

“Revitalising and Transforming the Academic Profession”

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE NEW GENERATION OF ACADEMICS PROGRAMME (nGAP)

With effect from January 2024¹

Introduction

1. The Minister approved the Ministerial Statement on the Implementation of the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) 2021-2023 through Effective Management and Utilisation of the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) 2021-23 in November 2020.
2. This document should be read in conjunction with the approved Ministerial Statement on the UCDP as well as the Staffing South Africa's Universities' Framework (SSAUF) document.
3. The New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP), which involves recruiting new academics as part of the nGAP, is one of the programmes within the SSAUF.
4. The implementation of the nGAP involves recruitment of new academics as part of a 6-year development programme.
5. The 4 or 6-year period is specific for each nGAP academic post and starts on the date that the post-holder signs the employment contract.
6. This document is intended to provide a standard set of policies and processes to guide the implementation of the nGAP.

¹ The policies and processes described in this document refer to all phases of the New Generation of Academics Programme implemented to date, and that will be implemented in the future, unless a revised version of the document replaces this one.

The nature of the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP)

7. The nGAP is intended to support universities to recruit academics into permanent positions in line with their staffing and development plans.
8. 80% of the appointees in the university must be Black (African, Coloured and Indian men and women including people with disabilities), of which at least 55% of the positions should be taken up by Black women. The permanent residents and other categories can be considered through the remainder of 20% based on substantial motivation. Priority must be accorded to persons who are 40 years or younger in age.
9. The nGAP will enable the newly recruited academics to benefit from teaching development and research development opportunities including institutional and other programmes in the UCDP, excluding the University Staff Doctoral Programme of the UCDP. In an event where the academic is awarded and has accepted a Future Professors Programme opportunity, he or she will forfeit the nGAP award without penalties.
10. Table 1 below illustrates 6 key aspects of the nGAP:

Table 1: The New Generation of Academics Programme (Master's degree holders)

	Stage 1 Development Programme			Stage 2 Induction and early career development			Stage 3 ²
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7 & 8
Employment	[reduced workload ¹ 20%]	[reduced workload 20%]	[reduced workload 20%]	[increasing workload 50%]	[full workload]	[full work load]	Remain at the University [full workload]
Doctoral/ Post-Doctoral Studies	√	√	√	PhD possibly still completing			
Mentoring	√	√	√	√			
Participation in development activities as part of the SSAU-Development Programme (SSAU-DP)	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Research Study Costs	Contributions towards the lecturer's research study costs.						
International mobility	The intention is to support one international mobility opportunity, to take place at any point during the eight-years of participating in the programme where it will have maximum benefit for the development of the lecturer.						

² Lecturers need to remain at the university two years after completing the programme to plough back to the university Stage 3 is meant to protect universities and improve retention of nGAP lecturers. During these 2 years, lecturers will be allowed to utilise remaining funds in their respective cost centres to participate in further developmental programmes and travel.

Each aspect of the programme listed in Table 1 is discussed in greater detail below:

11. Employment:

11.1 Academics are appointed on a permanent, full-time basis from the outset.

11.2 Academics must fulfil probationary requirements in accordance with paragraph 9 as would any other academic. Probationary requirements should be aligned to the agreed upon workload.

11.3 The recruitment and appointment of academics will take place in accordance with the university's policies and procedures. The university will provide the management and administrative support required to perform the recruitment and appointment functions.

11.4 The university is the employer, and the academic has to comply with line management and performance management processes that are in place at the university, and in accordance with paragraph 10 of this SoP document.

11.5 Beyond monitoring the appointment and continued employment of the academic and ensuring that specific conditions of the nGAP are adhered to, the Department of Higher Education and Training (the Department) does not play any further role with respect to the employment relationship between the university and the lecturer.

11.6 A specific condition of the nGAP regards the workload allocation for the academic which is indicated to be 20% in the first three years of the programme for those academics who enter the programme with a Master's degree and need to complete a doctoral degree. This will enable sufficient time to be available to complete or make significant progress towards the completion of a PhD/doctorate study program, and to participate in approved development activities. Academics who already hold a doctoral degree should be allocated a 50% workload for the first two years and a full workload thereafter.

