



HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

**EXAMINATION GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION AND
RESTORATION
TO THE
PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR DIETETICS AND NUTRITION**

01 JUNE 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

All individuals who practice any of the health care professions incorporated in the scope of the HPCSA are obliged by the Health Professions Act, 1974, to register with the HPCSA, such that failure to do so constitutes a criminal offence.

The implementation of the examination is in line with the objectives of the Professional Board for Dietetics and Nutrition as outlined in section 15A of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974), which entails, amongst others, the control and exercise of authority in respect of all matters affecting the education and training of persons in, and the manner of the exercise of the practices pursued in connection with, any health profession falling within the ambit of the professional board. In terms of section 15B of the Act the boards may appoint examiners and moderators and conduct examinations and charge such fees in respect of the examinations as may be prescribed.

Please note that the Board has the right to outsource the examinations, and therefore individuals who need to write an external examination, following a resolution of the Board, must contact a university of their choice, that offers the required examinations, and enroll to write the examination.

2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- i. *Examination*- means a method of assessing the standard and/or the skills and knowledge level achieved by a candidate in a discipline and/or profession.
 - ii. *Examiner*- means a person appointed by the Professional Board to ascertain whether the specific outcomes of a qualification and its underpinning programme have been achieved.
 - iii. *Invigilator*- means any person who supervises candidates during examinations, including any member of the Board or HPCSA staff member. The primary task of the invigilator is to ensure that the examination rules are adhered to at all times.
 - iv. *Misconduct*- means any unacceptable/fraudulent act or deed
 - v. *Moderation*- means the process that ensures that the assessment of outcomes has been fair, valid and reliable.
 - vi. *Moderator*- means a person appointed by the Professional Board for Dietetics and Nutrition or relevant Committee established by the Board for measuring the specific outcomes achieved for registration.
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- vii. *Qualification*- means the formal recognition and certification of learning achievement conferred by an accredited provider and signifies and formally certifies the demonstrated achievement of a person by means of a planned and purposeful combination of learning outcomes at a specified level of performance.
- viii. *Re-marking*- means the re-marking of an examination answer sheet/book by the moderator and is subject to the payment of a fee (50% of examination fee) by the candidate.

3. REGISTRATION AS A PREREQUISITE FOR PROFESSIONS UNDER THE AMBIT OF THE BOARD

Registration is a prerequisite for practicing in terms of section 17 of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974), no person shall be entitled to practice within the Republic of South Africa, any profession registrable in terms of the Act, unless he/she is registered. The professions under the ambit of the Professional Board for Dietetics and Nutrition are the following:

REGISTER CODE	REGISTER
DT	Dietitian
NT	Nutritionist

4. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO BOARD EXAMINATION

4.1 APPLICATION BY LOCALLY QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS IN CASE OF ERASURE

4.1.1 A person whose name was erased from the register has to apply to restore his/her name to the register, which is calculated as follows:

1. Restoration within a period of six months after the erasure date is equivalent to two (2) times the current annual fee, plus the outstanding annual fee(s).
2. Restoration after a period of more than six months since the erasure date but within a year is equivalent to four (4) times the current annual fee, plus the outstanding fee(s);
3. Restoration after a period of 12 months, but less than 4 years since the erasure date is equivalent to five (5) times the current annual fee, plus the outstanding fee(s).

4.1.2 Health professionals whose names have been erased as referred to in 4.1.1 above, shall be restored upon receipt of the following:

- Duly completed application for restoration form (Form 18) and applicable Restoration Fees;
- Health professionals have to obtain the necessary 30 CEU's within 12 months of restoration;
- Health professionals will then be audited after 12 months to ensure that they have accrued the CEU's.

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4.1.3 Health professionals who have been erased for more than 4 years may be restored after successful passing of the Board examination.

4.2 APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION FOR BOARD EXAMINATION FOR FOREIGN QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS

An applicant must hold a qualification equivalent to the recognised South African qualification.

The minimum period of education must correspond with the education required from candidates qualifying in South Africa.

An applicant for registration must also submit official documentary evidence of having completed full-time practical training and/or professional experience.

The attached application form (Form F176 NT and F176 DT), duly completed must be accompanied by:

- Copies of all degree/diploma certificates or similar academic qualifications certified by an attorney in his capacity as notary public and bearing the official stamp. Copies certified only by a Commissioner of Oaths, will not be accepted.
- Original transcripts of record issued by your educational institution indicating course content of each qualification referred to above (copies of original documents will only be accepted if duly certified as outlined above and also verified by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA).
- A recent original Certificate of Status (Certificate of Good Standing), indicating that the applicant is in good standing, issued by the foreign registration authority where the applicant is currently registered which has been issued within the preceding three months.
- A copy of a valid Passport or Identity Document as proof of current citizenship, duly certified by a notary public as indicated above.
- A letter of endorsement in support of the application for registration issued by the Foreign Workforce Management Program (FWMP) of the National Department of Health (Form 176 DOH attached hereto for this purpose). Applications should be directed to The Programme Manager, FWMP, Room 1123, Fedlife Building, National Department of Health, Private Bag X828, Pretoria, 0001, RSA (Corner of Church and Prinsloo Streets).

