



POLICY

LANGUAGE

Introduction

The Foundation for Professional Development's (FPD) Language Policy follows section 27(2) of the Higher Education Act (1997) 1 which requires higher education institutions to develop and publish a language policy.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance on the language requirements for internal and external communication and for teaching and learning practices with FPD, in accordance with relevant legislation (see references). FPD subscribes to a multilingual ethos where the linguistic diversity of South African provinces is acknowledged.

The Language Policy is aligned with four major languages policy imperatives as prescribed in the Language Policy for Higher Education: 2

- The designation of the language(s) of instruction.
- The future of the indigenous languages as fields of academic study and research and the need for higher education to create "a multilingual environment in which all our languages are developed as academic/scientific languages" (par. 6).
- The promotion of the study of foreign languages (par. 17.1).
- The promotion of institutional multilingual practices.

FPD has taken into consideration the following South African legislation in the development of this Policy:

- Language in Education Policy in Terms of Section 3(4)(M) of the National Education Policy Act, 1996. 3
- The Norms and Standards Regarding Language Policy Published in Terms of Section 6(1) Of the South African Schools Act, 1996. 4

¹ Republic of South Africa. 1997. Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997). Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a101-97.pdf

² Department of Higher Education and Training. 2017. Language Policy for Higher Education. Available at: <https://www.dhet.gov.za/Policy%20and%20Development%20Support/Government%20Notice%20Revised%20Language%20Policy%20for%20Higher%20Education.pdf>

³ Department of Education. 1997. Language in Education Policy (In terms of Section 3(4)(M) of the National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 1996)). Available at: <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Policies/GET/LanguageEducationPolicy1997.pdf>

⁴ Department of Education. 1997. Norms and Standards for Language Policy in Public Schools (In terms of Section 6(1) of the South African Schools Act (No. 27 of 1996)). Available at: <http://www.up2speed.co.za/Legislation/NORMS%20AND%20STANDARDS%20FOR%20LANGUAGE%20POLICY%20IN%20PUBLIC%20SCHOOLS.pdf>

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act. ⁵
- South African Qualifications Authority Act. ⁶
- Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997). ⁷
- Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act 12 of 2012). ⁸
- Ministry of Education: National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa.⁹
- Ministry of Education: Language Policy for Higher Education. ¹⁰
- The Development of Indigenous African Languages as mediums of instruction in Higher Education. ¹¹
- Higher Education Qualifications Sub- Framework (HEQSF). ¹²
- Department of Education: Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate, 2005. ¹³

Definitions and Terms

African indigenous languages	Refers to IsiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho, SeSotho sa Leboa, Setswana, SiSwati, TshiVenda, XiTsonga. ²
Career-based conversational language	Refers to the ability to have a conversation in a colloquial (informal) language in a specific career capacity.
Conversational fluency	The ability to have a conversation in a colloquial (informal) language.
Foreign languages	Includes, but is not limited to, languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, such as German, Greek, Somali, Swahili, Portuguese, French and Hindi. ²
Functional multilingualism	Refers to the choice of a language in a specific situation and according to the context, i.e. the function, audience and message for which it is used.
LPHE	Language Policy for Higher Education ²
Multilingual	Refers to using more than one language by individuals or a group of people
Primary language speaker	Mother-tongue language speaker
FPD designated language	Refers to English

Principles of Language Policy

- The multilingual nature of the South African provinces is acknowledged;

⁵ Republic of South Africa. 1996. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996. Available at: <https://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/constitution/saconstitution-web-eng.pdf>

⁶ Republic of South Africa. 1995. South African Qualifications Authority Act (No. 58 of 1995). Available at: https://www.saga.org.za/sites/default/files/2019-11/SOUTH%20AFRICAN%20QUALIFICATIONS%20AUTHORITY%20ACT%2C%20NO.58%20OF%201995_8.pdf

⁷ Republic of South Africa. 1997. Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997). Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a101-97.pdf

⁸ Republic of South Africa. 2012. Use of Official Languages Act (No. 12 of 2012). Available at: <https://www.gov.za/documents/use-official-languages-act>

⁹ Ministry of Education. 2001. National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa Available at: <https://www.dhet.gov.za/HED%20Policies/National%20Plan%20on%20Higher%20Education.pdf>

¹⁰ Department of Higher Education and Training. 2017. Language Policy for Higher Education. Available at: <https://www.dhet.gov.za/Policy%20and%20Development%20Support/Government%20Notice%20Revised%20Language%20Policy%20for%20Higher%20Education.pdf>

¹¹ Ministry of Education. 2001. The Development of Indigenous African Languages as mediums of instruction in Higher Education. Available at:

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/Reports%20Doc%20Library/Development%20of%20Indigenous%20African%20Languages%20as%20mediums%20of%20instruction%20in%20Higher%20Education.pdf>

¹² Council on Higher Education. 2014. National Qualifications Act (No. 67 of 2008): Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework. Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201410/38116gon819.pdf

¹³ Department of Education. 2008. Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor Degree Programmes requiring a National Senior Certificate. Available at: https://mb.usafac.za/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/nsc_he_admission_requirements.pdf

- The notion of functional multilingualism where the choice of using a particular language is determined by different contexts such as the purpose and nature of language use and communication;
- The multilingual varieties of students and staff as resources for effective teaching and learning;
- The important role of language in promoting human dignity, and the transformation process required to build a free and just democracy;
- The need to cultivate a spirit of respect and inclusiveness in matters relating to language;
- The need to develop and study indigenous African languages as fields of academic study.

Designated Languages

Given the institution's geographical context and reflecting our commitment to promoting multilingualism in the context of higher education, Sesotho sa Leboa (Northern Sotho), English, isiZulu (Zulu) and Afrikaans are designated as primary languages in FPD's community. Depending on the need of our community and where feasible, FPD will evaluate the language of instruction annually and update this policy accordingly.

Languages of Instruction

- All approved modules and programmes are offered in English.
- FPD will adopt comprehensive measures to ensure that students have access to English academic literacy courses to facilitate the use of English as a tool for teaching and learning, and for professional purposes.
- Working Language(s):
 - English is the primary language of internal governance, administration, marketing, and internal and external communication at FPD.
 - The use of any particular language(s) must not serve as a barrier to participation in official institutional governance and communication.

Future of Designated Languages

- Conditions will be created for the ongoing and systematic elaboration/expansion of other indigenous languages, where feasible and within budget constraints.
- Strategies and support mechanisms for ongoing and systematic elaboration/ expansion will be considered where feasible.

Foreign Languages

- A student whose primary language is any other language/s other than English will be assisted as follows where necessary and if possible:
 - Provide basic information about the module, such as information relating to contact times and assessments;
 - Guidance with understanding academic records and administrative information.
- FPD does not have a Language Unit but can recommend institutions of higher learning that can offer support to its students.

Accountabilities

The Academic Committee is responsible for review and approval of this policy on an annual basis. The policy is to be distributed to staff via induction and distributed to students and FPD's community via the website and other publications.