11.7 A Master's degree with a 70% average pass mark is the standard requirement for consideration as an nGAP academic. Appointment of candidates who already hold a Doctorate/PhD is supported, however, the requirement of the 70% average pass mark from a Master's degree still applies. Below is a table that illustrates the model for entering the programme at this level:

Table 2: The New Generation of Academics Programme (PhD/Doctorate holders)

	Stage 1 Induction and early career development				Stage 3 ³
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5 & 6
Employment	[reduced workload 50%]	[reduced workload 50%]	[full workload]	[full workload]	Remain at the University [full workload]

³ Refer to footnote number 2.

Post-Doctoral ³ Studies/Professional Teaching Studies/Publications	√	√	√	√	
Mentoring	√	√	√	√	
Participation in development activities as part of the SSAU-Development Programme (SSAU-DP)	√	√	√	√	
Research Costs	Contributions towards the lecturer's research and publication costs.				
International mobility	The intention is to support one international mobility opportunity, to take place at any point during the six-years of participating in the programme where it will have maximum benefit for the development of the lecturer.				

12. Doctoral studies

12.1 An nGAP academic who has not yet embarked on **postgraduate Doctoral** studies must be immediately supported to enroll for a relevant **postgraduate Doctoral** programme in his/her lecturing discipline. Depending on what qualifications are already held by the academic, enrolment could be for a doctoral, post-doctoral or relevant professional teaching programme. **Registration for Doctoral studies must be concluded within the first six months of joining the programme.**

12.2 Candidates with a Master's degree are expected to achieve a doctoral degree within the first 4 years of the nGAP. Candidates with a Doctoral degree are expected to complete any studies registered for within the four years of the programme.

12.3 Funds to enable the enrolment of the academic on the relevant programme and to undertake the study and research work for the programme are included in the funds that the Department allocates to the university for the academic's participation in the nGAP. Funding opportunities from other sources to augment the allocated nGAP funds can be considered, and only if the contractual obligation/s are not in contravention of the programme.

12.4 The study should take place at a university and with a supervisor that has recognized and demonstrated expertise in the area of study. The mentor allocated to the newly appointed academic should assist with making this decision. The intention is that the newly- appointed academic receives the highest level of supervision possible, from recognized experts in the discipline. Where possible and necessary, the academic should preferably not undertake his/her studies at the university where he/she is appointed.

13. Mentoring

13.1 **The university** must appoint a mentor for each academic **from the point of taking up the position**, and at least for the first four years of the academic's participation on the programme. Mentors are envisaged to be experienced and successful academics. Semi-retired or recently retired recognized disciplinary experts also recognized as good

academics are ideally placed for the mentorship role.

- 13.2 The mentor's main purpose is to support and assist in inducting the academic into the life and work of an academic, to develop understanding of how the university system works, and how to navigate it to become an established and successful new academic.

The duties of mentors include:

- keeping close track of agreed upon developmental milestones and plans;
- providing assistance with the preparation of a personal plan for professional development;
- advising on professional development activities that should be undertaken;
- assisting where necessary with the process of registering for a PhD;
- assisting with such matters as personal problems, time management, financial management; and
- creating opportunities for reflective discussions on teaching and research experiences, opportunities, and challenges.

- 13.3 The role of a mentor must not be conflated with the role of the supervisor. The mentor cannot be the student's supervisor as the roles are different.

- 13.4 Mentors may be recruited from current or retired academics, inside or outside of the university. Ideally, mentors should be academics. Where it is necessary for existing staff members to be recruited, the university must make sure that the additional functions can be successfully carried out. The funds provided for this must enable the provision of dedicated mentor support. The mentor support should be in addition to the mentorship that all new academics should receive in the school/department in which they are employed. It is possible that an appointed mentor can be responsible for more than one lecturer.

14. Participation on the Staffing South Africa's Universities' Development Programme (SSAU-DP)

- 14.1 Each university is expected to identify relevant teaching and research development programmes that lecturers should participate in, with consideration of each Department's compulsory development programmes.

