

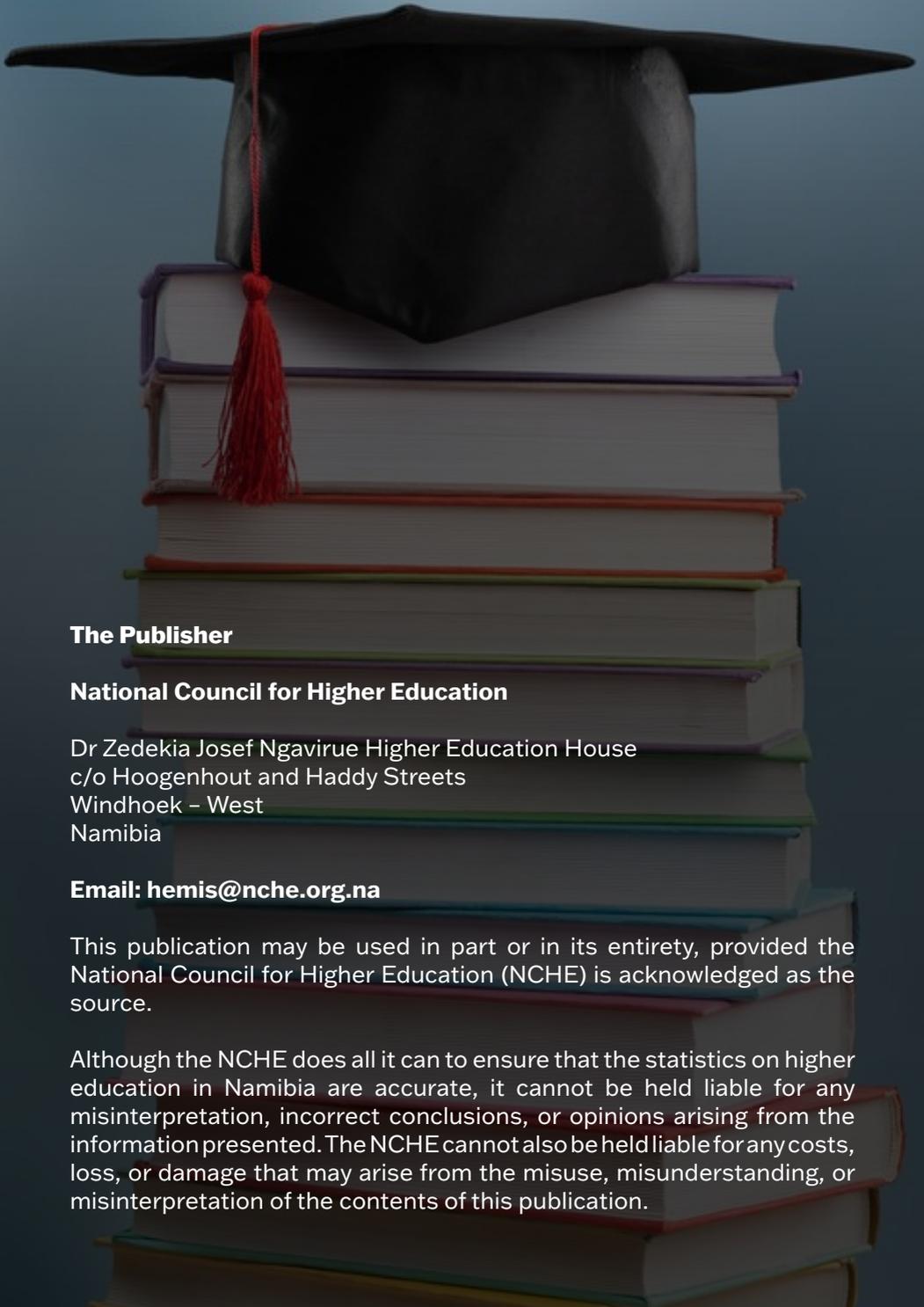


NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



**2024 NAMIBIA HIGHER
EDUCATION STATISTICS**

SYNOPSIS



The Publisher

National Council for Higher Education

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Introduction

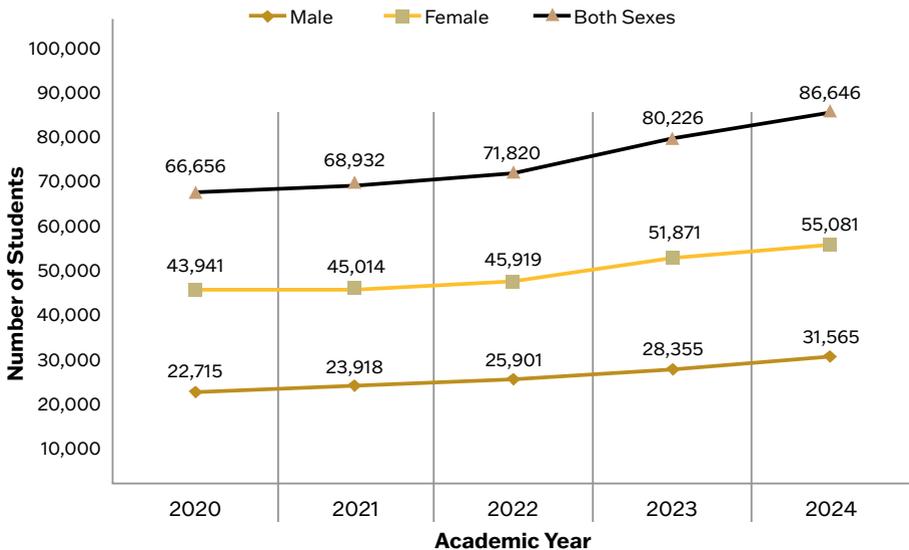
NCHE is a statutory body established under Section 4 of the Higher Education Act, 2003 (Act No. 26 of 2003), to promote a coordinated higher education system, assure the quality of higher education, enhance students' access to higher education and advise on the allocation of state funds to public higher education institutions.

This synopsis provides a condensed overview of the 2024 Namibia higher education statistics. The detailed statistics are contained in the 2024 Namibia Higher Education Statistical Yearbook, accessible online at [NCHE | Documents](#).

You can also engage us at hemis@nche.org.na for all your higher education statistical needs.

