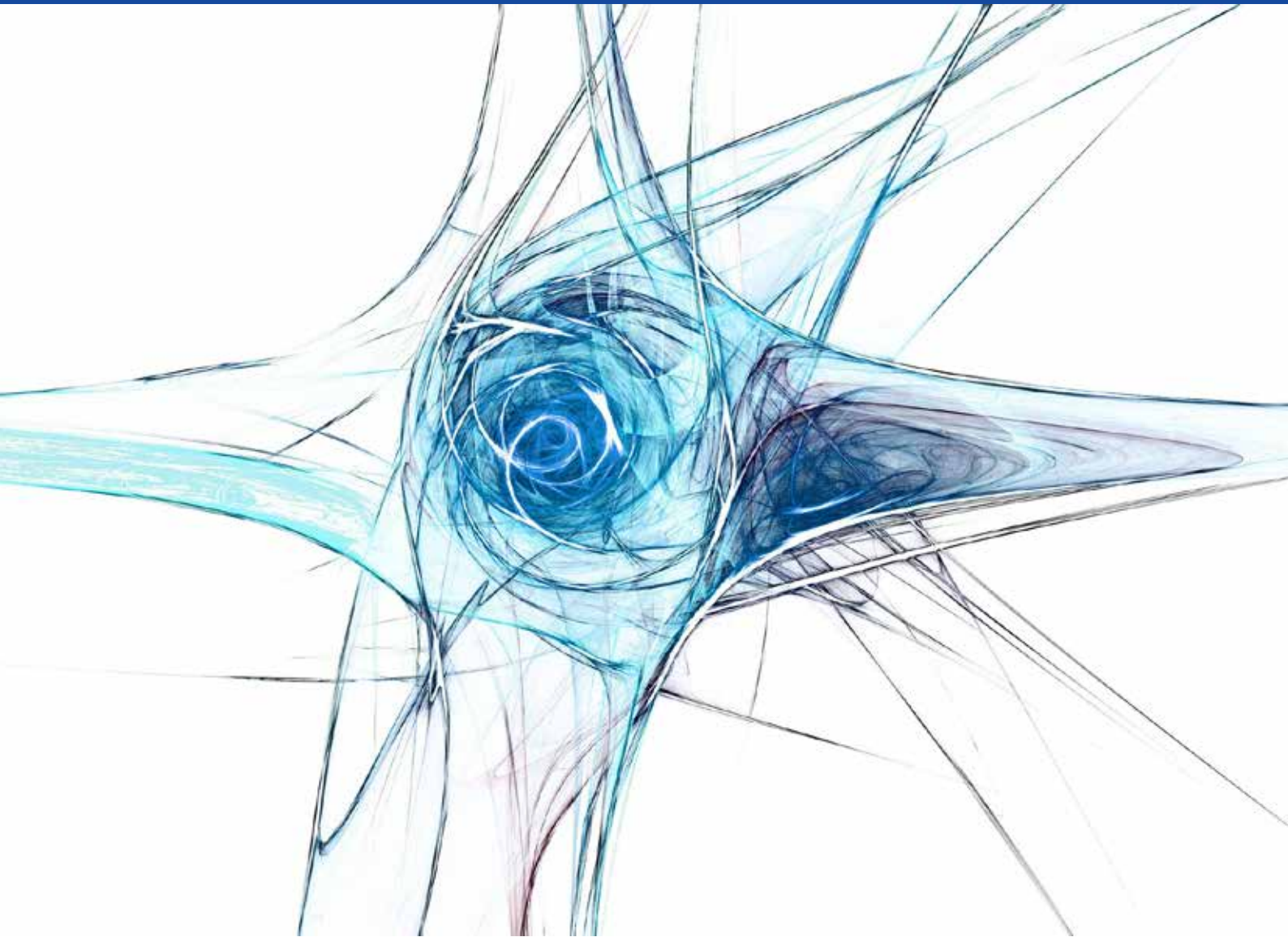


# Psychology @ Unisa

A complete guide to preparing  
yourself for career opportunities



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*The information in this document was correct as of 26 September 2021. Visit the Directorate: Counselling and Career Development website (<http://bit.ly/30ygrll>) for the latest version of this document.*

# Introduction

There is great diversity in the field of psychology. On the continent of Africa, psychology has much to explore and research. Unisa is in a unique position to facilitate such exploration as its teaching extends beyond South Africa's borders. The prospect of contributing to psychological knowledge from an African perspective in all its diverse forms remains an inspiring challenge.

According to the American Psychological Association (2003), the study of psychology is good preparation for a variety of professions. Several employers are interested in the skills that psychology majors can bring to collecting, analysing, and interpreting data. All of Unisa's Psychology, and Industrial and Organisational Psychology modules and qualifications could be listed to

demonstrate their usefulness in developing skills for diverse contexts.

You may be aware of the therapeutic side of psychology as a prospective career direction. You feel anxious at the start of your studies when a guarantee that you will be accepted into a professional training programme (at the Master's level) cannot be provided. Fixated on the idea that only professional psychologists are employed meaningfully, you might limit your career investigations as well as your creative abilities to use your psychology background to prepare for other opportunities. The question is: how innovative can you be to turn your academic studies into a satisfying career while meeting the needs of the South African community and the Pan-African community in general?

# How to use this brochure

We first started producing this brochure in 2007. Over the years, we have updated the brochure to reflect the changing landscape of training for psychologists in South Africa, and most importantly, to accommodate the needs of students and applicants who need the information to make effective career choices.

You can choose to work through all the information and activities in the brochure, or you can skip certain sections depending on your needs. You are making an important career decision – take some time to complete all the activities. We recommend that you make notes and a list of further questions as you are working through the information.

## We welcome your feedback

If you have any comments about this brochure or would want to make suggestions for improvement, please send an e-mail to [counselling@unisa.ac.za](mailto:counselling@unisa.ac.za).

# Career planning self-assessment

Where are you now with your career planning? Complete the following self-assessment to help you be aware of the aspects you still need to pay attention to in terms of your career planning.


## Activity

The following questions may help you to think about important aspects of planning your career in psychology. Your honesty when completing these questions will help you to have a realistic picture of what you could still possibly do to make effective career decisions.

STATEMENT	YES	NO
1 I am sure that I want to major in psychology		
2 I want a psychology-related career		
3 I am familiar with the types of jobs that psychology graduates can apply for		
4 I am aware of the skills that employers expect psychology graduates to have		
5 I know about the different fields in psychology		
6 I know which field in psychology I am interested in		

STATEMENT	YES	NO
7 I have a clear understanding of the kinds of work done by different types of psychologists (e.g. clinical, research, and educational)		
8 I know where to look for information about a career in psychology		
9 I have spoken to at least one person who works in the field of psychology about a career in psychology		
10 I know what steps I will have to take to accomplish my career goals.		
11 I can identify several “people helping” careers outside of psychology and I have some understanding of the preparation required for each of these careers.		
12 I understand the curriculum requirements for my psychology degree		
13 I know about other study options (not psychology) after completing my first degree		
14 I know what the admission requirements are for postgraduate studies in psychology		
15 I know how to go about preparing for applying for a Master's programme in psychology		
16 I have ideas for ways to gain experience in the psychology field during my studies		
17 I read about topics in psychology		
18 I understand some of the disciplines related to psychology		

Once you have completed all the questions, go back to the statements you marked as “no”. Write down what you see as gaps in terms of your career planning below:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin blue border, intended for the student to write down their observations of gaps in their career planning.



# Career options

Psychology is a field with diverse interest- and specialisation areas. Below is a summary of the various fields in psychology, as reflected in the various divisions for psychological associations internationally. Have you thought about the area(s) in psychology that you are most interested in? To give you an idea of the scope of the field, the following is a summary of the various divisions related to different professional psychology organisations.