- 14.2 The development opportunities may take the form of enrolment on formal qualifications and/or through completing relevant short courses, modules or programmes identified by the university's nGAP management, the mentor or the Department and/or Faculty and any other university centre that is responsible for staff development.

- 14.3 Mentors are expected to advise academics on which professional development

opportunities to pursue. Where there are cost implications that will be covered by nGAP funds allocated for the academic's development, the nGAP manager at the university must approve participation in the activity.

- 14.4 Academics will be expected to maintain a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) in line with the university performance management policy which provides evidence of participation in development programmes undertaken as part of the SSAU-DP including any other relevant activities the academic was participating/involved in. The PoE should be available if required for review during the site visit. This must form part of the annual progress reports on the nGAP. At the end of the 4 or 6 years, the PoE will be used as one of the determinants of a satisfactory conclusion of the academic's participation in the nGAP. The evidence should accompany the final year report that is submitted to the Department.

15. Research Study Costs

- 15.1 Each appointed academic is provided with a fund allocation for equipment to support his/her research study work.
- 15.2 The funds must be used only for the needs of the research study of the academic and can include purchasing items such as specialized ICT equipment, research software, recording equipment and the like. Activities such as data collection, analysis etc. can also be funded from these funds.
- 15.3 The funds cannot be used to cover costs for the workspace, including furniture and basic tools such as laptops, printers, including for example, Apple and other tablets necessary to execute duties that the university should provide to its permanently employed staff member.
- 15.4 Academics with a Master's degree and working on undertaking doctoral studies (proposal stage) are able to apply for support for research costs from the National Research Foundation (NRF) which has established a dedicated fund for this purpose. Information with regards to this opportunity is available from the Research Office of each university.
- 15.5 Academics must register with the NRF soon after appointment and assumption of duty. This is a requirement as the NRF uses an electronic submission system and applicants must first register, if not already registered on the NRF Online Submission System (<https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>) in order to create and complete an application. Academics will be alerted when the call for applications is open. Academics are advised to approach the Research office at the university should they need assistance in this regard.

16. International and local mobility

- 16.1 Funds are provided to enable one international mobility opportunity for the academic during the 4 or 6-year period of the programme. Academics who could not exhaust

funds in their cost centres are allowed to continue utilizing the remaining funds until the end of the 6 or 8 years of the final stage of the programme. This applies only if the academic remains at the university for the 6 or 8 years.

- 16.2 Funding of local mobility opportunities should be managed through the university policy and processes that cater for all academics participating in such conferences/events.
- 16.3 The international mobility opportunity should take the form of an international visit to spend some time at a university which has demonstrated expertise in the discipline and research focus the academic is pursuing.
- 16.4 The visit should serve the purpose of enhancing and informing the research work that the academic is undertaking either for their PhD studies or to enhance their research, teaching curriculum development skills. In addition, the visit should be used as an opportunity to enable the academic to establish international and local links and possible future research collaborations.
- 16.5 The visit should take place at an appropriate time to enable the academic to benefit maximally from the experience.
- 16.6 The academic's supervisor and mentor should advise on the place and time of the visit.

Financial management of nGAP funds allocated by the Department to universities.

17. The university is required to create a separate cost centre for each phase of the nGAP (i.e., a cost centre for Phase 1, 2 and subsequent phases) in its financial system; and within this, to manage the fund allocation for each academic appointed in each financial year.
18. nGAP funding covers a four or six-year period to enable full participation of each academic on the programme. The four or 6-year period is specific for each nGAP post and starts on the date that the academic signs the employment contract.
19. The funds allocated to support the participation of the academic on the nGAP can only be used for the following activities over the four or six years of the nGAP, as spelt out in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Allocation of funds for nGAP implementation

nGAP component	Maximum amount that can be paid from the DHET funds (%)
Salary costs of the nGAP appointees	18% (54% over the 3-year period) of the total allocation per nGAP appointee per year for each of the <u>first three years</u>

