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The Durban University of Technology (DUT) is committed to prioritising the quality of teaching and learning by providing high calibre and extremely relevant, academic programmes.

DUT commenced the offering of higher certificate qualifications to allow students with a Grade 12 certificate endorsement to be permitted admission into a first level university qualification. A higher certificate is an exit level qualification. I must be noted that these students are usually excluded from most universities, since they do not satisfy diploma or degree qualification requirements. At the same time, the completion of a higher certificate does not imply immediate admission into a diploma within a given academic year, regardless of the results obtained. Furthermore, the completion of a particular higher certificate qualification does not imply that the university is obliged to grant the student admission to all diplomas that it offers.

DUT endeavours to create learning spaces that promote the academic aspirations of students, regardless of their educational, cultural or socioeconomic background. This is especially reflected in DUT's long and proud history of creating gateways into higher education for students who are usually barred from obtaining a university education, primarily due to the quality of their Grade 12 results. DUT has widened access to higher education by offering a range of diploma programmes and this endeavour is further supported by the implementation of extended curriculum programmes, to further boost educational opportunities for students. This is also evident in the multitude of alternative access programmes that DUT supports, to enable a wider range of students to gain entrance into higher education.

Whilst DUT makes every effort to provide further learning opportunities for qualifying students, various factors hinder the full realization of the university's plans and intentions. There are several governmental and regulatory requirements that the university has to adhere to, such as limits on the number of students it is allowed to admit into its academic programmes, a cap on the total number of enrolments, limits on the types of programmes offered and the

fields of studies that can be offered. The impact of this highly regulatory environment is further exacerbated by internal capacity constraints such as lecture venue size, number of academic and administrative staff available and specialist professional services to support students.

Due to the afore-mentioned restrictions, DUT is not always able to accommodate all students who apply for further studies such as diplomas, advanced diplomas, postgraduate diplomas, honours degrees and so on. Thus, higher certificate graduates are no exception to this restriction and hence, may not always be allowed admission into diploma programmes.

Where space exists in select diploma programmes, in specific fields of study and as stipulated in the university's Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) approved enrolment plan, DUT may be able to admit students with a higher certificate qualification. However, the admission of these students is contingent on the application of a strict merit-based selection process and it will be subject to changes and further limitations in subsequent years.