Student enrolment growth

In 2024, enrolment in higher education programmes rose to 86,646 students, marking a 30 per cent increase from 66,656 in 2020. Female enrolment over the last five years accounted for nearly two-thirds of all students, with 63.6% female and 36.4% male enrolment in 2024, indicating a significant gender imbalance in favour of women.

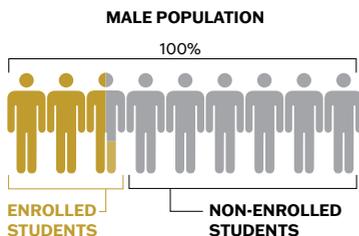


Namibians' participation in higher education, last five years

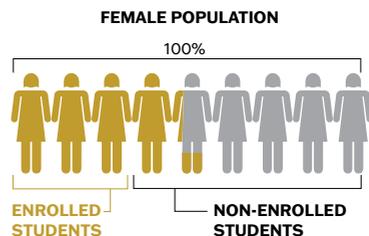
The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) measures the total enrolment in higher education regardless of age - as a percentage of Namibia's population aged 19 to 23. Namibia's GER rose from 27.8% in 2020 to 33.1% in 2024, reflecting a 5.3 percentage point increase and signalling improved participation in higher education. The age category of 19 – 23 is essential as it is the ideal age for higher education attendance.