	14% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee for the <u>fourth year</u> (university contribution to meet gap)
	9% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee for the <u>fifth year</u> (university contribution to meet gap)
	5% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee for the <u>sixth year</u> (university contribution to meet gap)
A contribution towards registration and tuition fees for postgraduate studies of the nGAP academic	2% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee over the full registration period
Costs associated with assigning a mentor for each nGAP academic	4% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee over the first four years of the nGAP programme
Costs associated with the nGAP academics' participation in the Staffing South Africa's Universities Development Programme (SSAU-DP)	5% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee over the full programme
Costs of equipment and activities needed to support the studies of the nGAP academic registered for a PhD. Candidates that entered the programme with a PhD can use this allocation to cover costs for further research and publication developmental needs.	5% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee over the full programme
International conference/mobility participation costs	2% of the total allocation per nGAP appointee over the full programme
TOTAL	100% = Specific allocated amount for the 4- or 6-year programme

20. The university and academic must manage the costs of the individual budget items listed above within this overall allocation. Budget virements are allowed between budget items, except for the salary and the SSAU-DP budget line items. ~~Permission must be requested from the Department before implementing the changes.~~
21. The university must maintain a budget which clearly shows how the funds are used over the four or six years of the programme, and a report on the budget for each academic must be included in the annual report on the nGAP submitted by the university. In cases where remaining funds are used after the 4 or 6-year period, a financial report on how the funds were utilised should be submitted as part of the nGAP annual report.
22. The university will credit the nGAP account annually with interest as calculated by the university in accordance with its financial policy regarding trust fund accounts, which is subject to change from time to time. Details of this policy must be made available to the Department and amendments thereto must be communicated to the Department in advance. The accumulated interest earned on the funds may be used primarily to offset inflationary salary increases, secondly for administrative/management expenses and lastly, for related bona-fide purposes/costs approved by the nGAP Manager.
23. All expenditure debited against the nGAP funds will be subject to the provisions of the

university's financial policies and normal institutional audit protocol.

Application for and allocation of nGAP posts

24. The Department/implementation support partner will issue a call for applications for nGAP posts from universities for each phase.
25. Each call will be accompanied by a proposal template and a set of criteria against which applications will be assessed.
26. Universities are expected to submit their applications by the deadline indicated in the call for applications.
27. A review team will be convened to assess the applications.
28. Broad criteria that will guide the allocation of posts include the following:
 - alignment with the university's medium to long term staffing plan;
 - alignment with national/systemic priorities;
 - alignment with higher education transformation imperatives;
 - progress with regards to the implementation of the preceding allocations; and
 - the demonstrated capacity of the university to develop and support a young upcoming academic.
29. The funds that will be needed to enable the appointment of lecturers/academics into the allocated posts, and to support their full participation over the four or six years of the nGAP, will be transferred to each university. ~~in two tranches, one at the beginning of the cohort and the final tranche~~ Funds will not be transferred until the a university submits a report to the Department illustrating a satisfactory progress of the implementation of the programme. These funds can only be utilised on confirmation that the university agrees with the policies and processes for managing the nGAP, as described in this document, through signing the agreement document (nGAP terms and conditions) that will be sent to universities and submitted to the Department.

Recruitment and appointment of lecturers

30. For each financial year, the university will receive formal notification from the Department on the specific posts that have been approved for the university, and recruitment processes to fill these posts can only begin on receipt of this notification.
31. The Department/implementation support partner university will create a composite nGAP vacancy list for posts that will be supported in each financial year. The advertisement will be advertised nationally and at institutional level through various means, including electronic and print-based media. The national advertisement will direct potential applicants to each university's website, and details of the post must be available there when the advertisement is published.

