

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychology

In the School of Behavioural Sciences within the

Faculty of Health Sciences
Caring for tomorrow

POSTGRADUATE MASTERS AND DOCTORAL RESEARCH GUIDE



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Welcome and Introduction

An introduction from coordinator – Prof Ally

I would like to welcome you to a world of research into psychological phenomenon. Your pursuit of further understanding the complex working of the human mind has led you towards considering a postgraduate qualification in psychology. Our vision in the Department of Psychology, is to welcome you and provide training that will produce a critically engaged and thinking graduates. In this pursuit, we aim to provide our postgraduate students with a grounding, steeped in the university values of social justice, quality, respect for diversity and environmental stewardship. As the coordinator of the M and D Research programme I will engage with you at various points of your registration.

A note of welcome from HoD – Prof Ngcobo-Sithole

Thank you for considering our department as you engage on your journey to contribute to new knowledge in the field of psychology. Your journey with us promises not only academic growth but personal development and a chance to make long lasting change to society. We offer a range of research themes and areas with state of the art resources to ensure that you excel in your research endeavours. When you join us, you will have an opportunity to work closely with accomplished staff members who have a strong record of impactful research. You will gain invaluable insights as you embark on your own research journey. We look forward to welcoming you to the department.

Admission Requirements

Master of Arts in Psychology (Research)

Qualification code: 65102 Offering: Full-time South Campus (A1) OR Part-time South Campus (A2);
Aligned NQF Level: 9; SAQA ID: 87169

Total NQF Credits for qualification: 180

BACKGROUND: This qualification has been created for students who want to gain a comprehensive understanding of psychology. It has been approved in terms of the new Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF). The primary purpose of this qualification is to educate and train researchers who can contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level in the field of psychology.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS: Unless Senate decides otherwise, candidates shall be admitted to the studies for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology only if they have obtained an Honours or equivalent degree in Psychology, of which the course content and the candidate's level of achievement are considered to be satisfactory by the Department of Psychology.

Note: This qualification does not lead to professional registration with the HPCSA Professional Board for Psychology

Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology (Research)

Qualification code: 66000 Offering: Full-time South Campus (A1) OR Part-time South Campus (A2);
Aligned NQF Level: 10; SAQA ID: 115163;

Total NQF Credits for qualification: 360

BACKGROUND: This qualification has been approved in terms of the new Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF). It requires a candidate to undertake research at the most advanced academic levels culminating in the submission, assessment and acceptance of a thesis in a specialised field of psychology. The defining characteristic of this qualification is that the candidate is required to demonstrate high level research capability and to make a significant and original academic contribution to the field of psychology. The work must be of a quality to satisfy peer review and merit publication.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS: Holders of a Masters' degree or other qualification approved by Senate, may be accepted. A Doctoral Degree is the highest qualification type awarded within the HEQSF. This qualification may not be awarded for early exit from a Doctoral Degree.

Note: This qualification does not lead to professional registration with the HPCSA Professional Board for Psychology.

Selecting Research Topics Process

1. Selecting your research topic should be based on your interest and passion.
2. You should explore potential research areas, either through reviewing existing literature to identify a gap, looking at the research themes offered by the department and most importantly communicating with a potential supervisor who has experience working in the area you wish to pursue.
3. Should you wish to explore potential research areas, please consult the Research Focus Areas Table below for the research areas offered by the department.
4. Email or set an appointment with relevant supervisor(s), and based on their availability, you can discuss your research area and align it with potential supervisor(s).

Application Process

Step 1: Applicants are to first, familiarize themselves with the admission requirements for the M and D qualifications, outlined in the section above. Applicants are to ensure that they hold a relevant postgraduate qualification (honours) and that their marks meet the entrances requirements for the programme. Please see the faculty's postgraduate guide [[https://health.mandela.ac.za/About-Us/Committees/Faculty-Research-Engagement-Committee-\(FREC\)-Fa/Postgraduate-Guidelines](https://health.mandela.ac.za/About-Us/Committees/Faculty-Research-Engagement-Committee-(FREC)-Fa/Postgraduate-Guidelines)]

Step 2: Applicants are guided towards the departments M and D supervisors and their research focus areas. These research focus areas speak to the overarching departmental research themes. Applicants are therefore requested to align their research topic to one or more to the areas as outlined in the departmental research focus areas section.

