

Division of
Emergency Medicine
Department of Family, Community and
Emergency Care

**Postgraduate Diploma in
Emergency Care
2026**

Post-Graduate Diploma in Emergency Care Programme Outline 2026

AIM

This fully online course has been designed for doctors, nurses, paramedics, and clinical associates who want to gain knowledge in emergency care. The primary purpose of the Post Graduate Diploma in Emergency Care is to equip healthcare professionals with theoretical, clinical, research and management skills that enable the promotion of evidence-based emergency care across the continent.

The course is designed to focus on the African emergency care contexts and caters for paramedics, nurses, doctors, and clinical associates that are involved in emergency care.

Please note that the course provides clinical theory, but there is no practical clinical requirement – that is assumed from your prior experience and current workplace.

The course is ideal for busy emergency care workers who due to high patient loads and geographical distances are unable to access traditional educational methods. Working online, you can access your coursework on your electronic device.

The course requires no travel and there are no face-to-face sessions, allowing you to work in a flexible study schedule whilst fulfilling personal and professional obligations.

Please note that the course is an interactive, online distance learning course, with regular weekly activities to complete.

The course can serve as a bridge to the MPhil programme in Emergency Care.

PROGRAMME COMPOSITION

Mode of delivery: This is a fully online course.

Minimum time for completion: One year

It is a full-time course

Number of credits: 120 credits and each subject/course have different credits.

Each credit equals one notional hour, and one notional hour equals 10 hours of work for the average student. You should expect to spend 20-30 hours a week on readings and activities.

There are six courses in the diploma which you will undertake with the expert guidance of dedicated lecturers, providing contextually relevant information, and a collaborative online learning environment with interdisciplinary colleagues from around South Africa and the rest of the continent.

The courses are

- Introduction to Postgraduate studies
- Concepts in Emergency Care
- Adult Emergency Medicine
- Child Health in Emergency Care
- Leadership and patient safety
- Research literacy

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The PG Diploma in Emergency Care is open to doctors, nurses, paramedics, and clinical associates who hold a minimum of an NQF 7 Degree.

Candidates must have at least one year's experience working in an emergency care clinical health professional setting.

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Candidates with extensive experience but who do not hold an NQF 7 Degree may be considered as part of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process of the Health Science Faculty. Applicants who wish to be considered based on RPL will be required to complete a personal portfolio reflecting, amongst others, their experience in the field of emergency care, and any relevant work experience and past attendance of relevant short courses or courses for which they may have obtained certificates or diplomas.

Assessment to identify critical thinking skills in writing and reading may be conducted. Applicants must be registered with the relevant South African professional body (such as the HPCSA or Nursing Council) or equivalent and should preferably be working in an emergency care environment.

Applicants must be able to converse and write in Medical English.

Applicants must pass a basic computer literacy examination provided by the Division upon shortlisting.

It is strongly encouraged that students have the support of their employer in undertaking this course. Although there are no face-to-face contact sessions, it will require a good deal of dedicated study time, and attendance remotely at some contact sessions and assessments.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Since this course is hosted online you need to have access to a laptop or computer and reliable internet access.

Technical requirements:

Basic computer skills

- You must be able to operate a computer, possess basic web-browsing skills and be able to use a word-processing program to create and edit documents.
- You must be proficient with email and file management (access, create, edit, save, upload, and download documents).
- You must be able to use a word-processing program to create and edit documents.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Programme Convenor: To be confirmed

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SEMESTER OUTLINE

| Week | Course | |
|---------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Adult Emergency Medicine | Introduction to Postgraduate studies |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | Concepts in Emergency Care |
| 10 | | |
| 11 | | |
| 12 | | |
| 13 | | |
| 14 | | |
| 15 | | |
| 16 | | |
| 17 | | |
| 18 | | |
| 19 | Student break | |
| 20 | | |
| 21 | | |
| 22 | | |
| 23 (1) | Child health in Emergency Care | Research literacy |
| 24 (2) | | |
| 25 (3) | | |
| 26 (4) | | |
| 27 (5) | | |
| 28 (6) | | |
| 29 (7) | | |
| 30 (8) | | |
| 31 (9) | | Leadership& Patient safety |
| 32 (10) | | |
| 33 (11) | | |
| 34 (12) | | |
| 35 (13) | | |
| 36 (14) | | |
| 37 (15) | | |
| 38 (16) | | |
| 39 (17) | | |
| 40 (18) | | |

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COURSE STRUCTURE

In-course work (assignments, etc.) will count towards at least 50% of the course mark, with the summative assessment at the end of the course counting at most 50%. A 50% sub-minimum must be achieved to pass a course. Unless otherwise stated, upon failure in a final assessment, no supplementary examination is available, and the course will have to be retaken when it is offered again if allowed by the university. (Also see Book 3 – General Rules & Policies: Master’s Degrees [GM1 to GM10]).