Year	Population Group Aged 19–23 Years*			Student Enrolment in Local HEIs			Gross Enrolment Ratio		
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes
2020	118,717	121,317	240,034	22,715	43,941	66,656	19.1%	36.2%	27.8%
2021	118,245	120,263	238,508	23,918	45,014	68,932	20.2%	37.4%	28.9%
2022	117,467	118,859	236,326	25,901	45,919	71,820	22.0%	38.6%	30.4%
2023	132,277	129,648	261,925	28,355	51,871	80,226	21.4%	40.0%	30.6%
2024	132,277	129,648	261,925	31,565	55,081	86,646	23.9%	41.6%	33.1%

HIGHER EDUCATION GROSS ENROLMENT RATES 2024



MALE POPULATION GROSS ENROLMENT RATE: 23.9%



FEMALE POPULATION GROSS ENROLMENT RATE: 41.6%

Higher Education Institutional enrolment growth, last five years

Between 2020 and 2024, enrolment patterns shifted notably across Namibia’s higher education sector. Triumphant College recorded the most dramatic growth with a 341% increase, followed by Welwitschia University at 209% and the International University of Management at 88%. Other institutions, including the Eleven Private HEIs, Namibia University of Science and Technology, and ITC-Lingua, also expanded, with increases ranging from 49% to 147%.

In contrast, the Namibia College of Open Learning and the University of Namibia experienced declines of 23% and 2% respectively, while the Institute of Open Learning recorded the sharpest drop at 43%. Overall, the sector grew by 29%, supported further by the entry of new institutions such as the I-Care Health Training Institute and Shiramed.

Higher Education Institution	2020	2024	% Change	Trend Indicator
Triumphant College	878	3,871	341%	major growth
Welwitschia University	1,612	4,988	209%	significant increase
International Training College Lingua	750	1,849	147%	significant growth
International University of Management	10,396	19,497	88%	strong growth
Nine Other Private HEIs	1,195	1,469	23%	moderate growth
Namibia University of Science and Technology	12,197	17,816	46%	steady increase
Institute of Open Learning	4,473	2,531	-43%	significant decline
Namibia College of Open Learning	4,939	3,804	-23%	noticeable decline
University of Namibia	30,216	29,546	-2%	slight decline
I-Care Health Training Institute	-	967	-	new institution
Shiramed Medical Institute	-	308	-	new institution
Total	66,656	86,646	23%	overall growth

Enrolment by qualification field of learning

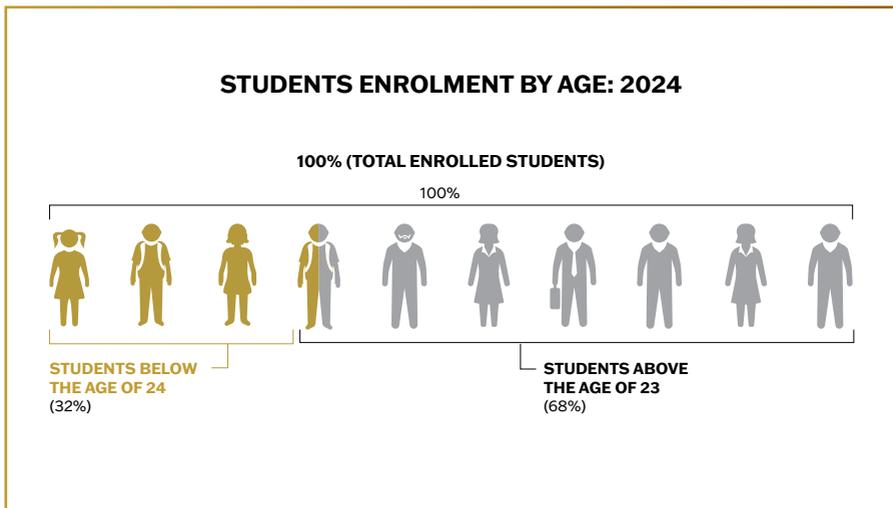
A notable share of students (30.1%) pursued studies in STEM-related fields, with male students showing higher participation (34.6%) than females (27.6%). In contrast, non-STEM fields attracted a larger proportion of students (69.9%), where female representation was significantly higher (72.4%) than male (65.4%), particularly in Education (42.5% vs 32.2%).