## American Psychological Association (APA)

Teaching of Psychology	Organisational	Psychotherapy
Experimental psychology	Educational psychology	Psychological hypnosis
Evaluation, measurement, statistics	School psychology	Humanistic psychology
Behavioural neuroscience	Counselling	Psychology of women
Developmental psychology	Military psychology	Psychological study of men and masculinity
Personality and social psychology	Adult development and ageing	Paediatric psychology
Clinical	Experimental and engineering psychology	Addictions
Consulting	Rehabilitation psychology	Trauma psychology
	Consumer psychology	Exercise and sport psychology
	Community psychology	Group psychology
		Peace psychology

## Canadian Psychological Association (Canada)

Aboriginal Psychology	Extremism and Terrorism	Psychopharmacology
Adult Development and Aging	Family Psychology	Psychology and Religion
Brain and Behaviour	Health Psychology	Rural and Northern Psychology
Clinical Psychology	History & Philosophy of Psychology	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
Clinical Neuropsychology	Industrial and Organizational Psychology	Social and Personality Psychology
Community Psychology	International and Cross-Cultural Psychology	Sport & Exercise Psychology
Counselling Psychology	Perception, Learning, and Cognition	Substance Abuse/ Dependence
Criminal Justice Psychology	Psychoanalytic & Psychodynamic	Teaching of Psychology
Developmental Psychology	Psychology in the Military	Traumatic Stress
Education		Women and Psychology (SWAP)
Environmental Psychology		

## British Psychological Society (BPS)

Clinical psychology	Health psychology	Sport and exercise psychology
Counselling psychology	Neuropsychology	Teachers and Researchers in Psychology
Educational and child psychology	Occupational psychology	
Forensic psychology		

## Australian Psychological Society (Australia)

Clinical neuropsychology	Counselling psychology	Health psychology
Clinical psychology	Educational & Developmental psychology	Organisational psychology
Community psychology	Forensic psychology	Sport and exercise psychology

## Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA)

Community & Social Psychology	Neuropsychology and Forensic Psychology	Sexuality and Gender  Student Division
Educational Psychology	Registered Counsellors and Psychometrists	Counselling Psychology
Research and Methodology	Psychology in Public Service	Clinical Psychology  Trauma and Violence

There is a distinction between the academic and the practitioner route in Psychology, Industrial and Organisational Psychology, and Educational Psychology:

Academic route	Professional route
The academic route allows one to pursue a professional career in research, teaching, and some fields of psychological practice, excluding psychological testing, psychotherapy, and counselling	The practitioner route means training as a registered counsellor, psychometrist, or psychologist to register in one of the registration categories offered by the Health Professions Council of South Africa. Currently, the following categories are available: registered counsellor, psychologist, and psychometrist (independent practice)

It is important to do career research about the various options available. Inadequate research could lead to unrealistic expectations of what a career in psychology

entails. Thorough research in terms of career options will enable you to broaden your knowledge about alternative careers should you not be selected for, or not wish to continue with postgraduate studies in psychology.

## Preparing for opportunities and planning your career

“Don’t ask kids what they want to be when they grow up but what problems they want to solve. This changes the conversation from who do I want to work for, to what do I need to learn to be able to do that.”

*Jaime Casap, Google Global Education Evangelist*

One way of preparing for opportunities and planning your career is to think about the type of problems you would want to be able to solve. This will help you to focus on what you wish to contribute, and not necessarily on, whom you want to “become”. Once you have identified some of the problems you would want to focus on, you can then explore how individuals from different academic and professional backgrounds are addressing these problems. Then, you could start thinking about how you would want to contribute and what you will need to do to prepare for this.

### Activity

Think about your environment (family, community, South Africa, Africa, international) and what problems or challenges you know about. Perhaps you have even thought of possible solutions to these challenges. Write down some of the problems or challenges you would want to address.

Problems/ Challenges

Next, think about how you would want to contribute to addressing some of these problems/ challenges. What would your role be? Also, think about how you would need to start preparing for the roles you identified (think about education, and work/ volunteer experience).

Problems/ Challenges	My role	How do I need to prepare

The following are some ideas of challenges/ problems experienced across the world, including South Africa.

Access to digital technologies

Access to primary health care

Clean air

Clean energy

Access to education

Affordable energy

Clean fuel

Access to employment

Ageing world population

Clean water

Access to mental health services

Cancer

Climate

Child labour

Climate change

Corruption	Illegal drugs	Safety at work
Crime	Income inequality	Sealife
Data security	Justice	Sexual health
Deforestation	Knowledge transfer	Skills development
Digital disruption	Lifelong learning	Skills gap
Digital economy	Literacy	Small enterprises
Disabilities	Malnutrition	Smoking
Disaster management	Meaningful employment	Social cohesion
Discrimination	Mechanisation	Social inequality
Economic growth	Nutrition	Substance addiction
Economic inequality	Obesity	Sustainable agriculture
Economic inequality	Peace	Sustainable communities
Ethical institutions	Poverty	Sustainable economic development
Fitness	Quality education	Unemployment
Food security	Rapid urbanisation	Urban development
Gender inequality	Refugees	Violence
Gender-based violence	Resistance to medicine (e.g. TB, malaria)	Violence against children
Health and well-being	Responsible consumption	Water security
HIV/AIDS	Responsible production	Youth unemployment
Human rights	Retirement	
Human trafficking	Rural development	
Hunger		

As an example, you may want to address the problem of violence against children. Think about the different individuals that may be able to contribute to solving this problem: police officers, social workers, educators, legal professionals,

psychologists, and community development practitioners. In the field of psychology, a clinical psychologist may focus on therapy for the affected child; a counselling psychologist could address coping strategies for parents; a research psychologist may do research related to the impact of violence against children, and an educational psychologist may offer support to children within the school context. As a psychology student or graduate, you may volunteer to work with community-based organisations that work with children.

## What can I do with a Bachelor's or Honours degree?

You need to consider that training in psychology equips you with theoretical, practical, and transferable skills that you could apply in a variety of contexts. For example, psychology graduates could work in different capacities in the following fields:

- For-profit organisations (HR, marketing, project management, research, consulting, coaching)
- Research institutions (Human Science Research Council, Institute for Safety and Health Studies, Unisa Centre for Applied Psychology, to name a few)
- Government (Departments of Labour, Social Development, SAPS, and Correctional Services)
- Non-profit organisations (Non-governmental organisations, Non-profit organisations, Community-based organisations - think local, national and international)
- Higher education (Universities and Universities of Technology)
- Schools (government and private)
- Other educational organisations (e.g. FET colleges and private training organisations)

**Complete the career research activities that follow to identify even more opportunities related to your psychology studies.**

# Identify opportunities with career research

## How do you identify opportunities?

Your career research will connect you to others who will help you to answer questions you have with relation to your career choice; expand your understanding of the opportunities related to your career vision; identify “hidden” career paths that you did not think of previously, and think about how you could plan to pursue specific opportunities.

## Prepare

Think about what you still need to find out: what questions do you have? You will use these questions as a starting point to structure your research. Examples of questions include “What can I do with a major in...”, “How much do psychologists earn?” or “What must I study to be ...?”

My questions

## Keep track of information

Keep track of your research by making notes about what you learn and what you still need to find out.



## Evaluate

Evaluate the information that you are finding: Who wrote the information (person/organisation)? Which country does the information relate to? When was the information last updated? After you have visited several websites, you could reflect on what you found – what are the similarities and differences? What else do you need to find out?

## Ways to do career research

### 1 Online search

Use a search engine such as Google to search for information related to your questions. For example, you need to find out about career opportunities related to psychology. You could start by using keywords such as “careers in psychology”. To further contextualise your findings, you could search keywords such as “careers in psychology Africa” and “careers in psychology South Africa”. Scan the brief descriptions of the first ten results and decide which website you would want to explore first. Skim-read through the information on the website (start with the headings) to get an understanding of the content of the page and to find information related to your question. Also, check whether

there are links to other websites that you could further explore. As you are reading, make a summary of the information. You could use the information you find to make lists of job titles related to your field of study, organisations that employ individuals in these fields, and professional organisations.

Remember to bookmark pages that you would want to return to and make notes about what you find and what you would still like to find out. Use online services or apps such as Evernote (<http://www.evernote.com>), Diigo (<http://www.diigo.com>), or Notion (<https://www.notion.so/>) to keep track of your research online.

## Activity

Use Google to find specific job titles related to psychology as a major. The following are some search terms you could consider: “job titles psychology graduates”; “job titles psychology graduates south africa”; “jobs for psychology graduates with bachelor degree”. Note the job titles below.

Job title	Website
Examples:	Quintcareers.com
Career counsellor	Quintcareers.com
Human resources assistant	

## 2 Occupational information websites

The following websites will help you to learn more about specific job titles:

Website	Description
Unisa Counselling & Career Development <a href="http://bit.ly/2TO2KoR">http://bit.ly/2TO2KoR</a>	This website provides more information about opportunities related to qualifications at Unisa.
National Career Advice Portal <a href="http://ncap.careerhelp.org.za/occupations">http://ncap.careerhelp.org.za/occupations</a>	Search for information about specific job titles.
Career Planet <a href="http://www.careerplanet.co.za/">http://www.careerplanet.co.za/</a>	Learn more about different career areas, including social and community services. The website also contains information about learnerships and student finance
O*Net <a href="http://www.onetonline.org/">http://www.onetonline.org/</a>	Explore job titles related to different categories such as your interests, skills, values, typical work activities, and more. You could also browse through groups of occupations related to specific industries or economic sectors.
Prospects <a href="http://www.prospects.ac.uk/">http://www.prospects.ac.uk/</a>	Explore different job titles related to job sectors, as well as what you could do with your major subject.

## Activity

Go to any of the above occupational information websites and search for the job titles you identified during the Google search activity.

Use the tables below to explore your top three occupational interests.