If 50% or more courses taken in a year are failed, or the candidate is absent for the examinations without timely prior communication, the candidate may not be allowed to re-register for the degree in the following year. Continuous registration at the university is a necessity to allow for completion of the programme, else a specific leave of absence needs to be applied for in special circumstances.

Contact will be via the internet portal “Amathuba”: www.amathuba.uct.ac.za. All the resources will be made available on Amathuba, communication will be through it and assignments are also submitted via this portal. It is the candidate’s responsibility to access the available information, ensure that he/ she keeps their details up to date via the preference settings and/ or informs the programme coordinators of any problems. The candidate also needs to ensure that he/ she puts automated messages from Amathuba on their email “safe senders” list, as non-receipt of messages will be the candidate’s responsibility.

Please note that we must enforce strict deadlines for all assignments. Assignments handed in after the due date and time will be penalised by deducting 10% off the mark for every day that it is late. In all events, times mentioned refer to South African standard time (GMT +2) and are reported in a 24-hour time format. In the event of illness and other exceptional, unforeseen circumstances the course convenor may give the student an extension for the assignment submission. Again, strict deadlines need to be adhered to (see assignment submission policy).

Assignments are to reflect individual, original work and not that of a group of students working/studying together unless it is specifically issued as a group assignment. University guidelines related to misconduct and dishonesty will apply and plagiarism will not be tolerated. The university utilises “Turnitin” for all assignments and the dissertation. Even in the event of Turnitin not being immediately available, it is still up to the student to ensure that they do not plagiarise according to the wider definition (see later in this document).

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COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

| Course name | Semester | Convenor | Credits | Notes |
|---|-----------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Introduction to postgraduate studies Course code FCE4016Q | 1 Duration: 8 weeks | Monique Venter & A/Prof Peter Hodgkinson | 10 | This course focuses on achieving the basic skill set to succeed in postgraduate studies. It looks at searching the literature and using several medical databases, plagiarism avoidance, time planning in study and research, how to structure and write assignments and how to do researched presentations. |
| Concepts in Emergency Care Course code FCE4018Q | 1 Duration: 10 weeks | A/Prof Peter Hodgkinson & A/Prof Willem Stassen | 20 | This course provides the candidate with basic insight into the differences between Emergency Care and other medical fields. It introduces the EMS and healthcare systems, principles of adult and paediatric triage, principles of emergency care diagnostics and aspects of teamwork, handover and communication. |
| Adult Emergency Care Course code FCE4019Q | 1 Duration: 18 Weeks | Dr Waseela Khan | 30 | This course focuses on adult emergency care. It will be a problem-based course with an emphasis on evidence-based medicine and critical thinking. The course will take a system-based approach to the undifferentiated patient presenting for emergency care. It will encompass common problems and differential pathways, as well as relevant basic physiology and anatomy, and deals with the management of common adult medical and surgical emergencies and the evidence-based for these recommendations. |
| Child health for emergency care | 2 | A/Prof Willem Stassen and Dr Jessica Head | 30 | This course focuses on child health in emergency care and is divided into 3 sections. Section |