Qualification Field of Learning	Number			Per Cent		
	Sex		Total	Sex		Total
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Health Sciences and Social Services	2,645	9,715	12,360	8.4%	17.6%	14.3%
Physical, Mathematical and Computer Sciences	3,917	2,572	6,543	12.6%	4.7%	7.6%
Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology	2,324	1,005	3,329	7.4%	1.8%	3.8%
Agriculture and Nature Conservation	1,347	1,470	2,817	4.3%	2.7%	3.3%
Physical Planning and Construction	620	424	1,044	2.0%	0.8%	1.2%
Total STEM Fields	10,907	15,186	26,093	34.6%	27.6%	30.1%
Education, Training and Development	10,171	23,429	33,600	32.2%	42.5%	38.8%
Business, Commerce and Management Studies	6,735	10,393	17,128	21.3%	18.9%	19.8%
Communication Studies and Language	1,462	2,841	4,303	4.6%	5.2%	5.0%
Law, Military Science and Security	1,516	1,511	3,027	4.8%	2.7%	3.5%
Culture and the Arts	134	379	513	0.4%	0.7%	0.6%
Services and Life Sciences	345	649	994	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%
Human and Social Studies	295	693	988	0.9%	1.3%	1.1%
Total Non-STEM Fields	20,658	39,895	60,553	65.4%	72.4%	69.9%
Total	31,565	55,081	86,646	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Enroled students' Age groups by qualification type

Namibia's higher education enrolment is dominated by older students, with only 32.3% falling within the theoretical age of 19-23 years. The largest group is students aged 24-29 years at 35.3%, followed by those 30 years and above at 32.4%, reflecting extended study durations linked to low completion and high repetition rates. Younger students are concentrated in Bachelor's/Honours programmes (40.4%), while older students dominate Other Undergraduate studies (45.6%) and Postgraduate programmes, where 81.7% are 30 years or older.

Age group (years)	Other Undergraduates	Bachelors/Honours	Postgraduates	Total
23 and below	21.1%	40.4%	0.2%	32.3%
24-29	33.3%	37.9%	18.1%	35.3%
30 and above	45.6%	21.7%	81.7%	32.4%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%



Enroled students' NQF qualification type by Sex

Most students (64.8%) were enrolled in Bachelor and Honours programmes, while 28.7% pursued other undergraduate qualifications such as certificates and diplomas, and only 6.5% were in postgraduate studies. Male students were more heavily concentrated in Bachelor and Honours programmes (70.1%) compared to females (61.8%), whereas female students were more represented in other undergraduate qualifications (31.7%) compared to males (23.3%). Overall, this shows that women make up a larger share of certificate and diploma enrolments, while men dominate degree-level studies.

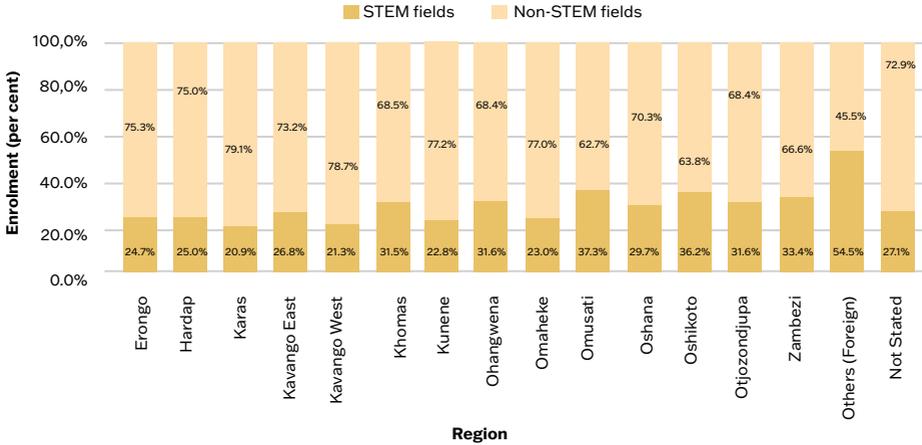
NQF Qualification Type	Number			Per Cent		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Undergraduate Certificate & Diplomas	7,361	17,467	24,828	23,3%	31,7%	28,7%
Bachelor and Honours	22,123	34,056	56,179	70.1%	61.8%	64.8%
Postgraduates	2,081	3,558	5,639	6.6%	6.5%	6.5%
Total	31,565	55,081	86,646	100%	100%	100%