*Example table:*

Job title	Website	Related job titles?	Pros	Cons
<b>Career counsellor</b>	O*Net	School psychologist Social worker Marriage therapist Teacher	The tasks for this person seem related to my interests and values	Seems to be a lot of paperwork involved (writing reports; answering e-mails, etc.)

Job title #1	Website	Related job titles?	Pros	Cons

Job title #2	Website	Related job titles?	Pros	Cons

Job title #3	Website	Related job titles?	Pros	Cons

### 3 Job-search portals

Job search portals are useful in terms of researching specific job titles linked to different industries is job search portals. Finding job advertisements that interest you is a worthwhile activity, even if you are not currently applying for jobs. You may not yet be eligible to apply for your dream job, but you can still gain a lot of information that can be applied to your career planning. For example, you are interested in psychology, but you are

not sure which specific job titles are linked to this field, or you want to know what kind of qualifications and skills are needed to be a psychologist at a hospital.

You can use this information to make career goals and think strategically about how you can develop experiences that will help you meet more of the selection criteria in the future.

Job search sites include

- PNet (<http://www.pnet.co.za>)
- Careerjunction (<http://www.careerjunction.co.za>)
- Careers24 (<http://www.careers24.com/>)
- Indeed (<http://www.indeed.co.za>)
- LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com>)
- Government positions (<http://www.gov.za/aboutgovt/vacancies.htm>)

## Activity

Use the Indeed website (<http://www.indeed.co.za>) to search for job advertisements that mention the words “psychology graduate” or “psychology degree” or “social science degree”. Write down the job titles that you find.

### Example list of job titles related to a bachelor’s degree in psychology

User experience designer

Join a Graduate Development Programme/ Graduate trainee

Recruitment consultant

Researcher

Community engagement officer

### Your list of job titles related to a bachelor’s degree in psychology

## Activity

Use one of the websites above to search for “psychology”. Read at least three advertisements and note the information in the tables below.

### Example (used indeed.co.za)

Job title	Report writer
Salary	R10000 per month
Organisation	For a psychologist; working hours 8:00-16:00 on Mondays- Thursdays; Cape Town
Responsibilities/ duties/ tasks	Writing reports
Requirements (qualifications)	Honours or Master’s Degree in Psychology; Being a Registered Psychometrist would be an advantage; Experience in report writing and psychometric testing will also be an advantage.
Requirements (experience)	Did not state
Requirements (skills)	Writing Skills: Willingness to adapt to the report template and the use of professional language, learn and become familiar with psychological and medical terms; Excellent reading and writing skills; Self-Editing Skills; Ability to meet deadlines; Willing to take and follow instructions, to work in a disciplined and focused way, balanced with the ability to work independently when needed; Ability to think and integrate information from multiple records and documents, identify discrepancies; Willingness to take and work with feedback, ask for help when required; willing to work and grow from mistakes; Communicates well; Good computer skills (Microsoft Word); Passionate about psychology and personal development; Ability to work in a team

Job title #1

Salary

Organisation

Responsibilities/  
duties/ tasks

Requirements  
(qualifications)

Requirements  
(experience)

Requirements  
(skills)

Job title #2

Salary

Organisation

Responsibilities/  
duties/ tasks

Requirements  
(qualifications)

Requirements  
(experience)

Requirements  
(skills)



Job title #3
Salary
Organisation
Responsibilities/ duties/ tasks
Requirements (qualifications)
Requirements (experience)
Requirements (skills)

#### 4 Psychology career websites/ web pages

Many specific psychology career websites can help you to identify job titles related to different areas in psychology. Examples of these pages include:

- Careers in Applied Psychology  
<http://www.psychology.uct.ac.za/what-can-i-do-my-psychology-degree>
- American Psychological Association Careers in Psychology  
<http://www.apa.org/action/careers/index.aspx>
- British Psychological Society: Your journey into psychology  
<http://careers.bps.org.uk/>
- Australian Psychological Society: Careers in Psychology  
<https://www.psychology.org.au/careers?Redirected=true>
- Verywellmind.com Careers in Psychology  
<http://bit.ly/2Kw2MZm>
- Careers in Psychology  
<http://careersinpsychology.org/psychology-careers>

## Activity

After visiting the above sites and reading through the information, write down the job titles mentioned on these sites in the table below.

Job titles related to a degree in psychology

### 5 LinkedIn

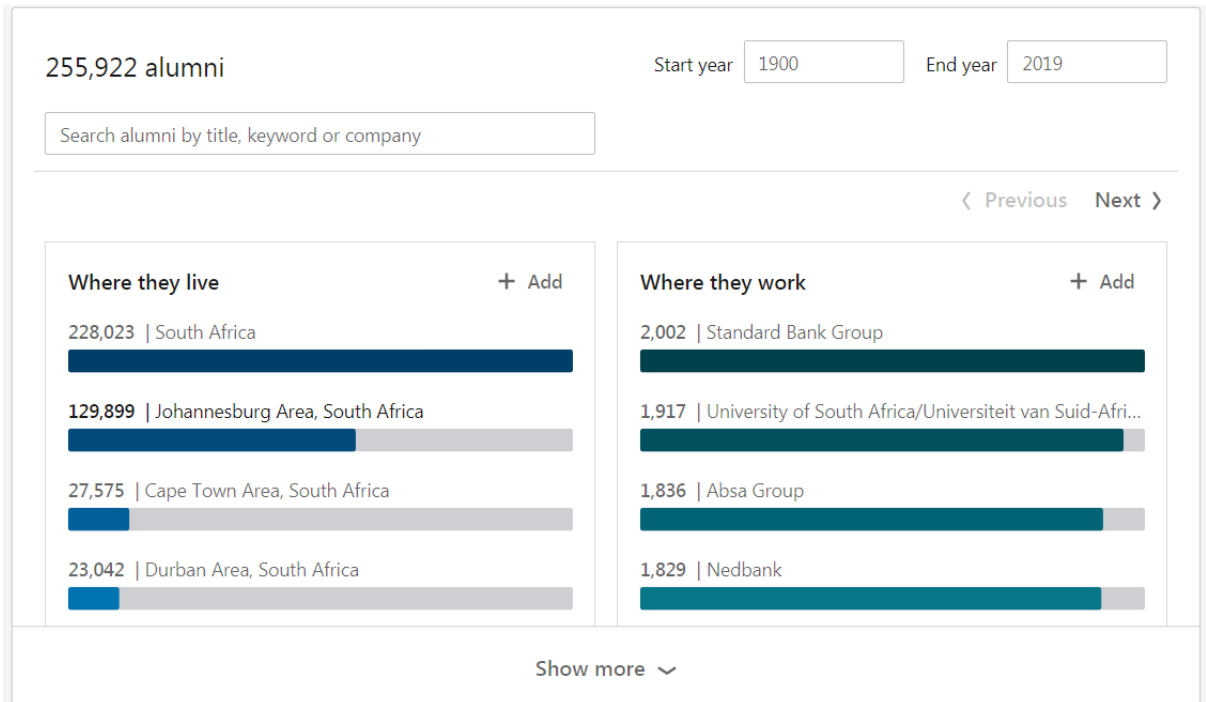
If you have not done so already, start building your network on LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com>) today!

Register for a free account and start connecting with your network online. Join groups relevant to your career field so that you could participate in discussions, ask questions, provide answers about specific topics, and search for people, organisations, and jobs in your field of interest. Research companies and employees to help you identify opportunities. To learn more about using LinkedIn effectively, go to <http://bit.ly/2JSxa3b>.

