basis of a feasible development and improvement plan, and the plan is systematically implemented.