

**SELECTION CRITERIA FOR SHORT-LISTING FOR MASTERS
APPLICANTS**

The Department of Psychology receives approximately 150 applications a year for its two masters programmes that lead to professional registration with the Professional Board of Psychology as Counselling or Clinical Psychologists. The intensive training involved in such programmes and the staff infrastructure available to deliver these programmes necessitates a final selection of between 14-16 applicants. The selection procedure involves all psychology staff and representation from the internship training sites where students would train during the second year of their programme. Each short-listed applicant is interviewed and then discussed in a one- hour time slot.

The Department is unable to commit its staff and external stakeholders to a selection process that involves more than seven consecutive working days. This necessitates reducing the initial pool of applicants from approximately 150 to 40. Such a process involves a short-listing panel comprising three senior, registered staff members. Each of these staff members rates all completed applications independently. Ratings are averaged across the three staff members and the resultant ranked list is presented to the full staff complement for endorsement before successful short-listed candidates are contacted.

In essence, this first round of selection is based on the paperwork available for each applicant. The applicant's file contains the following: a full academic record, three referee reports (two of which should be completed by academics), a written autobiography, and a description of the applicant's work and life experience (subsections of the application form).

This year the Department proposes to rate the applicants according to the following criteria:

[1] Academic performance

While all applicants have to have an aggregate mark of 60% at the fourth year level of study, applicants will be rated on a 3 point scale as follows: 1= 60-69%, 2= 70-74%, and 3= 75% and above. This criteria is considered a critical one by the Department and thus the rating is multiplied by 2, therefore making this admission criteria 30% of the total rating available. Given the educational level involved and the intensity of the programme, the Department is of the opinion that an applicant should be able to manage the academic requirements of the two year masters level programme.

[2] Referee reports

Referees are asked to rate applicants on a wide variety of variables, with ratings ranging from below average through to outstanding. They are also asked for any additional comments. An applicant's referee reports will be rated on a 3 point scale as follows: 1= only one positive report, 2= two positive reports, and 3= three positive reports.

[3] Autobiography

The applicant writes an autobiography of several pages in which they describe their life events to date and in which they motivate for their choice of psychology as a profession. Such autobiographies can demonstrate areas of concern. An applicant's autobiography will be rated as follows: 1 = significant concerns regarding personal/psychological self knowledge, 2 = some concern, and 3 = no concern.

[4] Work experience

The applicant describes his or her work experience and community involvement on the application form. This experience will be rated on a 3 point scale as follows: 1 = student-related activities (eg. Practical course related activities), 2 = psychological part-time activities (eg. Lifeline, volunteer work), and 3 = more extensive work experience.

[5] Black African language

The Department is aware of its responsibilities in terms of macro-environmental factors and is under pressure to increase the relevancy of its profession. Xhosa and Afrikaans are the primary languages spoken by members of the communities serviced by the university mental health clinics. Applicants will be rated in their language proficiency according to the following 5 point scale: 1 = unilingual (English or Afrikaans speaking), 3 = bilingual (English and Afrikaans speaking), 5= Xhosa as the indigenous language and Afrikaans or English. Language thus constitutes 25% of the overall criteria.

Please note that the above criteria are applicable to the first round of selections, i.e. to shortlist applicants for the second and final round.

The final selection process involves a panel interview and a psychometric evaluation.