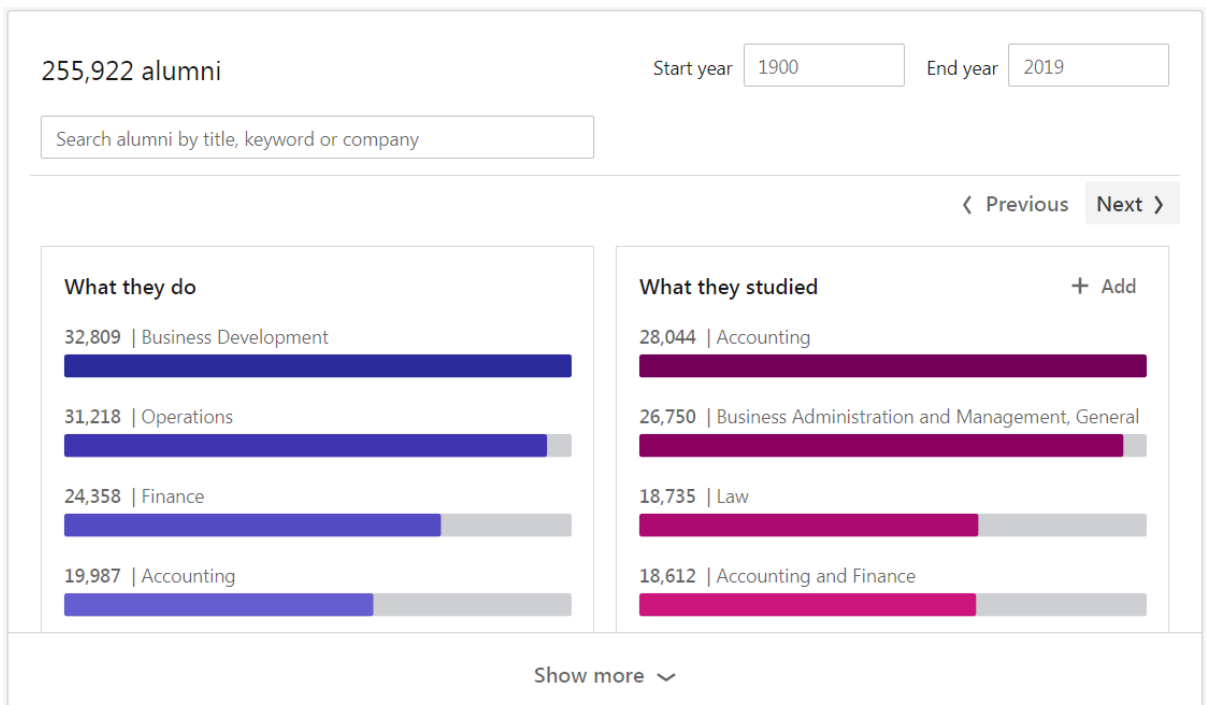
## Activity

1. Go to [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) and sign in to your LinkedIn account. If you do not have an account yet, then create one.
2. Make sure that you have captured your current or previous studies at Unisa on your LinkedIn profile.
3. Once you are signed in, go to the University of South Africa page at <https://www.linkedin.com/school/12049/>.
4. Click on “Alumni”.

5. You will now be presented with a page with Headings and graphs beneath the headings (Where they live, Where they work).



6. Click on the “Next >” link to go to the next set of headings (What they do and What they studied).



7. Click on “+Add” next to the heading “What they studied”

8. Start to type “psychology” in the search box. You will notice that you are provided with suggestions for study fields.
9. Choose one of those options that you would want to explore.
10. You will notice that the graphs for the different headings adjust. You have now filtered the information to contain information about Unisa graduates for a specific field of study.
11. You can now see how many graduates in these fields are on LinkedIn, where they work, what they do, what they’re skilled at, etc.
12. You are also able to view the profiles of alumni who meet the criteria you searched for. For example, you can filter your search results to those alumni who indicated that they studied psychology, and work at Unisa.
13. Make some notes about the interesting things you find below.

Your notes about what you find on LinkedIn

## 6 Talk to others (informational interviewing)

Once you have done some research about specific options, your next step is to talk to individuals in the type of job/ industry that you are interested in. The goal of these conversations is to explore your career options, expand your network, build confidence, access information, and identify your strengths and areas of development. For example, you read an article about a new programme for addiction treatment and you feel curious about how the researchers went about evaluating the programme. You could contact one of the authors of the article to ask if they would be willing to share how they went about gaining access to the information they needed for their evaluation. Before you interview someone, research what you would want to discuss with them – you could ask this person to “fill in the gaps” for

you. Start with people you already know: friends, family, neighbours, colleagues, lecturers, tutors, and fellow students. Use online social networks such as LinkedIn to identify potential individuals. For more information on how to go about this, and suggestions for questions that you might want to ask, visit <http://bit.ly/2LX7qp3>. Also watch this video to learn more: The Dos and Don'ts of Informational Interviews: <http://youtu.be/ixbhtm8l0sl>.

Keep track of:

- the information you have gathered,
- how you make sense of the information,
- questions you still have, and
- ways you think you will be able to get answers to these questions.

## **A Unisa student, Ms Nomalanga Mnisi, shares her experience of conducting informational interviews:**

### **How did you prepare for the interviews?**

I started by reflecting on my career vision, as well as making notes of how I think my vision is related to the organisation I will contact for interviews, as well as the possible career fields within the company that is related to my studies and career vision.

I researched to help me understand more about the organisation, for example, the different divisions, where they are, what their main business is, and the kind of jobs available. This helped me to know which questions I need to ask so that I could clarify uncertainties.

I also wrote an introduction letter (who I am, previous and current qualifications, why I am interested or what I know about the organisation, the purpose of the information interview, and how it will contribute to my career development and also careers that I am interested in within the organisation).

I made a list of aspects I am curious about, including in which department is my qualification in demand within the organisation, and which career positions I can be considered for with my qualifications.; different career titles within the company related to my studies?; other requirements for those positions, e.g. skills, driver's license, physical health, etc.; how to structure my CV and cover letter; what to include when I apply for positions in the organisation?; information about internships, learnerships, or volunteering programmes that I can apply for to enhance my skills.

### **What did you do before the interview?**

I sent an email confirming my appointment with keywords that I wanted the interview to cover and specified that among others those are topics I wanted to discuss with them. Both gave me feedback that my email also helped them to prepare for the interview.

## What did you gain from the interviews?

The two individuals I spoke to helped me to understand what I needed to ask during my next interviews in specific sections.

## Activity

Write down the names of people you know who may work in the fields you are interested in. For instance, do any of your parents' friends work in any of the fields you are considering? Also, write down the names of other people who you think could give you information about any careers you are considering.

People who work in my preferred career	People who can give me information about potential career choices
Brother's friend	University tutor

You may have identified a lot more people than you thought! Imagine how much information you can gather about the career you are interested in just by talking to these people. Each person will give you fresh insights opinions and valuable information about the careers you are considering, whether they are currently working in that field, or are only remotely related to or associated with it.

## 7 Attend a Virtual Grad Expo/ Careers Fair event

Attending a Careers Fair event allows you the opportunity to speak to people from different industries. You may be studying a qualification that does not seem to have a direct link to the exhibitors or the presenters, but they have one thing in common: they employ people, who work in organisations, who do business with all kinds of suppliers and services. Somewhere in this value chain, your qualification will find a place to fit – either as a customer or as an employer or employee.

### Preparation

- Think about what you will wear.
- Practice your handshake and introduction - how will you introduce yourself to recruiters?
- Update your CV and prepare to answer questions about yourself, your career, and your studies.
- Research the participating organisations (start with the organisation's website).
- Prepare questions that you would want to ask recruiters - use your research about an organisation to inform your questions (for example, “What

kind of person are you seeking for this position?”, and “What particular skills do you value most?”).

### During

- Make an effort to speak to all the exhibitors and presenters and keep a note of who they are and what their companies do – remember to introduce yourself.
- Speak clearly and confidently – it may be noisy, so remember to speak up if necessary.
- Be ready to take notes: Carry a notebook and pen with you, or do it on your cell phone/ tablet.
- Network with other students at the Careers Fair (but not at the expense of talking to employers!)
- Don't ask about: Information you could have easily learned on the employer's website or salary and benefits.

### After

- Make notes about the various people you spoke to and the information you would want to follow up.



- Connect with company representatives that you met online (for example, on LinkedIn)
- Reflect on your experience: How did you use this opportunity? Could you link your skills and qualification to what was offered at the Fair?

[Visit our website](#) for more information.

## 8 Experience studying psychology

Explore what psychology is by watching and listening to online lectures and reading free open textbooks on a variety of topics in psychology such as introductory psychology, social psychology, human emotion, history of psychology, clinical psychology, brain structure and its origins, neuroscience, and behaviour, depression and more. These resources will enhance your understanding of psychology and the various opportunities related to this field.

**Search for psychology courses and open textbooks on these sites:**

- Open University (Visit the site at <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/> and type “psychology” in the search box to find psychology-related courses.
- Coursera.org (<http://www.coursera.org/>)
- Udemy (<http://www.udemy.com/>)
- Saylor Academy (<http://www.saylor.org/books/>)
- Khan Academy (for statistics-related courses) (<http://www.khanacademy.org/>)
- MITOpenCourseware (<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/brain-and-cognitive-sciences/>)
- Open Culture (<http://www.openculture.com/freeonlinecourses>)
- iTunes University (<http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u/>)
- YouTube education (<http://www.youtube.com/education?b=400>)
- FreeVideoLectures (<http://freevideolectures.com/Subject/Psychology>)

# Professional psychology in South Africa

Individuals can register with the Health Professions Council of South Africa in one of the following registration categories:

- Registered counsellor
- Psychometrist
- Clinical psychologist
- Forensic psychologist
- Neuropsychologist
- Counselling psychologist
- Educational psychologist
- Research psychologist
- Industrial psychologist

Practitioners in each of the above categories are required to practice within a specific scope of practice, that is, adhere to guidelines regarding approved activities.