Enrolment by region of origin and by grouped qualification types

Substantive proportions of students from Kunene (42%) and Omaheke (40.5%) were mainly enrolled in undergraduate Certificate and Diploma programmes. Ohangwena (71.2%), Oshana (68.5%), Kavango East (68.3%), and ||Karas (67.8%) had the highest proportions of students enrolled for Bachelor or Honours programmes. Higher percentages of students whose area of origin is foreign countries enrolled for postgraduate studies (14.6%).

Enrolment by region of origin by STEM and non-STEM fields of Learning

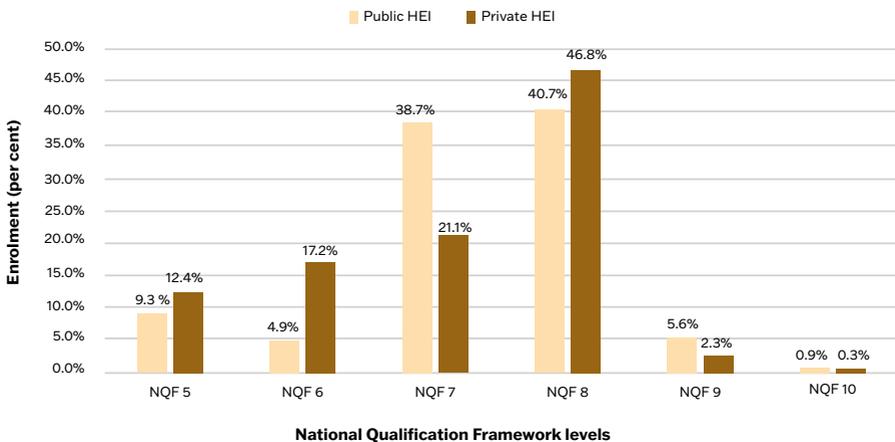
STEM fields are more popular for students whose area of origin is outside Namibia as well as for students from Omusati and Oshikoto regions. While students from ||Karas, Kavango West, Kunene and Omaheke highly prefer non-STEM fields.



Enrolment among public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) across NQF levels