The Board resolution is valid for eighteen (18) months from the date of issue.

5. CANCELLATION OR RESCHEDULING OF THE BOARD EXAMINATION

Cancellation of an application to sit for the examination must be done in writing and e-mailed to DNB@hpcsa.co.za.

Notification of cancellation to sit for the examination must reach the Board at least 3 weeks prior to date of the examination, whereafter the examination handling fee will be forfeited.

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6. CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR CONTACT DETAILS

If the applicant changes either his/her address or contact details before the examination for which an application has been made, the applicant shall notify the Board in writing of such change of address or contact details at least 3 weeks prior to date of the examination. The same should be communicated with the university of your choice to ensure that the study material and confirmation of the examination venue are mailed to the correct address.

7. EXAMINATION HANDLING FEES APPLICABLE TO THE DNB REGISTERS

REGISTER CODE	REGISTER	EXAMINATION APPLICATION HANDLING FEE*
DT	Dietitian	R3 434.00
NT	Nutritionist	R3 434.00

* These fees are revised annually and may change

8. PAYMENT OF THE EXAMINATION HANDLING FEE

For restoration of South African citizens, the proof of payment (deposit slip) must reflect the candidate's surname, Initials, and contact telephone number. For correct reference number, make use of either your HPCSA registration number or South African identification (ID) number. For foreign qualified candidates, use ID or passport number, initials, surname and professional board DNB.

The Professional Board will not accept responsibility for the exclusion of a name of a candidate from the list of candidates due to non-receipt of proof of payment by the HPCSA.

The banking details of the HPCSA are as follows:

HPCSA

ABSA

Arcadia Branch

Account number: 0610-000-169

Branch code: 33-49-45

REF NO: REGISTRATION NUMBER AND INITIALS AND SURNAME
OF THE CANDIDATE (for restoration) – PBDNB

or

ID/PASSPORT AND INITIALS AND SURNAME OF THE CANDIDATE
(for Foreign Qualified – PBDNB)

- i. The HPCSA has for safety reasons implemented "a no cash on premises policy" and payments have to be made at the bank or through the internet; and
- ii. Incomplete application forms will not be processed and will be returned to candidates;
- iii. An admission letter issued by the Board, and the ID/Passport document must be presented to the invigilator on the day of the examination.

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9. BOARD EXAMINATIONS

The South African Qualifications Authority's (SAQA) framework requires that examinations and/or assessments are based on minimum objective criteria/outcomes. The examination is predicated on the minimum competency and ethical standards within the South African context, legislation and international best practice in the profession.

The purpose of the examination is to establish insofar as is possible, whether the applicant demonstrates the exit level outcomes that are indicators of professional competence to practice as a Dietitian or Nutritionist.

10. STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION

Once the documents have been assessed by the Board, they will be evaluated in order to decide whether the applicant complies with the basic education and training requirements for the practice of dietetics and nutrition in South Africa. The requirement of practical exams will be decided based on the work experience of the applicant. The Board will inform the candidate whether they are eligible to write the exams and whether they are required to do practical exams.

The applicant is required to successfully complete the following 3 exams, including the practical component if applicable, (as per exit level examination of the specific University) with a minimum of 50% for each of the three examinations:

DIETETICS	NUTRITION
Therapeutic Nutrition	Public Health Nutrition
Food Service Administration	Food Service Administration
Community Nutrition	Community Nutrition

If the applicant is required to do practical exams it will mean that the applicant will be required to do a 3-month practical module in one or more of the 3 theory areas specified. This should be done at the University where the exams are written.

11. ARRANGING EXAMINATION DATES AND VENUES

The exams will be written in November every year at the Dietetics and Nutrition Department of the applicant's choice. The Chairperson of the Education, Training and Registration Committee together with the Secretariat for Education and Training Division will make arrangements with the Head of Department of Dietetics/Nutrition for the applicant to write the final year exam papers with the final year Dietetic/Nutrition students. If practical work is required, this will also be arranged. The University rules and regulations relating to the writing of examinations and examination fee apply.

The closing date for applications will be 30 June annually for the Board examinations in Dietetics/Nutrition in November.