Detailed information about the scope of practice for each of the above categories is available in the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act no 56 of 1974)

([https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/scope\\_of\\_profession\\_of\\_psychology\\_sept\\_2011.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/scope_of_profession_of_psychology_sept_2011.pdf)). Visit the Health Professions Council

of South Africa (HPCSA) website at

<https://www.hpcsa.co.za/?contentId=0&menuSubId=52&actionName=Professional%20Boards> for more information.

Other important information on the [Board for Psychology website](#):

- A list of accredited universities in South Africa in terms of training in psychology  
([https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf))
- Rules and Regulations of the Board)
- National Board examination information (including exam results, dates for application reading material)
- Information about internships and the list of approved internship organisations

## Registered counsellor

The role of the registered counsellor is to provide psychological screening services and short-term psychological interventions to enable individuals to function more effectively, Professor H G Pretorius (2012) summarises the role of the counsellor as follows:

“to make preventative and developmental counselling services accessible and affordable to all; to first act as "emotional paramedics" in cases of trauma; to intervene appropriately, and to refer when and where necessary; to act as a resource in communities and to promote health in a socio-cultural appropriate manner; to design preventative and developmental programmes, to implement them in the widest possible contexts, and to monitor their effectiveness”.

Read more about the framework for registered counsellors here:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations\\_gnr1820\\_2003.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations_gnr1820_2003.pdf).

## Where do they work?

Community-based settings such as schools, non-government organisations, prisons, and children’s homes; universities as counsellors and lecturers; organisations as HR practitioners and recruitment consultants.

## Professional training route: Registered counsellor



## Training at Unisa

Unisa is in the process of restructuring the BPsych equivalence programme and will be in a position to offer it again, after attending to HPCSA requirements. Keep in mind that as with the previous BPsych equivalence programme there will be a selection process and only a limited number of students will be accommodated annually. There is also no guarantee that you would be accepted into the programme automatically. The undergraduate and Honours degrees in Psychology are accredited and the options of doing a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology or Masters by dissertation remain open after the Honours degree in Psychology.

View a list of accredited universities in South Africa in terms of training in psychology on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf).

## Psychometrist

Psychometrists perform psychological assessments and use psychological assessment data. Psychometrists are permitted to select, administer, score, and interpret psychological tests, write and sign reports, and give feedback to clients independently. They need mentoring by or refer to a registered psychologist only when they find it necessary within their prescribed scope of practice as specified by the Board. When it comes to reporting the results, the psychologist needs to take final responsibility for the contents of the report, but the psychometrist may contribute to the content and co-sign the report. Psychometrists are not permitted to use certain personality measures (for example, TAT, CAT, Rorschach); specialist neuropsychological measures; or measures that are used for the diagnosis of psychopathology (for example, MMPI-2).

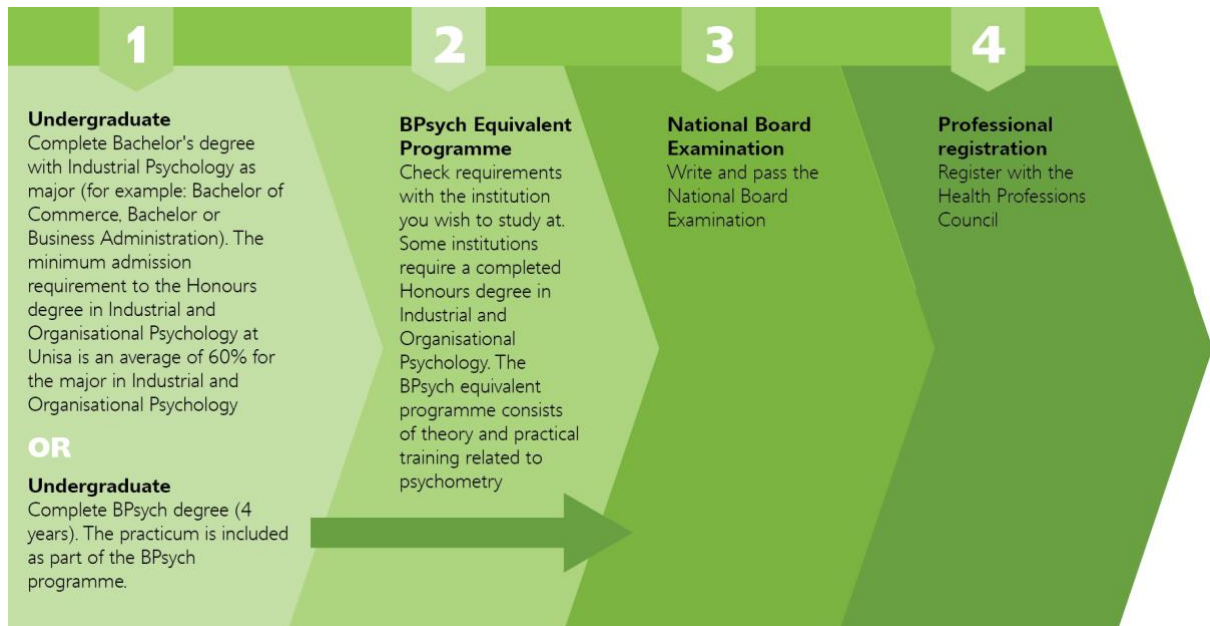
Read more about the regulations related to the registration of psychometrists:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations\\_qnr1201\\_2003.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations_qnr1201_2003.pdf).

## Where do they work?

The psychometrist may be part of a psychological practice or employed by private companies, industries, or institutions such as government departments or non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The psychometrist, who from 2006 only registers at the level of independent practice, is allowed to practice independently but must adhere to the scope of practice specifications by the Board, and not execute psychological acts reserved for counsellors and registered psychologists.

# Professional training route: Psychometry



## Training at Unisa

Unisa is in the process of restructuring the BPsych equivalence programme and will be in a position to offer it again after attending to Unisa management and HPCSA requirements. Keep in mind that as with the previous BPsych equivalence programme there will be a selection process and only a limited number of students can be accommodated annually and no guarantee that you would be accepted into the programme automatically. The undergraduate and Honours degrees in Industrial and Organisational Psychology are accredited and the options of doing a Master's Degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology and Masters by dissertation remain open after the Honours degree. Utilise the information and activities in this brochure to help you identify other career opportunities.

View a list of accredited universities in South Africa in terms of training in psychometry on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf). The various institutions will be able to

advise whether psychology or industrial psychology at the undergraduate level and/or Honours level is required.

## Clinical psychology

A clinical psychologist renders a diagnostic and therapeutic service, often in association with medical, paramedical, and other professionals, to patients or clients experiencing mental and/or emotional distress. The focus is on medium and long-term interventions at the secondary and tertiary curative and/or preventative levels.

Read more about the scope of practice for clinical psychologists:

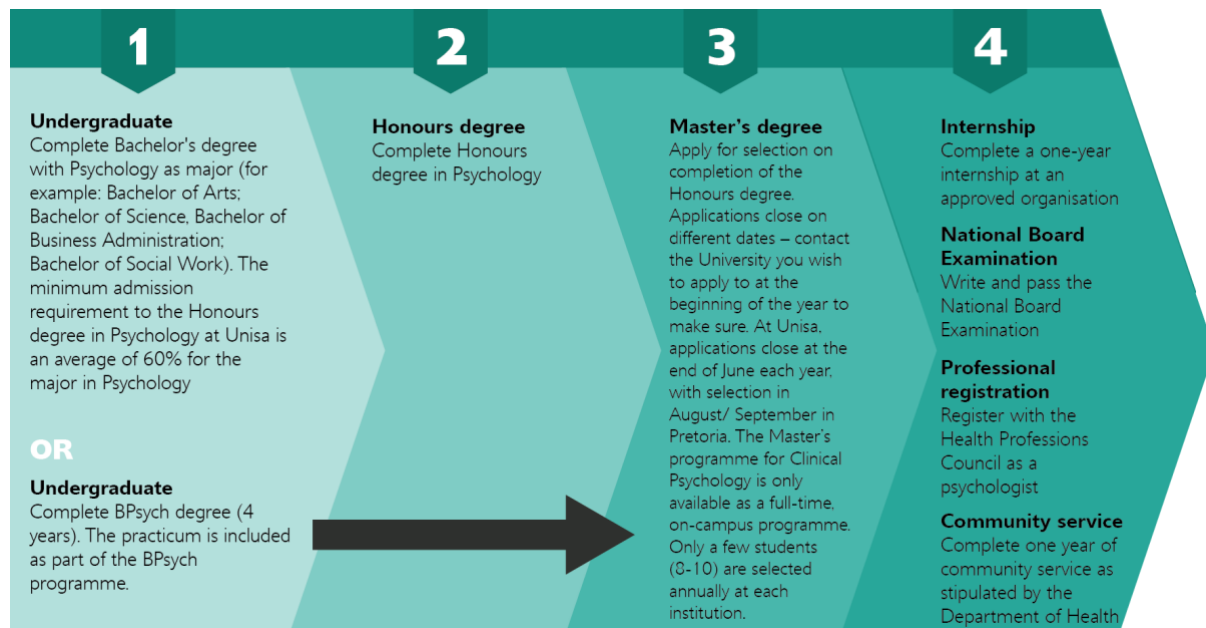
[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations\\_gnr993\\_2008.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations_gnr993_2008.pdf).