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| | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|----|---|
| Course code FCE4020R | Duration: 18 weeks | | | one sets the scene with an overview of global child mortality, referral pathways and triage systems. Section two takes a deep dive into the common clinical presentations that are responsible for the majority of child deaths in emergency care. The final section of the course focuses on the Childs' voice, exploring child rights, consenting laws and best interest principles. |
| Research literacy Course code FCE4017R | 2 9 weeks | A/Prof Colleen Saunders and Mr Wesley Craig | 15 | The course will teach students to think like a researcher and will develop an understanding of the research process. It introduces key concepts necessary for developing a postgraduate research proposal including research ethics, research design and academic writing. In addition, the course introduces students to both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, including the principles of critical thinking and evidence-based medicine |
| Leadership and patient safety Course code FCE4021R | 2 9 weeks | TBC | 15 | The course provides an overview of basic managerial skills, with a focus on skills e.g. objective setting, implementation of plans and review. Resource management e.g. basic HR processes, financial management. The aim is to make it practical and applicable to senior/shift leader level, not yet first-line manager level. It provides an in-depth knowledge of the principles of patient safety that they can use to improve the care delivered in their setting |

PROGRESSION RULES

A candidate may be refused readmission if he/she

- a) Fails (a mark of <50%) half or more of the coursework courses per semester.
- b) Where a candidate fails any course twice or fails three or more courses a recommendation will be made to the Faculty's Examination Committee to refuse readmission.
- c) The candidate fails to obtain a sub-minimum of 50% for each of the courses in the diploma to pass the course.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is not tolerated as it undermines the academic integrity of the degree and your learning experience. We make use of Turnitin (see more about Turnitin [here](#)) for the submission of all assignments. Make sure that you reference correctly by referring to the multiple guides available in all the online tabs, as well as the UCT library site. The Division makes use of the EMJ-modification of Vancouver referencing.

You will need to submit a plagiarism declaration with each assignment.

If you used AI (Artificial Intelligence) to assist, you will need to declare it, or it will be considered as plagiarism.

Every student will need to read and acknowledge the UCT and Divisional plagiarism guidelines rules and information which will be made available to registering students.

We enforce a strict policy and where significant plagiarism is detected in student work, the work will be penalized (up to 100% penalty in severe cases) and a first written warning applied. Any further instances are referred to the faculty disciplinary processes.

In line with the University plagiarism policy, as a learning tool, in most of your assignments, you will following submission of your assignment receive a "Turnitin Report" which flags any plagiarism issues. You then have an opportunity to revise and resubmit your assignment if you are still within the deadline for submissions.

READING LIST

There are no prescribed textbooks, and candidates would be able to electronically access chapters in textbooks via the library.

Articles and other resources will be made available via Amathuba and the library.

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STUDENT ADMIN

During the year, you can download an official letter of enrolment, check your student fees balance, and see which course you have registered for by visiting: <http://studentonline.uct.ac.za>. Be sure to log on using your UCT credentials (student number and password); go to www.icts.uct.ac.za if you have forgotten your password.

You will be allocated a UCT email (studentnumber@myuct.ac.za) and a mailbox (Microsoft Office 365) at the time of registration. All UCT communications and teaching material notifications will be sent via this email and it is your responsibility to monitor this email (or set it up to forward to another email address you monitor). See www.icts.uct.ac.za/myUCT for details.

Please be aware that you are signing a financial commitment when you register at the beginning of an academic year. In that vein, you will need to be mindful of the cut-off dates for registration and re-registration of courses in the fees manual (book 12) downloadable from the main UCT website. If you miss those dates, you may be liable for fines and/or the cost of the course. It is your responsibility to check your fees account.

In the same vein, if you feel you are unable to complete a course, communicate with the course convenors or programme convenor early. Again, be aware of the last deregistration dates. After that, even if you have informed us, the course will still appear on your academic transcript, with an "AB" next to it, standing for "absent" but counting as a 0%. This is important if you do not wish to contravene the progression rules. The only valid absence for the university is for a medical reason. This however needs to be formally applied for in good time ("medical leave of absence"). It never helps to contact us or the university late, after the fact.

It is up to you to familiarise yourself with UCT's general rules and policies (book 3), the Faculties plagiarism rules, the divisional progression rules, assignment submission rules, as well as the portfolio and dissertation guidelines.