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12. SITTING FOR THE BOARD EXAMINATION, COMMUNICATION OF THE RESULTS TO THE BOARD, AND QUALIFYING FOR RE-EXAMINATION

- i. The candidate needs to write all 3 subjects simultaneously at the university of her choice and should obtain at least 50% in all subjects in the full University examination, and furthermore the candidate must also pass the required practical/s linked to each subject exam, to successfully pass the examination;
- ii. The results of the examination must be communicated by the University directly to the Board following which, if the student has passed, will be registered either as a Community Service Dietitian/Nutritionist or Dietitian/Nutritionist, whatever is applicable;
- iii. Candidates who fail one or more subjects with 45% to 49% will be required to re-write those subjects;
- iv. Applicants are afforded a maximum of three (3) consecutive opportunities to have their competence re-assessed by means of examination. After 3 unsuccessful attempts the candidate must complete the **full** final year as a fulltime student at the University of choice. In that case the University rules will apply.
- v. Candidates are required to advise the Board in writing of their intention to re-write the examination. Proof of payment of the examination handling fee must be submitted. The fees payable for a re-examination is **100% of the examination fee**.

13. COMPLAINTS AND/OR REQUEST PERTAINING TO REMARKING OF THE EXAMINATION

- i. Candidates who have any complaints/grievances regarding the examination are at liberty to submit their complaints/grievances *in writing* to the Board within *1 week* after the date of the examination;
- ii. The complaints process aims to be fair to all parties involved with the complaint. All complaints will be treated as legitimate and investigated without prejudice;
- iii. Complaints will be dealt with promptly, courteously and in accordance with their urgency within the Board's set timeframes. Complaints will be resolved in a maximum of 30 working days where possible. Complaints handling shall be at no charge to the complainant, subject to statutory requirements. However, the normal charges relating to Access of Information requests will apply;
- iv. Complaints have to be lodged in writing and may be submitted by e-mail to:

The Head of Division
 Education and Training Division
 P.O Box 205
 Pretoria
 0001
 E-mail : DNBexams@hpcsa.co.za

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14. FRAUD, DISHONESTY AND OTHER MISCONDUCT

If it shall appear to the Board that there is credible evidence of the following misconduct and/or fraudulent activities, the Board shall serve written charges on the specific candidate by mail at the last address provided to the Board by the candidate, stating with particularity the facts upon which such charges are based. The candidate's examination results shall be withheld pending the outcome of the investigation:

- i. Either by omission or commission falsified the application or proof required for admission to the Board examination or misrepresented the applicant's eligibility to sit for the Board Examination;
- ii. Either by omission or commission falsified documentation submitted in support of a special request or served such documentation under false pretences;
- iii. Brought unauthorised items or materials into the examination room or otherwise violated the Board's examination security policy;
- v. Opened a question paper or reviewed the questions prior to the announcement that the examination has begun, or otherwise violated any of the oral and/or written instructions given by the invigilators in connection with the administration of the Board examination;
- vi. Memorised questions for the purpose of reporting and or reported the substance of questions to any person associated with any person or organization engaged in the preparation of the applicants to take the Board examination or otherwise violated the copyright protection to the Board examination materials;
- vii. Engaged in fraud, dishonesty in connection with the administration of the Board examination;
- viii. Compromised or disrupted the process for admission to, or administration of the Board examination.

Candidates shall be granted an opportunity to respond to the charges within a period of 21 days after date of the letter which contains the charges. Such a response shall identify with specificity the charges disputed by the candidate, who shall set forth any evidence which can be adduced by the candidate in the contradiction of such charges. The applicant may include in such written response a request that a hearing be held.

In the event of the candidate not submitting a written response within the set timeframe, the Board shall deem the facts presented in the written charges to be true. In the event of the candidate not requesting a hearing and the Board does not on its own accord determine to conduct a hearing, the Board shall make a determination based on the evidence submitted.

The Board shall have the authority to determine a sanction to be applied based on the severity of the allegations/ offences and inform the candidate accordingly. Sanctions to be applied by the Board may include but not be limited to:

- i. Nullification of the examination taken by the candidate;
- ii. Disqualification of the candidate from sitting for another examination for a period not exceeding five years from the date of such determination;
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- iii. Invalidation or striking off one or more answers of the examination taken by the candidate, or reduction of the candidate's final score by one or more points.

The Board shall notify the candidate of its decision in writing within a period of 30 days from the date of the hearing of the charges.

The candidate shall be entitled to representation by an attorney at his/her own expense at every stage of the proceedings.

15. SUGGESTED READING MATERIAL

1. Universities' specific study guidelines.
2. Ethical rules, relevant legislation, e.g. Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act 56 of 1974), regulations relating to the scope of practice, etc. (obtainable from Council's website [www.hpcsa.co.za /Health Related Acts/ scope of practice](http://www.hpcsa.co.za/Health%20Related%20Acts/scope%20of%20practice)).

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