### Where do they work?

A clinical psychologist can be self-employed, part of a psychological practice, or employed by organisations in the private or public sectors. Many psychologists are employed by mental health service institutions, hospitals, schools, and counselling centres. Opportunities are also available at tertiary institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), and government departments. The psychologist can act as a consultant to a variety of institutions. Psychologists are also increasingly drawn to health institutions, such as sport training institutes. Some perform expert witness duties in court, and some specialise in defined fields, such as neuropsychology or bereavement. Others follow the academic route as lecturers at Higher Education institutions and focus on research, teaching, and community engagement.



## Professional training route: Clinical psychology



View a list of accredited universities in South Africa in terms of training in psychology on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf).

The information for the Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology is available here:

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Qualifications/Selection-degrees>.

## Forensic psychology

Clinical-forensic psychologists are clinical psychologists who specialise in the assessment and/or treatment of persons who, in some way, are involved in the legal process or legal system. According to the forensic psychologists' scope of practice in South Africa, these practitioners may

- conduct psychological assessments, diagnoses, and interventions;

- refer clients to appropriate professionals for further assessment or intervention;
- provide therapeutic interventions; advise on the development of policies, based on forensic psychological theory and research;
- design, manage, and evaluate forensic psychology-based programmes, and interventions;
- design, manage, and conduct research; report on, and supervise research, in forensic psychology
- train, supervise students, interns, and other registered psychology practitioners in forensic psychology; and
- provide expert evidence and/or opinions.

Learn more about forensic psychology in the PsySSA PsyTalk newsletter (September 2018, Issue 3) here: <http://psytalk.psyssa.com/>.

## Professional training route

See route for clinical psychology. There is no specialised training programme at Master's programme for this specialisation. *Practitioners who specialise in this field first train as clinical psychologists.*

## Neuropsychology

Neuropsychologists evaluate psychological and behavioural disturbances associated with central nervous system dysfunction. According to the neuropsychologists' scope of practice in South Africa, these practitioners may:

- assess, diagnose and intervene in psychological disorders of people experiencing neuropathology;
- diagnose and evaluate psychological disorders caused by neurological conditions; and

- treat and rehabilitate psychological disorders of people suffering from central nervous system dysfunction.

Neuropsychologists can also be involved with policy development, perform research related to neuropsychology, train and supervise other registered practitioners in the field of neuropsychology, and provide expert opinion and/ or evidence. Visit the South African Clinical Neuropsychological Association (SACNA) webpage (<http://www.sacna.co.za>) for more information about this field.

## Professional training route

See route for clinical psychology. There is no specialised training programme at Master's programme for this specialisation. Practitioners who specialise in this field first train as clinical psychologists.

## Research psychology

Research psychology is a specialised sub-discipline in Psychology that focuses on applied research across diverse sectors. A research psychologist investigates various societal and human issues to generate and disseminate psychological knowledge for understanding and dealing effectively with these issues. Research psychologists are also concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of interventions. This specialisation is suitable for persons who are interested in psychology as the scientific study of human behaviour, rather than in the applied field of therapy. Professional training in research psychology offers an exciting opportunity to obtain skills and competencies to meet the rapidly changing needs of our fast-moving information society. A master's degree in research psychology also serves as the basis for PhD studies and a career in academia.

Read more about the scope of practice for research psychologists:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations\\_gnr993\\_2008.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations_gnr993_2008.pdf).

Upon completion of an HPCSA-approved research psychology Master's degree, one has the opportunity to pursue professional registration with the HPCSA as a research psychologist.

Identify the Universities that currently offer accredited research programs in the HPCSA Accredited Institutions document:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf).

## Where do they work?

Master's degrees that specialise in research psychology focus on developing practical and applied research skills in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed, or multi-method, research. Such degrees equip graduates with key skills to work across a range of research environments, including but not limited to, science councils, government, policy research units, NGOs, advocacy organisations, independent research consultancy, market research, public health, education, and personnel development. Research psychologists may be employed as researchers and consultants in the general area of psychological and social science research and consultation. Possible employers include market research companies; research organisations such as the Human Science Research Council; government departments; South African Police Services; media companies; financial institutions; management consulting companies; nongovernmental organisations; community-based organisations and mining companies. Self-employment is possible as a research consultant.

Having equipped students with key research skills, a Master's degree in Research Psychology opens many doors for graduates. A table follows with an indication of some of the sectors graduates can find internships and/or employment.

Institution/Organisation/ Unit/Company	Website
<b>Social and Health Research Councils, Units, and NGOs</b>	
Unisa Institute for Social and Health Sciences (ISHS)	<a href="http://www.unisa.ac.za/ishs">Unisa Institute for Social and Health Sciences (ISHS)</a>
Centre for Health Policy (CHP)	<a href="http://www.chp.ac.za/">http://www.chp.ac.za/</a>
Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR)	<a href="http://www.csvr.org.za/">http://www.csvr.org.za/</a>
Sonke Gender Justice	<a href="http://www.genderjustice.org.za/">http://www.genderjustice.org.za/</a>
HIVSA	<a href="http://www.hivsa.com/">http://www.hivsa.com/</a>
Centre for Development and Enterprise	<a href="http://www.cde.org.za/">http://www.cde.org.za/</a>
Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)	<a href="http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/jobs">http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/jobs</a>
Medical Research Council (MRC)	<a href="http://www.mrc.ac.za/job-opportunities">http://www.mrc.ac.za/job-opportunities</a>
Social Surveys Africa	<a href="http://www.socialsurveys.co.za/">http://www.socialsurveys.co.za/</a>
Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI)	<a href="http://www.pari.org.za/">http://www.pari.org.za/</a>
South African Institute of Race Relations	<a href="http://irr.org.za/">http://irr.org.za/</a>
Institute for Security Studies South Africa	<a href="http://www.issafrica.org/about-us/careers-and-opportunities">http://www.issafrica.org/about-us/careers-and-opportunities</a>
Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA)	<a href="https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/humanities/csda">https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/humanities/csda</a>
Perinatal HIV Research Unit (PHRU)	<a href="http://www.phru.co.za/">http://www.phru.co.za/</a>

Institution/Organisation/ Unit/Company	Website
JVR (Psychometric Research)	<a href="https://www.jvrpsychometrics.com/">https://www.jvrpsychometrics.com/</a>
Phelophepha Train (Entabeni Hospital Medical Centre West)	<a href="http://www.trainofhope.org/">http://www.trainofhope.org/</a> <a href="http://www.lifehealthcare.co.za/Company/Training_and_Development.aspx">http://www.lifehealthcare.co.za/Company/Training_and_Development.aspx</a>
Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Research Unit (MRC)	<a href="http://www.mrc.ac.za/intramural-research-units/ATOD">http://www.mrc.ac.za/intramural-research-units/ATOD</a>
<b>Educational Research Councils, Units, and NGOs</b>	
Wits Student Equity and Talent Management Unit (SETMU)	<a href="https://www.wits.ac.za/setmu/">https://www.wits.ac.za/setmu/</a>
JET Education Services	<a href="http://www.jet.org.za/">http://www.jet.org.za/</a>
Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/people/Centre-for-Education-Policy-Development-CEPD/100067190006792/">https://www.facebook.com/people/Centre-for-Education-Policy-Development-CEPD/100067190006792/</a>
Umalusi	<a href="http://www.umalusi.org.za/">http://www.umalusi.org.za/</a>
Council on Higher Education	<a href="http://www.che.ac.za/newsroom/vacancies">http://www.che.ac.za/newsroom/vacancies</a>
Mindset Network	<a href="http://learn.mindset.co.za/">http://learn.mindset.co.za/</a>
NWU – Potchefstroom campus	<a href="http://www.nwu.ac.za">www.nwu.ac.za</a>
NWU – Vaal-Triangle campus Optentia Research Focus Area	<a href="http://www.optentia.co.za">www.optentia.co.za</a>
UCT - Gender Health and Justice Research Unit	<a href="http://www.ghjru.uct.ac.za/ghjru/internships/how-to-apply">http://www.ghjru.uct.ac.za/ghjru/internships/how-to-apply</a>