32. Each university must place a full advertisement for each nGAP post on its website with clear instructions about the application process. Institutional advertisements should, among others, clearly indicate that the posts are institution-based and permanent. Universities must advertise nGAP posts specifying a Master's degree with a minimum average of 70% pass mark for the Master's degree as the standard requirements to apply for nGAP posts. Universities cannot include a PhD qualification as a minimum requirement or as an advantage for any nGAP post.
33. The university must provide the management and administrative support required to perform the recruitment and appointment functions. The recruitment and appointment of nGAP academics will take place in accordance with the university's policies and procedures.
34. Selection and appointment of academics will be made with due observance of the policy and criteria of the university regarding job titles (academic status), post descriptions, competency profiles of candidates and any other relevant institutional priorities and criteria, as well as the criteria linked to the transformational agenda of the nGAP.
35. The nGAP is positioned as a prestigious programme in the sector, and candidates who demonstrate passion for pursuing a career as an academic and who have demonstrated high academic ability must be recruited. Prospective candidates should have achieved an average of 70% or above in the Master's degree. This condition can be waived on approval by the Deputy Director-General of the Department, but only following a substantial motivation submitted by the university. Motivation is allowed only for candidates who obtained 65% or above. The motivation must include confirmation that the candidate will be accepted at a university for a Doctoral/PhD study with the average of 65% pass mark.
36. Where possible, a representative from the Department will participate as an observer in the short-listing and interview process and must be notified in good time by the university for shortlisting and interview dates.
37. Following the short listing and interview process, the university will make recommendations regarding the appointment of candidates to the Department, which will confirm or reject the recommendations of the university and forward such recommendations to the Deputy Director-General of the Department or his/her nominee for final approval. Recommendations are only likely to be rejected if the criteria developed by the Department for nGAP appointments have not been met. The submission of recommended candidates must be made to the Department within 30 days of the interviews. The recommendation must include: a copy of the advertisement of the post, the signed Human Resource report on applicants' shortlisting and interview process, a copy of the recommended candidate's curriculum vitae, identity document, qualification certificates and academic transcripts of the highest qualification.

38. Once the proposed appointment has been confirmed in writing by the Deputy Director-General or his/her nominee, the university can make firm offers of employment to the selected candidates. The university cannot make a firm offer to the candidate/s without the formal approval from the Department. After the recommendation has been approved by the Department, the university must submit signed contracts of appointments and the 'New Generation of Academics' Programme (nGAP) Addendum contracts to the Department within 30 days from the date the incumbent takes up the post.
39. Posts are considered to be filled when the Department has granted the approval for the recommendation and received a copy of the signed employment contract between the academic and the university.
40. nGAP posts allocated to the university which are not filled by the start of the next phase allocation will be carried over to the next allocation. This will affect the number of posts allocated to the university in the following year.

Provisions to be incorporated in the employment contracts of lecturers

41. The academics are deemed to be full employees of the university and will be subject to the university's conditions of service for academic employees.
42. The university must be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the academics.
43. The university must determine the institutional reporting lines of the academics.
44. The university is responsible for providing administrative and developmental support to academics, as necessary and appropriate, with a view to enabling them to participate fully in appropriate development programmes.
45. The university must provide appropriate office space and infrastructural support to academics reasonably required to perform their tasks.
46. The university must put an employment contract in place with each nGAP appointee, which, among others, clearly stipulates obligations, expectations, roles and responsibilities and clearly describes the university's conditions of service for academics appointed in nGAP posts.
47. The employment contract/performance agreement must:
 - 47.1 make it clear that the appointment is on a permanent full time basis;
 - 47.2 specify the teaching load (as a percentage of the norm for the level of appointment) of the appointee over the 4 or 6 years of the programme;
 - 47.3 emphasise the need to participate successfully in the SSAU Development Programme (SSAU-DP);