Step 3: Applicants are to make appointments with potential supervisors who may be able to guide them with their topic. However, it is very likely that a supervisor may have already existing projects in place and your study could fit into these. The appointments with potential supervisors can be made online or face-to-face. In setting the appointments, please make sure that you have a clear idea of the area you would like to research. Come to the meeting prepared with the following:

1. A preliminary reading/understanding of the literature surrounding the topic you would like to research. You do not need to have an extensive understanding, but be able to discuss the topic in relation to what has been researched. Important to note, is the identification of 'gaps' or areas that require attention.
2. Have a working understanding of the methodology you would like to work with, as this will guide the development of the research project.
3. Once you have secured a supervisor, you will need to complete the university's U24 form. It is the postgraduate admissions form. Please click the link here to access the form. All students will require to submit required documents, like identity copies and proof of completion of previous qualifications. Please ensure that all documentation is submitted to ensure efficient processing.
4. With the U24 form, you will be expected to provide preliminary information on your proposed study. This includes a working title, summary of the literature and breakdown of the methodology you are proposing to use. Please note, that this is not the final proposal, and it can change based on the discussions you will have with your supervisor. However, it is a requirement of the application process.

5. Once the university admissions office has processed your application, it will be referred to the Department of Psychology for departmental selection. It will be sent to the coordinator, who will confirm with the supervisor if they have agreed to supervise the student.
6. The departments M&D selection panel will also ensure that all applicants meet the entrance requirements of the programme before finalizing the application.
7. Once approved, the application will be sent forward to the Faculty of Health Sciences Faculty office for processing. The application will serve at the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee [FPGSC] for noting and approval. Once the application has been approved, admissions will be informed, and the student can register.

Research Focus Areas

Research areas	Supervisors	Contact information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Psychology (resilience, wellness) • Depression and suicidality • Gender-based violence 	Dr Gradidge Dalray	Dalray.Gradidge@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological assessment (Technology-based assessment, Test development, Ethical assessment) • The psychology of online learning (teaching and assessment practices in psychology; student success and graduate attributes in a technological age) 	Prof Cheryl Foxcroft	Cheryl.Foxcroft@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime • Poverty • Gangsterism • Community trauma • Primary and preventative psychology • Health and Welfare 	Dr Ulricha de Klerk	Ulricha.DeKlerk@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Health Psychology • Neuropsychology • Animal Assisted Interventions and Environmental Psychology/Ecopsychology • Developmental Psychology 	Ms Lisa Currin	Lisa.currin@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV and AIDS • Bullying • Trauma 	Dr Johan Cronje	Johan.cronje@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and academic training in Psychology • Political Psychology • Decolonisation, transformation and its application to human behaviour • Standardisation and Development of Psychological Tests • Critical Psychometry • Five Factor Model for SA (NEO -PI) 	Dr Justin August	Justin.august@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence • Sexual abuse 	Prof Maggie Ngcobo-Sithole	Magnolia.Ngcobo-Sithole@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship psychology • Cyber relationships 	Dr Tania Lambert	Tania.lambert@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Mental Health & Adversity/Assessments/Child Trauma/ Child therapy 	Dr Thabisa Mabusela	Thabisa.Mabusela@mandela.ac.za

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyberpsychology • Psychotic disorders • Cross-cultural psychology 	Mr Is-haaq Lekganya	Is-Haaq.Lekganya@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural And Cross-Cultural Psychology • Religious and supernatural belief systems and psychological well-being • Culture-specific expressions of violence • Sport psychology and neuroscience 	Prof Yaseen Ally	Yaseen.ally@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychobiography • Gender and Sexuality • Influences to Development/Personality & Pathology Development • Narcissism and antisocial behavior 	Dr Alida Sandison	Alida.sandison@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychobiography • Standardisation and Development of Psychological Tests • Griffiths Scales of Child Development • Neuro-Psychology • Self-Concept/Esteem/ Social Identity • Developmental Psychology 	Prof Louise Stroud	Louise.stroud@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Abuse • Psychobiography 	Dr Konesh Navsaria	Konesh.navsaria@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyberpsychology • Psychotic disorders • Cross-cultural psychology 	Dr Ashwin Navsaria	Ashwin.navsaria@mandela.ac.za
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student life cycles and student success • Career psychology • Reproductive health • Gender studies 	Dr Phumeza Kota-Nyati	Phumeza.kota-nyati@mandela.ac.za

Funding and Scholarships

For more information on funding and scholarships, please visit the following sites:

- ☐ National Research Foundation:
<https://www.nrf.ac.za/>
- ☐ National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences:
<https://www.nihss.ac.za/>
- ☐ NMU RCD Office:
<https://rd.mandela.ac.za/>

Please note that the funding and scholarship opportunities are also communicated via the Memo of the university. So, be on the lookout for these opportunities.

Academic Supervision

Your supervisor will also guide you with the supervisor contract, which is an essential component of the supervision relationship.

Key elements that contribute to successful academic supervision: aligned research areas, communication, feedback, guidance, respect, commitment, planning etc.

Managing the Research Process

You and your supervisor will hold timely meetings to discuss the research process, from proposal development, submission for ethical clearance, writing the final report to completion of the study.

It is important that you develop realistic timelines, prioritise tasks and communicate and collaborate with your supervisor throughout the process.

Most important, align your time frames, with the time frames of the department, faculty and institution in terms of submissions.

Applying for Ethical Clearance

All M and D studies require ethical clearance. You CANNOT commence with data collection until you have obtained clearance for your study. These following steps will be followed:

1. Student and supervisor MUST develop the research proposal. The student will develop the research proposal in collaboration with the research supervisor. Feedback on submitted drafts will be provided and the final version will be submitted for departmental review.
2. Once a proposal is ready for review, the student is responsible for submitting the proposal for departmental review. For departmental review, the proposal must be submitted to Prof Yaseen Ally (Yaseen.ally@mandela.ac.za). Once submitted, the proposal will be sent for departmental review.
3. All M and D students will present their proposal at one of the monthly departmental meetings. The presentation is 10 minutes in length and all staff members attend to provide verbal feedback. Your supervisor will provide you with the dates of these meetings, once you begin your research and you can plan toward presenting.
4. Following the presentation of the proposal and receiving departmental feedback, the proposal will be submitted for the next step in receiving ethical clearance – faculty ethics clearance (FPGSC). Your supervisor will guide you on the submission process, as there is a migration to an online submission system called Meos. Meos is an online submission platform that enables better tracking and management of your research.
5. The proposal will further be sent to RECH for institutional ethical clearance (if deemed necessary), before commencing with data collection. You will complete a RECH form online. Please open link to access RECH guidelines for submission [[https://rd.mandela.ac.za/Research-Ethics/Research-Ethics-Committee-Human-\(REC-H\)](https://rd.mandela.ac.za/Research-Ethics/Research-Ethics-Committee-Human-(REC-H))]

Research Skills Development

1. Departmental research workshops

The department of psychology hosts workshops for our registered students, to induct them into research within the department. These workshops will be communicated with students but take place throughout the year.

Topics covered include, but not limited to:

1. Understanding the research process and the development of the research proposal and RECH Form
2. Research methods
3. Epistemological frameworks and their role in your research
4. Literature review writing
5. Data collection: practical strategies

2. Faculty research workshops

Students are encouraged to further make use of the research workshops conducted by the faculty research directorate.

3. Attending conferences and seminars

It is encouraged that you build your research network by engaging with the academic community through the attendance of conferences and seminars to showcase your research work. This is done in consultation with your supervisor, once you have sourced relevant conferences and seminars.

Academic Writing and Publication

Academic writing for postgraduate studies requires specific skill sets: the ability to search for literature; to read and understand the findings from previous studies; critique and appraise arguments being made; as well as constructing an argument that is specific to the research you are conducting. To ensure that your writing remains academic and scientific, students are requested to attend faculty workshops. As a postgraduate student, you should consult with your supervisor(s) regarding the publication of your research. The publication of research ensures that academics, researchers, scientists and policy-makers have access to the findings from your study.

Submission of Thesis or Dissertation

The thesis and dissertation are mostly submitted for examination in August every year. Your supervisor will decide when the thesis or dissertation is ready for submission. Please note that while a timeframe for the study will be discussed with your supervisor, delays may occur. However, your supervisor will guide you toward the successful completion of your studies.

Other Services Offered by The Institution

NOTE: The university offers services i.e. Counselling Services, Accommodation, Bursaries, International Office, Library, IT Services etc.

University Services Contacts

Contact Centre	041 504 1111
Postgraduate/Mature Student Enquiries	041 504 2162
Postgraduate Admission Enquiries	041 504 3619
Research & Capacity Development (Funding for M & D studies)	041 504 2538
Student Housing (Postgrad Student Village, Summerstrand)	041 504 3941
Student Counselling	041 504 2411
Office of the International Education	041 504 2161
Disability Services	041 504 3935

Faculty and Department's Contacts

1. Mrs Marilyn Afrikaner
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Tel: +27 (0)41 504 2121
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2. Mr Siyabulela Mashalaba
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3. Prof Yaseen Ally
Research coordinator
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E-mail: Yaseen.Ally@mandela.ac.za
4. Ms Ebonga Maraule
Psychology Departmental Secretary
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