COST OF THE POST-GRADUATE DIPLOMA

| COST OF PGDip 2026 | | |
|---|--------------------|-------------|
| .Please confirm with UCT Website | | |
| Course name | Course code | Code |
| INTRO TO PG | FCE4016Q | R 5 702 |
| CONCEPTS IN EMERG CARE | FCE4018Q | R 11 923 |
| ADULT EC | FCE4019Q | R 16 664 |
| CHILD HEALTH FOR EC | FCE4020R | R 16 664 |
| RESEARCH LIT | FCE4017R | R 8 348 |
| LEADERSHIP & PT SAFETY | FCE4021R | R 8 348 |

You can keep an eye out on the following web pages for 2026 details:

<https://uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/media/documents/uct-handbook-12-2025-student-fees.pdf>
<http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/study/handbooks/current>

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Every year we have students, particularly non-SADC students, who go through the application process successfully, only to discover the term fees at the time of application which they may not be able to afford.

UCT PAYMENT STRUCTURE!

1. The International Term Fee is not a once of payment and must be made for **each year** of study.
2. For Internationals, fees are due in order for you to register. For SA students, an initial payment is due by 7 February 2026 and the difference by 31 July 2026
3. **International students** must pay the Course Fee/s for the selected courses (TABLE - 2nd PAGE) **plus**, an Admin Service Fee of R5600 **plus** the International Term Fee listed below **plus if applicable** Residence (catering) , or Residence (self-catering)
4. <https://uct.ac.za/international/student-support/fees> - Useful information
5. Request a [Proforma request](#) or an [Online self-service quotation](#) - Apply for a proforma invoice to determine your exact fee. This is the most precise way to calculate your total cost.

Please note that the fees for international students are different & IAPO clearance is required for international registrations! Please see <https://uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/media/documents/uct-handbook-12-2025-student-fees.pdf>

Detailed fee structures can be obtained from the UCT Fee Handbook. Above is a guideline for 2025 annual fees only. (for non-SA students, detailed fee structures can be obtained by IAPO and proforma invoices can be raised upon request)

APPLICATION (by September of the preceding year)

Apply online through the UCT website <http://applyonline.uct.ac.za/>

You will receive the steps to follow from the university once you have applied.

Registration follows on from the successful application.

Once registered, student accounts and course registrations may be checked via PeopleSoft:

<http://studentsonline.uct.ac.za/>

Application process

Also, see <http://www.emergencymed.uct.ac.za/em/programmes/pgdip>

Applications will close **strictly on 30 September 2026 for Non-RPL applications**

<http://applyonline.uct.ac.za/>

We have a rigorous review process and we will review each applicant, considering the qualifications, experience, workplace and motivation. We will ask you to complete a computer literacy test online following your application.

For your application for the full degree (submitted when you apply online) to be considered, you must include the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. Motivation describing how the post-graduate diploma will further your career (max 1 page or 600 words)
3. Copies of your academic transcript(s) and degree certificate(s) (translated if not in English)
4. For non-SA students - a copy of the passport front page
5. During your application there is an option to select the institution of your degree/diploma/certification. Should your institution be not on the drop-down list, you need to select "Foreign University."
6. In some cases, we may request an interview with you – could be conducted remotely (Zoom/ Skype/ MS Teams)

RPL CANDIDATES:

We will contact you and assist you with the RPL process once your application is complete and once the application deadline has passed. Expect communication from our division during the month of September 2025.

International (non-SA) Students - please refer to the UCT [IAPO website](#) for further information about the process.

For non-SA students you will require clearance from IAPO before you will be allowed to register - in most cases, this will require pre-payment (by the end of December 2025) of a substantial fee for the year, and a copy of your passport. If you will be resident in Cape Town for more than 3 months as a student, you will likely require a study visa which has more requirements and takes longer to process - contact IAPO direct.

International Students

All international students will need to obtain IAPO clearance before being allowed to register. This involves full up-front payment of fees, as well as sending through a copy of the passport and a declaration of study (if only coming to Cape Town for contact sessions and exams, you will not need to obtain a student visa). Also see: <http://www.iapo.uct.ac.za/>

As the IAPO process may take a considerable amount of time, start this early! Go through the IAPO pre-registration process ASAP: <http://www.iapo.uct.ac.za/iapo/intstud/prereg>

DO NOT FORGET THE IAPO PRE-REGISTRATION PROCESS AS HIGHLIGHTED ABOVE!

CONTACT DETAILS

EM PG Dip Divisional Administrator:

Ms Vathiswa Mzamo

021 650 1829

vathiswa.mzamo@uct.ac.za

IAPO Enquiries

Ms Lindy Duncan

021 650 5713

lindy.duncan@uct.ac.za