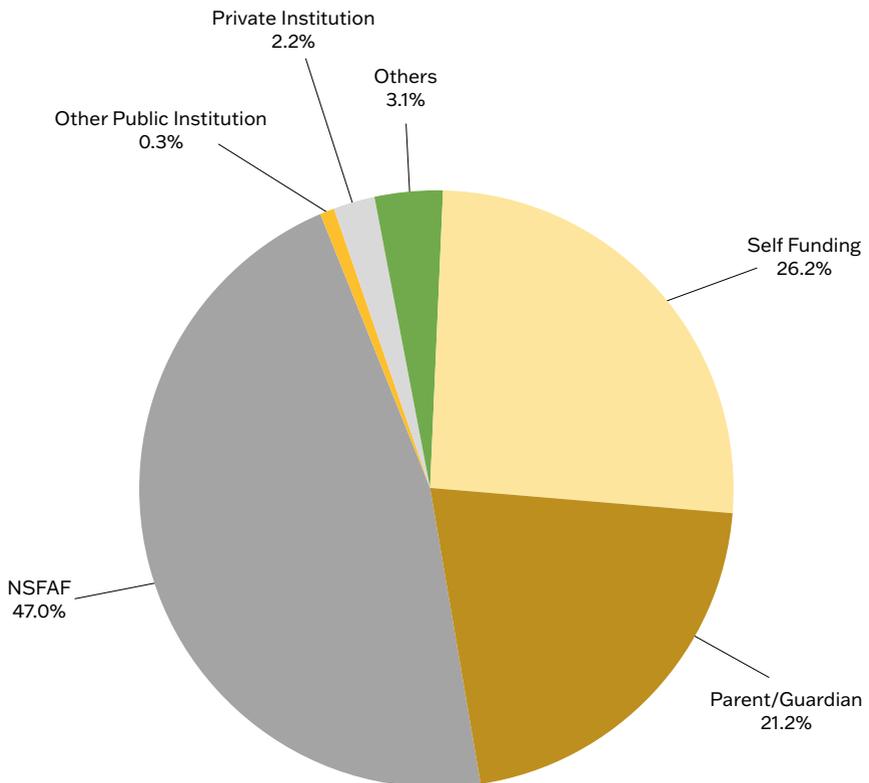
Public HEIs have a presence across most NQF levels, especially at levels 7, 9 and 10, where their percentages are significantly higher than those of private HEIs. Private HEIs show slightly higher representation at levels 5, 6 and 8.

Across NQF levels, level 8 has the highest concentration of institutions from both sectors. Representation drops sharply at levels 9 and 10, indicating limited institutional offerings the highest qualification levels.



Enrolment by financial sponsor

The Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) supported the largest share of students in higher education, covering 47.0% of total enrolments. Meanwhile, self-funded students (26.2%) and parents or guardians' support (21.2%) were also prevalent. While NSFAF plays a critical role in enabling access, almost half of students still depend on personal or family resources. This suggests financial pressure on households and highlights the importance of sustained and diversified funding mechanisms to support equitable access to higher education.



Enrolment by citizenship

Of the 86,646 students, only 2,253 (2.6%) were international students, mainly from neighbouring countries. Higher Education Institutions in Namibia should invest in attracting international students to promote internationalisation, diversity and student mobility as per the SADC Protocol on Education and Training.

Citizenship	Number			Per Cent		
	Sex		Total	Sex		Total
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Namibia	30,400	53,960	84,360	96.3%	98.0%	97.4%
Angola	215	198	413	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%
Botswana	14	29	43	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
South Africa	45	63	108	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Zambia	68	67	135	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Zimbabwe	414	431	845	1.3%	0.8%	1.0%
Other SADC Countries	269	201	470	0.9%	0.4%	0.5%
Other African Countries	106	75	181	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
European Countries	15	38	53	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
American Countries	5	8	13	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Asian and Oceanic Countries	14	11	25	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	31,565	55,081	86,646	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Examination results

The examination results reveal notable sex differences in academic performance. Female candidates had a significantly higher pass rate (73.7%) compared to males (67.4%), indicating stronger overall academic success among women. Conversely, males exhibited a higher failure rate (23.9%) than females (18.2%), suggesting greater academic challenges for male students. These differences highlight a consistent trend of better academic outcomes among female students.

Examination Results	Number			Per Cent		
	Sex		Total	Sex		Total
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Pass	21,267	40,609	61,876	67.4%	73.7%	71.4%
Fail	7,535	10,008	17,543	23.9%	18.2%	20.2%
Continuing (Master's and PhD)	861	1,351	2,212	2.7%	2.5%	2.6%
Absent	761	1,332	2,093	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
Drop-out/Cancelled	1,141	1,781	2,922	3.6%	3.2%	3.4%
Grand Total	31,565	55,081	86,646	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Graduation rate