Institution/Organisation/ Unit/Company	Website
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University - South Campus in conjunction with Elizabeth Donkin Hospital	<a href="http://clinic.mandela.ac.za/">http://clinic.mandela.ac.za/</a>
Centre for Student Counselling and Development (Stellenbosch University)	<a href="http://www.sun.ac.za/english/learning-teaching/student-affairs/cscd">http://www.sun.ac.za/english/learning-teaching/student-affairs/cscd</a>
<b>Research Consultancies and Market Research Companies</b>	
Khulisa Management Services	<a href="http://www.khulisa.com/">http://www.khulisa.com/</a>
Genex Insights (Previously TMS)	<a href="http://www.genex.co.za/">http://www.genex.co.za/</a>
Kantar Group	<a href="https://www.kantar.com/locations/south-africa#_=">https://www.kantar.com/locations/south-africa#_ =</a>
Accenture	<a href="https://www.accenture.com/za-en/careers/students-graduates">https://www.accenture.com/za-en/careers/students-graduates</a> <a href="https://www.accenture.com/za-en/new-applied-now">https://www.accenture.com/za-en/new-applied-now</a>
Ipsos South Africa	<a href="https://www.ipsos.com/en-za/opportunities-ipsos">https://www.ipsos.com/en-za/opportunities-ipsos</a>
Kaufman Levin Associates	<a href="http://www.kla.co.za/">http://www.kla.co.za/</a>
TTS-Top Talent Solutions	<a href="http://tts-talent.com/">http://tts-talent.com/</a>
<b>Government or Parastatal Organisations or Units</b>	
South African Police Service	<a href="https://www.saps.gov.za/careers/careers.php">https://www.saps.gov.za/careers/careers.php</a>
Parliament of South Africa	<a href="https://www.parliament.gov.za/careers-parliament">https://www.parliament.gov.za/careers-parliament</a>
SABC	<a href="http://www.sabc.co.za/wps/portal/SABC/SABCCI-TINFOJOBS">http://www.sabc.co.za/wps/portal/SABC/SABCCI-TINFOJOBS</a>

Institution/Organisation/ Unit/Company	Website
Military Psychological Institute (MPI)	<a href="http://www.dod.mil.za">http://www.dod.mil.za</a>

As a Master's graduate in this field, one also has the opportunity to pursue a career in various corporations within research & development (R&D) or marketing departments. To list a few examples of such corporations, one would be able to work in the banking sector, technology and communications sector, and FMCG sector.

If you wish to pursue HPCSA registration, you have to complete an internship at an HPCSA accredited internship site, following which you would write the Professional Board for Psychology examination. A list of HPCSA accredited internship sites is available on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Accreditation/FORM\\_77\\_REVISED\\_18\\_09\\_2018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Accreditation/FORM_77_REVISED_18_09_2018.pdf). Further information regarding professional registration is available on

the HPCSA website at

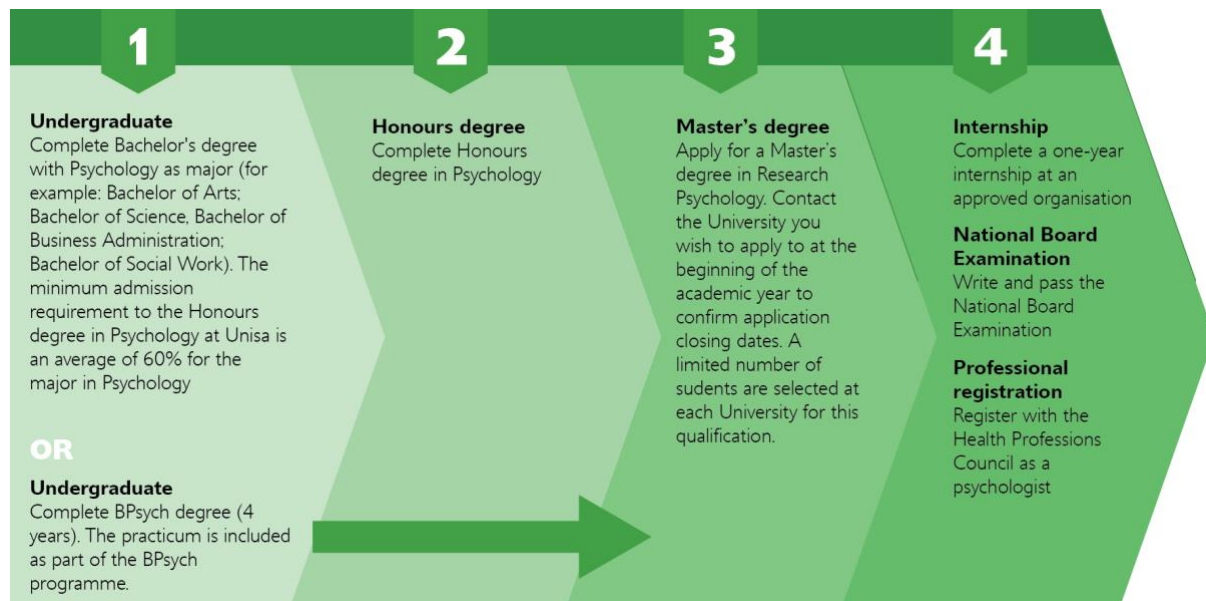
<https://www.hpcsa.co.za/?contentId=0&menuSubId=52&actionName=Professional%20Boards#Rules%20&%20Regulations-197>.



**Thank you to PsySSA, the DRM (Division for Research and Methodology), and the PsySSA Student Division for information about the opportunities related to research psychology. To join PsySSA, the DRM, and/or the Student Division, for more information, as well as educational and career-related support, visit <http://www.psyssa.com>.**



## Professional training route: Research psychology



## Training at Unisa

Unisa is in the process of restructuring the Master's degree to be accredited with the HPCSA for research psychology. View a list of accredited universities in South Africa in terms of training in psychometry on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf). The various institutions will be able to advise regarding the requirements for admission to a Master's degree.

## Industrial Psychology

Industrial and organisational psychologists study the organisation/employee interface and subsequently apply psychological principles to maximise reciprocal satisfaction and productivity in the work environment. Industrial and organisational psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour in the workplace. It involves the interaction of individuals, group, organisations, and work processes to influence behaviour and promote mental health and productivity.

Read more about the scope of practice for industrial psychologists:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations\\_gnr993\\_2008.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations_gnr993_2008.pdf).

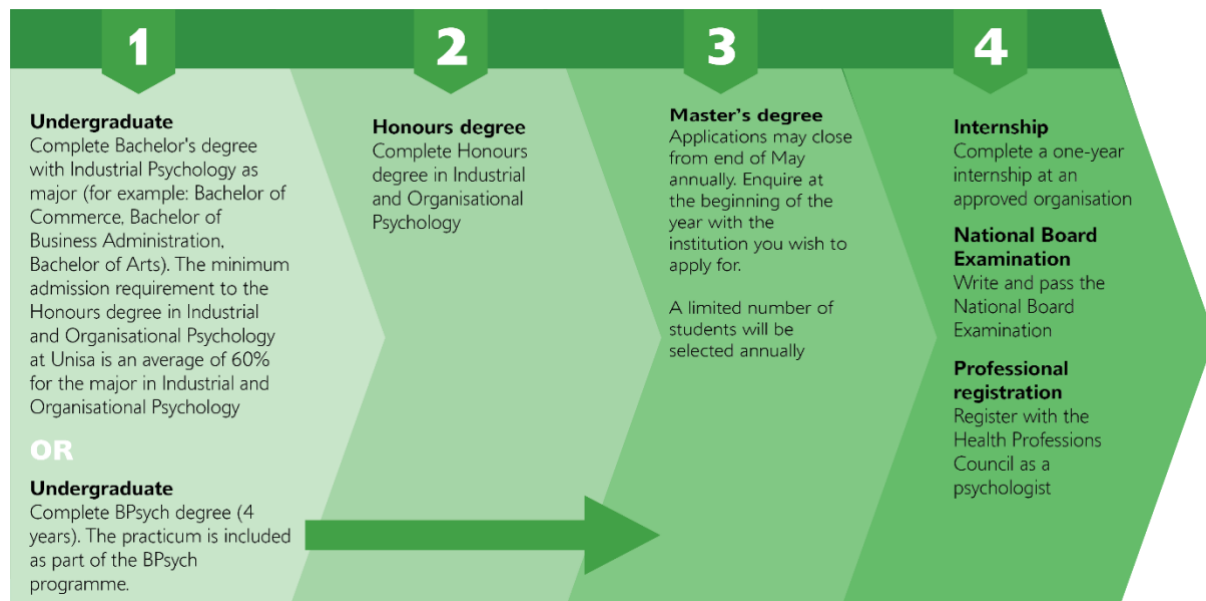
## Where do they work?

Possible employers include private and public companies; consultants to trade associations or retailers or manufacturers; university lecturers who do research in the field; private consultants; large organisations such as mining houses, insurance companies, and government departments. Graduates can be appointed as researchers by the following institutions: universities; the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR); the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Chamber of Mines of SA; and other organisations, for example, marketing research houses that use psychologists to execute research about consumer behaviour and profiles. Industrial Psychologists are also employed or self-employed as executive coaches, organisational development practitioners, labour relations practitioners, and employee wellness practitioners.