- 47.4 set out such matters as the number and nature of SSAU-DP courses and activities to be taken over the duration of the programme;
- 47.5 set out expectations in relation to registration for a PhD/Post-doctoral programme and target and timeframes for specific milestones to be achieved; and
- 47.6 emphasize the expectations of the appointees' commitment in relation to working with an appointed mentor, including details on what the roles and responsibilities of the appointed academic and mentor would be to enable an effective mentor-mentee relationship.
48. The following conditions regarding the financial implications of termination of participation in the programme must be incorporated into the employment contract of the nGAP academic:
- 48.1 Set out expectations in relation to registration for a PhD/Post-doctoral programme, targets and timeframes for specific milestones to be achieved;
- 48.2 The academic must acknowledge commitment to successful completion of the 4 or 6-year programme at the university by signing the nGAP SSAUF addendum; and
- 48.3 Should the academic leave the programme by choice, or drop out, or have his/her contract terminated for reasons of poor performance or misconduct during the first 4 or 6 years of the programme or within 2 years after the successful completion thereof, the nGAP academic will be obliged to repay the university the following costs incurred up to the point of leaving:
- full costs of registration and tuition fees for postgraduate studies;
 - full costs associated with assigning a mentor for each lecturer;
 - full costs associated with the lecturer's participation in the SSAU-DP;
 - full costs of equipment needed to support the research studies work of the lecturer;
 - full costs of international conference/ mobility participation, and
 - 10% of salary costs incurred up to the point of leaving.
- 48.4 It is the responsibility of the university, through its processes, to recoup any funds that the academic who left the programme before completion needs to repay.
- 48.5 The university must notify the Department when the position becomes vacant.
49. The Deputy Director-General or his/her nominee may, in the interest of the academic and after consultation with the home university, approve deviations from the provisions

set out in point 48 above.

50. The university indemnifies the Department against any action arising from the employer/employee relationship between the university and the academic as a result of any action taken by the university in terms of this contract or otherwise.

Change Management

51. Universities are monitoring the implementation of the nGAP and this necessitates changes as and when necessary based on the outcomes of the monitoring.
52. Therefore, universities are expected to make changes internally, however, with the approval of the respective Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The following changes, however, need to be approved by the Department:
 - a. extensions of the period a lecturer takes to complete the programme;
 - b. changes to the discipline of the allocated post;
 - c. utilisation of interest accumulated.
53. Records of changes made must be provided as part of the annual report that is submitted to the Department.
54. Requests for changes that are directed to the Department can only be considered up to the end of October with full justification for such requests.
55. Changes must be recorded on the standard change request template provided by the Department.
56. Changes with regards to budget virements (managed internally by the university) must be illustrated in a table that clearly indicates the movement of funds from one budget line item to the other.
57. Outcomes for changes submitted to the Department must be communicated to the universities within a period of two weeks from the date of submission.

Reporting Requirements

58. The nGAP fund is an earmarked grant and is therefore subject to the Department's financial reporting requirements in respect of such funds.
59. The university must provide an annual narrative and financial report to the Department on the implementation of the nGAP at the university, supported by a report from the external auditors.
60. The report must be submitted to the Department not later than 31 May of each year.
61. The narrative report will include a detailed report on the participation and progress of each academic supported in each financial year.

62. The financial reports will include management statements signed by the Director: Finance of the university reflecting the income and expenditure including the accumulated interest of the nGAP funds at the university.
63. The report from the external auditors must indicate that all expenditure was incurred and paid for following the university's formalized procedures and code of conduct. It must also indicate that all expenditure and commitments are consistent with the final version of the budget approved by the Department. An audit sampling methodology of not less than 60% of expenditure incurred must be used for this report. The university must adhere to the Standards on Auditing (SA 530: Audit Sampling) in this regard.

Project Management

64. Each university must appoint a manager for the nGAP utilising the interest accumulated from the funds where necessary.
65. The role of a manager is to coordinate and oversee the effective implementation of the nGAP at the university. Responsibilities of the manager include:
 - ensuring that the university applies for posts advertise by the Department;
 - manages and approves the changes made during the implementation of the programme;
 - be a liaison between the university and the Department;
 - submits reports to the Department;
 - coordinate all activities of the nGAP in the university;

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE NEW GENERATION OF
ACADEMICS PROGRAMME (nGAP)**

**The Standard Operating Procedures for the implementation of the ‘New Generation of
Academics’ Programme (nGAP) is endorsed:**

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Deputy Director-General: University Education

Date:

**The Standard Operating Procedures for the implementation of the ‘New Generation of
Academics’ Programme (nGAP) is approved:**

Director-General: Higher Education and Training

Date: