



MASTER OF HEALTH SCIENCES IN RESEARCH PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMME (NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY: POTCHEFSTROOM)

The purpose of the degree is to equip students, by means of exposing them to different philosophies and science views, which may be expressed in theories and hypotheses on human behaviour, so that they may be able to formulate and study relevant research questions in the different domains of Psychology and related disciplines. Through the use of advanced knowledge, skills, applied competencies, attitudes and values as researchers in Psychology, they will be enabled to grow personally and academically, think scientifically and to contribute to the body of knowledge and to the diverse needs of the communities in which they engage.

Students will be required to complete their mini-dissertation in a maximum of two years. According to the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) requirements, students are required to complete the theoretical component of the degree before they will be accepted in an internship position. After completion of the academic and research components of the Programme and their internships students will be eligible to write the professional Board of Psychology's examination to register as Research Psychologists at the HPCSA.

Admission Requirements

A student who wishes to register for a masters-degree must have acquired an honours degree (minimum 65% average) or equivalent qualification on NQF level 8 in the applicable field as approved by the Senate.

Selection Requirements

The following documents (please see 'Letter to Applicant') must be submitted before 30 September 2025.

Students who comply with all the requirements will be invited for a selection. Information regarding this will be provided once paper selection is completed.

Outcomes of the Qualification

Students of the Master of Health Sciences qualification in Research Psychology Programme should demonstrate the following:

- a) the ability to engage with and critique current research or practice in this field.
- b) the ability to analyse, evaluate and then choose appropriate enquiry methods for doing research in Psychology.

- c) critical knowledge and understanding of the ethical and legal considerations applicable to research and the consequences of interventions on individual, group and organisational level.
- d) advanced, systematic and specialist knowledge to undertake research at individual, community and/or interdisciplinary level by applying appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative research methods and techniques to identify, analyse, formulate and solve complex research problem(s) in the domain of Psychology.
- e) advanced strategies to obtain, analyse and evaluate applicable information for its relevance and validity.
- f) scientific interpretation of research results and integration of and critical reflection on findings.
- g) utilization of appropriate technology (computer, e-mail, fax, psychometric tests) effectively in the Research Psychology environment (technological and environmental literacy).
- h) exploration of different effective learning strategies to acquire the different capabilities of a practitioner in the field of Research Psychology; and
- i) promotion of responsible citizenship through their approach towards the holistic application of research skills in the field of Psychology.

Module Names and Outcomes

| Module Name and Code | Module outcomes |
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| PSYD 872 Mini-Dissertation: Research Psychology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to plan and do research of a limited scope by using appropriate research methods that are aligned with the ontological and epistemological assumptions applicable to the research phenomenon. • The ability to develop and write a research proposal in line with substantive theoretical or empirical foundations and ethical considerations. • The ability to conduct basic research, using applicable qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both research methods. • The ability to write a logically argued and integrated scientific report in which applicable psychological explanations are integrated with the research findings. |
| PSYC 874 Critical Research Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of the ontological assumptions about the nature of science and a people view (worldview). • The ability to plan and perform ethical research. • The ability to distinguish between different quantitative and qualitative approaches which are appropriate for |

| Module Name and Code | Module outcomes |
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| | answering the specific research question. |
| PSYC 875 Quantitative Research Methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding and application of different research methods that are associated with quantitative research. • An understanding and application of quantitative research processes such as: literature studies; sampling; validity and reliability; questionnaire design; experimental designs (SPSS); and data analysis techniques (multiple regression and structural comparison models). • The ability to implement appropriate ethical decisions within the quantitative research methodological context. |
| PSYC 876 Qualitative Research Methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding and application of different research designs associated with qualitative research. • An understanding and application of qualitative research processes such as literature reviews, purposeful sampling, data collection and data analysis methods (such as thematic analysis) as well as trustworthiness. • The ability to implement appropriate ethical decisions within the qualitative research methodological context. |
| PSYC 886 Project Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the knowledge and understanding of project management theory • Can utilise specialised skills to identify, conceptualise, design and implement methods to address challenges within project management. • Is able to master and evaluate all facets of project management and thus promote independent enquiry about project management and associated research processes. • Demonstrates the ability to make autonomous ethical decisions with regard to professional practice relating to project management and be able to critically contribute to the ethical standards of project management. • Understands and interprets project management and its role in the scientific field of Psychology as a registration category, with specific reference to internship requirements by the HPCSA. |