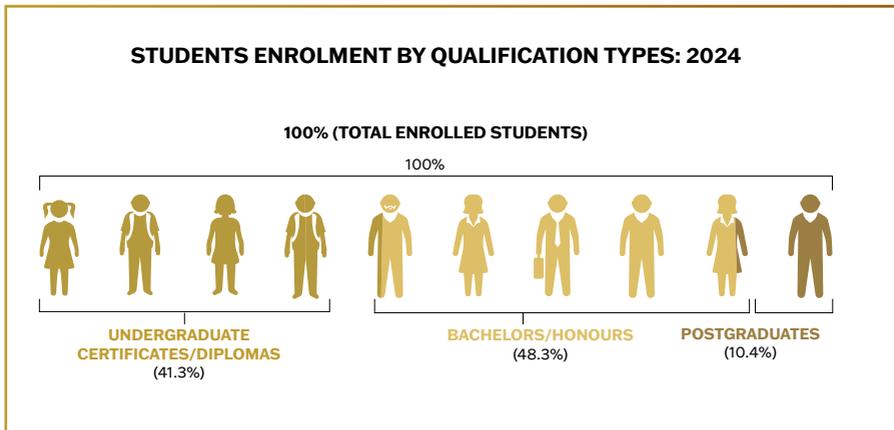
For all qualifications at NQF level 5 and above, 44.4% (15,926 students) of the 34,889 students in the final year completed studies and obtained qualifications.

Progression Status	Number of students	Graduation rate
Students who completed their studies	15,611	44.7%
Final year students	34,889	

Among the students who completed their studies, majority (35 per cent) were from the Education, Training and Development field of learning followed by Business, Commerce and Management and Health Sciences and Social Services (20.6 per cent).

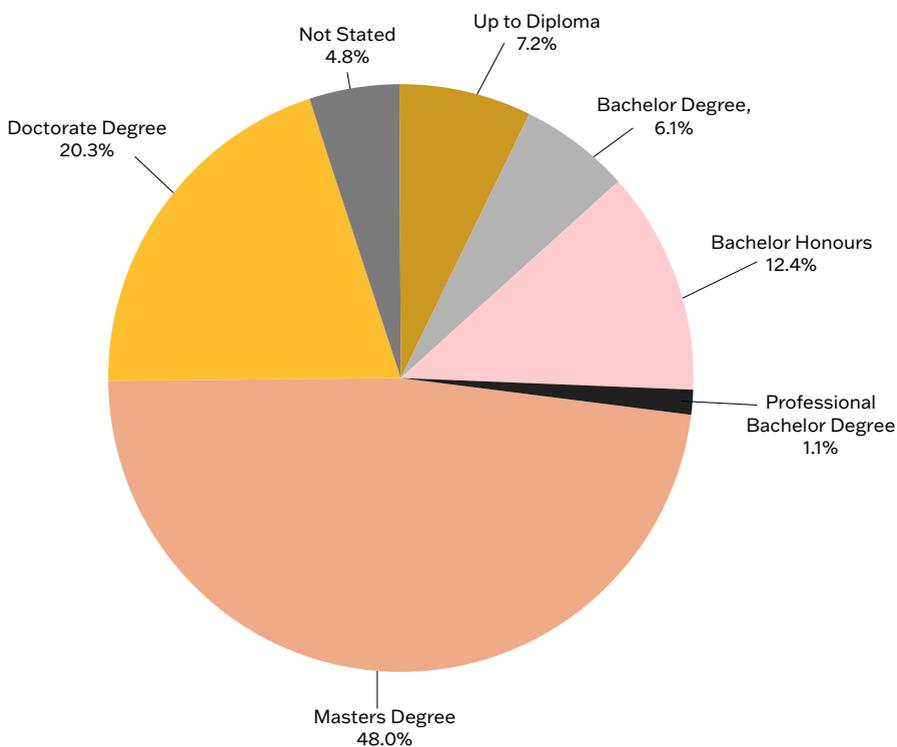
Majority of the graduates were doing a bachelor honours (33.9 per cent), followed by diploma (24.8 per cent) and then bachelor's degrees with (15 per cent). Doctorates and Master degrees recorded the lowest graduates with only 0.2 per cent and 2.9 per cent respectively.

