

CACH opens for applications on 2 January 2017

24 October 2016 - Every January, some 600,000 school-leavers eagerly await the announcement of the National Senior Certificate results. For many, this will mean the fulfilment of their dreams and the start of the next phase of their lives, but for some the route to post-school education will not be so smooth.

Every year, some learners receive results which are better than they had dared to hope, results which would qualify them for admission to the course of their dreams – if only they had applied in time. Others find their hopes dashed – their results do not meet the entry requirements of the study programmes they had been provisionally offered, and they had no Plan B.

Universities mostly close their application processes in September, so in years gone by the only option open to these potential students was to form long lines at the admissions departments of universities, hoping that places might become available. These queues migrated from institution to institution in pursuit of places.

In response to the challenges and obvious inefficiencies of this way of handling last minute applications, five years ago the Department of Higher Education and Training changed all that. The Central Application Clearing House (CACH) was established.

The CACH is the first phase of the National Central Application Service (CAS) which is being planned to simplify the process of admission to post school education and training.

The CACH allows matriculants (and others) seeking last minute places at institutions to register on a database indicating their preferred study areas and provinces. Applicants are matched to their examination results as supplied by the Department of Basic Education, and the information is made available to universities, TVET colleges, SETAs as well as to registered private colleges. The institutions are able to select potential students from the list and make contact with them.

In 2016, the CACH attracted 18,747 applicants. A survey of 10,087 of these taken in March 2016 revealed that 33% had found a place in post-school education and training or employment since contacting CACH.

CACH 2017 will open on 2 January and accept applications until the end of February. Applicants can sign up online on <http://cach.dhet.gov.za> or contact the Call Centre on 0860 356 635.

Publicly-funded universities, TVET colleges and SETAs will receive login information from DHET towards the end of November. This will allow them to access the CACH website to search for applicants meeting their entry requirements.

Lists of all applicants on the CACH database will be sent to all publicly funded PSET institutions regularly from around the middle of January.

Private colleges that would like to receive lists of applicants from the CACH should contact Dr van Staden of the Universities Branch (vanstaden.e@dhet.gov.za) providing proof of registration with DHET and proof of recognition of the programmes for which they will be recruiting.