| Module Name and Code | Module outcomes |
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| <p>PSYC 887</p> <p>Psychometrics and Applied Psychological Assessment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integrated understanding of psychometric and psychological assessment and its position in Psychology as an empirical science, especially from an Afri- centric approach. • A critical understanding and application of processes relevant to psychological assessment, whether individual or in assessment centres, that aim at gaining a holistic view of the client, especially in the South African context. • The ability to evaluate the use of tests based on their psychometric characteristics/properties, and to evaluate and interpret the results of Individuals in different tests or different test batteries, taking into account the international standards for test assessment. • The ability to develop a psychological test with ample focus on psychological measurement as a science that pertains to metrics for qualitative assessment of human behaviour using the theories (classical test theory versus response theory) and principles of Psychology. • Critical assessment skills in terms of cross cultural adaptation, translation, and management of test batteries and the ability to statistically determine and interpret results, determining the validation in the South African context and compile a report, focusing on bias and fairness. • Critical thinking and understanding of ethical considerations in psychological assessment (intellectual and scholastic capabilities, aptitudes and interests, personality and interpersonal functioning) within different cultural and social environments with ample focus on scope of practice and the South African context. • The ability to apply advanced knowledge of the central methods of psychological evaluation. • Synthesis of psychometrics and psychological evaluation as a research psychologist. |
| <p>PSYC 888</p> <p>Community Psychology</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to explain the need for community based research in the South African context. • The knowledge and understanding of community Psychology theory and research methodology. • The ability to plan, conduct, manage and evaluate community research that is relevant to the needs of the population within the South African context. • the ability to conduct community focused research on the |

| Module Name and Code | Module outcomes |
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| | <p>grounds of the ethical principles as expressed in the guidelines for psychological research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of applicable ethical principles in planning and executing community research. • Professional conduct when entering and conducting community research. |
| <p>PSYC 889</p> <p>Cognitive Psychology</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge about and insight in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The importance and role of cognition in human behaviour ○ The nature of basic cognitive processes like perception, attention, and memory ○ The nature of executive cognitive processes like problem solving and decision making ○ The nature of social cognitive processes like attribution, attitude and social judgment ○ The nature of the relationship between cognitive processes and mental health. • Ability to apply this knowledge to real life scenarios. • Ability to apply this knowledge to the planning and execution of qualitative, quantitative, multi- and mixed research contexts. |
| <p>Internship*</p> | <p>A student will only be able to graduate after completion of all the modules as well as the internship as required by the HPCSA.</p> <p>The internship year is a non-credit-bearing requirement of the Master of Health Sciences in Research Psychology degree. Therefore, students who have completed the coursework and mini-dissertation requirements may not graduate until they have also successfully completed their internships.</p> |

Delivery Mode

Students will attend four 'Blocks' of lectures/workshops (six weeks each) during the year. Between 'Blocks' students will need to complete practical hours (190 hours minimum). The mini-dissertation is supervised by staff members knowledgeable in the field of study. Please take note that this is a fulltime Programme. The internship is completed during the second year of study.

Assessment

The number and types of assignments are decided on by the lecturer. Academic excellence is always a prerequisite. A participation mark will be defined and determined for each module. A pass mark of 55 % per module and an examination sub-minimum of 50 % per module are required. Candidates are only allowed a 2nd opportunity in one paper. If the 2nd opportunity is failed, the year must be repeated. Should more papers be failed, the candidate fails.

Further information

For any further information, please contact:

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