Qualification NQF Type	Number			Per Cent		
	Completed studies	Not completed studies	Total	Completed studies	Not completed studies	Total
Certificates (Level 5-6)	2319	2330	4,649	14.9%	12.1%	13.3%
Diplomas (Level 5-7)	3,870	5,888	9,758	24.8%	30.5%	28.0%
Bachelor Degree (Level 7)	2,343	3,725	6,068	15.0%	19.3%	17.4%
Professional Bachelor (Level 8)	626	498	1,124	4.0%	2.6%	3.2%
Bachelor Honours (Level 8)	5,298	4,351	9,649	33.9%	22.6%	27.7%
Postgraduate Cert/Dip (Level 7-8)	670	602	1,272	4.3%	3.1%	3.6%
Master Degree (Level 9)	452	1,696	2,148	2.9%	8.8%	6.2%
Doctorate (Level 10)	33	188	221	0.2%	1.0%	0.6%
Grand Total	15,611	19,278	34,889	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



Academic staff members' qualification

Academic staff members are a critical component of higher education institutions. Most academic staff in higher education institutions had Master degrees (48.0%), followed by doctoral (20.3%) degrees as their highest qualifications

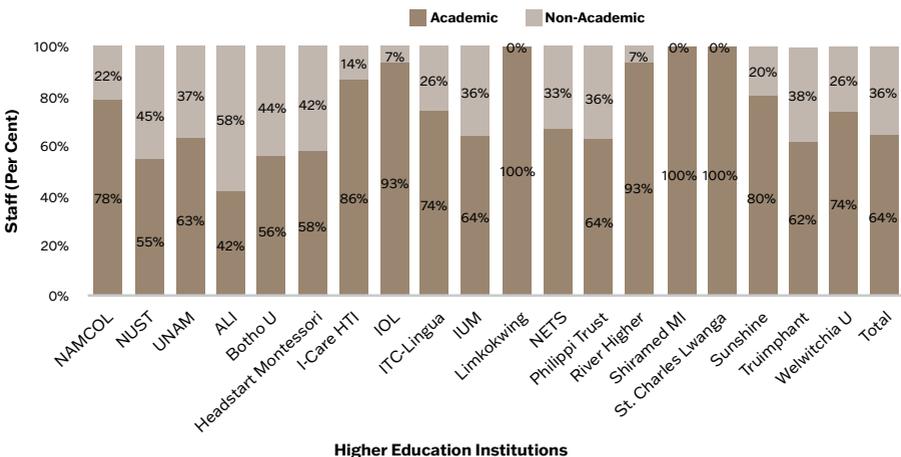


Staff members by Higher Education Institutions

Across higher education institutions, academic staff constitute 64.2% of the total workforce, while non-academic staff account for 35.8%. The highest academic representation is seen at Shiramed Medical Institute, St. Charles Lwanga, and Philippi Trust, all with 100% academic staff. Other institutions with very strong academic staff dominance include I-Care HTI (86%), ITC-Lingua (74%), and River Higher Institute of Technology (93%).

In contrast, institutions such as NUST (45% non-academic) and Botho University (44% non-academic) show more balanced staffing structures. NAMCOL, however, stands out with 78% academic staff and only 22% non-academic, indicating a strong academic focus. Institutions like Welwitchia University (74% academic) and Triumphant College (62% academic) also reflect relatively balanced but academically leaning staffing patterns.

Overall, these differences suggest diverse operational models, with some institutions heavily prioritising academic delivery while others depend more on support and administrative personnel.



Comprehensive higher education statistics are published in the 2024 Namibia Higher Education Statistical Yearbook, accessible online on NCHE website under publications.



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