## South African Board for People Practices (SABPP)

The South African Board for People Practices (SABPP) is approved by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) as the Education and Training Quality Assurance Body (ETQA) for some crucial human resources qualifications in South Africa. The Board offers various levels of professional and pre-professional registration from level 1 (HR technician) to level 5 (master HR practitioner). Please see the Board's website at <http://www.sabpp.co.za/> for further information about the qualifications needed.

## Professional training route: Industrial psychology



View a list of accredited universities in South Africa in terms of training in psychology on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf).

More information about the Unisa MCom in Industrial and Organisational Psychology (Course work) (Selection degree) is available here:

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Qualifications/Selection-degrees>.

## Educational Psychology

Educational psychologists are involved in counselling clients in educational contexts. Their focus is on guiding and counselling clients to alleviate emotional problems, making subject and career choices, assisting learners with barriers to learning, and facilitating the school admission process. Some conduct research on topics related to the learning of reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Others develop new methods of instruction including designing computer software. Others train teachers

and investigate factors that affect teachers' performance and morale. School psychology is related to educational psychology. The primary responsibility of a school psychologist/ counsellor is to help learners, teachers, and parents with career and subject choices, school adjustment, and personal matters.

Read more about the scope of practice for educational psychologists:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations\\_gnr993\\_2008.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations_gnr993_2008.pdf).

## Where do they work?

Most educational psychologists work in educational institutions (schools or universities) or private practice. Opportunities also exist in community-based settings such as non-government organisations and children's homes, at universities as counsellors and lecturers, and organisations as training practitioners. Educational psychologists can also work as researchers for research organisations or the government.

## Professional training route



## Training at Unisa

Kindly take note that the Master's degree related to educational psychology is currently under review and that it will not be available until further notice. Download the List of Accredited Universities here:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf). The institution(s) you wish to apply can

provide you with information about the requirements to apply for a Master's degree related to educational psychology.

## Counselling psychology

Counselling psychologists assess, diagnose, and intervene in clients dealing with life challenges, and developmental problems to optimise psychological wellbeing; assess cognitive, personality, emotional, and neuropsychological functions about life challenges and developmental problems; and assess developmental processes (e.g. career choice), and adjustment (Scope of Practice of Counselling Psychologists). Also, counselling psychologists may identify and refer to psychopathology; policy advice; conduct research; train and supervise other psychologists, and provide expert opinions.

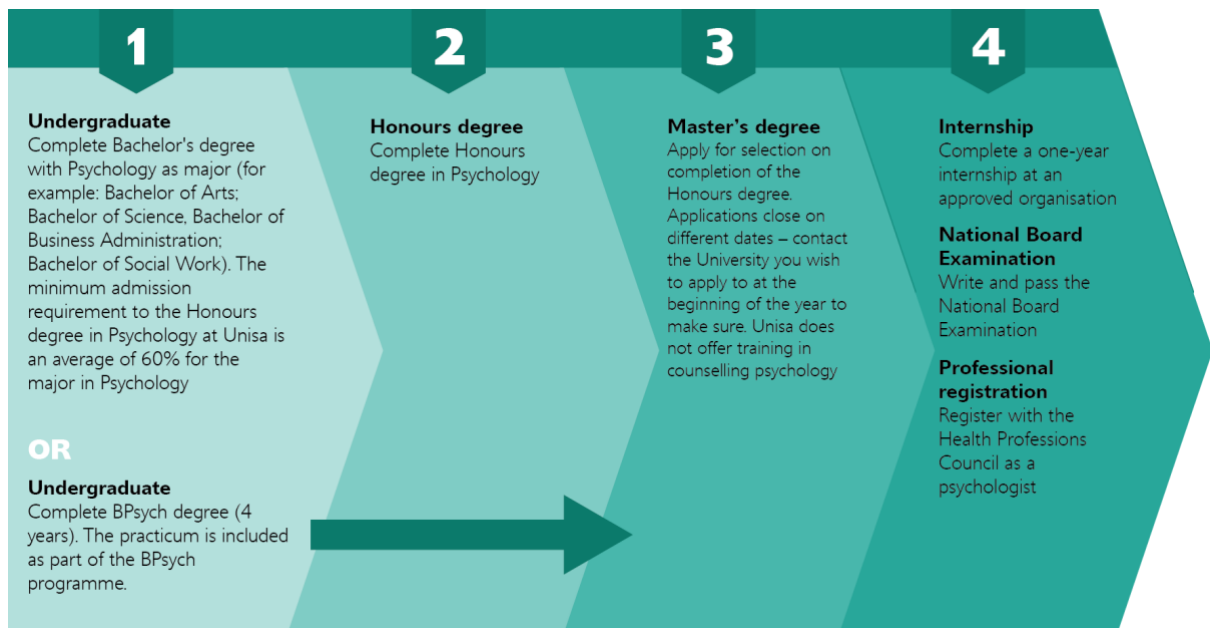
Read more about the scope of practice for counselling psychologists:

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations\\_gnr993\\_2008.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/Rules%20and%20Regulations/regulations_gnr993_2008.pdf).

## Where do they work?

Private practice; Department of Health; Universities and universities of technology; organisations with wellness services; community-based organisations; and research organisations.

## Training route



## Training at Unisa

Unisa does not offer training at the Master's level for Counselling Psychology.

View a list of accredited universities in South Africa in terms of training in psychology on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf).

## Other psychology specialisation areas

### Cognitive psychology

Cognitive psychology attempts to understand the nature of human thought processes. They study how people learn, understand, remember, and make decisions as a result of information they derive from current circumstances, their

existing memory, and the consequences of their actions. Most cognitive psychologists are engaged in basic or applied research at universities and research institutions. Self-employment as an industrial consultant or human factors specialist is also possible.

## **Social psychology**

Social psychologists study how people interact with each other and are affected by their social environments. They study individuals as well as groups, observable behaviours, and private thoughts. Employment opportunities exist at tertiary institutions. Many social psychologists are employed in the private sector as consultants, researchers, marketing directors, managers, political strategists, technology designers, and so on. Social psychologists also work in government and non-profit organisations, designing and evaluating policies and programmes in education, conflict resolution, and environmental protection.

## **Sport psychology**

Sport and exercise psychology is the scientific study of the psychological factors that are associated with participation and performance in sports, exercise, and other types of physical activity. Athletes, coaches, and parents are taught healthy and effective methods of building mental toughness, coping with pressure, and developing effective self-management practices within the context of competitive sports. Sports psychology is currently not a separate registration category of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). Practitioners in this field normally train as clinical and counselling psychologists and also complete further training in sport psychology and/or related fields such as Biokinetics and Sport Science.

Unisa offers an Honours level module in [Sport Psychology](#) as part of the [BA Honours in Psychology](#) (Applied Psychology for Professional Contexts), as well as a short

learning programme ([Short Course in Sport Psychology](#)) through the Centre for Continuing Education and Training.

Further online resources related to sport psychology in South Africa:

- University of Pretoria Sport Science and Medical Unit (<https://www.up.ac.za/Sport-Exercise-Medicine-and-Lifestyle-Institute/article/2679484/semli-psychology>)
- University of Cape Town Sport Science Institute of South Africa (<https://www.ssisa.com/>)
- PerformingMind (<http://www.performingmind.co.za/Sports-Psychology/studying-sport-psychology.html>)
- Search for these journal articles in the Unisa Library catalogue:
  - Jooste, J., Kruger, A., Steyn, B.J.M. & Edwards, D.J. (2016). Essential competencies in contemporary applied sport psychology: Comparative perspectives from South Africa and the United Kingdom. *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences*, 22(1:1), 1-32.
  - Edwards, D. J., & Jooste, J. (2016). Practitioners' perceptions of sport psychology in South Africa: sport psychology. *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences*, 22(1.1), 40-48.

## Applied experimental and engineering psychology

This field is at the intersection of psychology and technology. It suits people with a creative, exploring mind, an inclination toward research and practice, who work well in a team setting with other professionals, and who have an abiding interest in psychology. Work settings range from teaching to laboratory to the industrial design team.

Applied experimental and engineering psychology is increasingly employed in the design and evaluation of medical instrumentation and processes, as well as forensic work involving product and workplace safety.



## Behavioural science

A behavioural scientist works with communities and individuals examining behaviour and decision-making. Behavioural scientists are interested in how the actions of people influence their development, their relationships with others, and their future behaviours<sup>1</sup>. Individuals in this field typically have a social science background, such as psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Typical work environments include hospitals and healthcare facilities, research institutions (e.g. related to public health), law enforcement and prisons, higher education institutions, as well as private companies (as consultants, analysts, or marketers). Some future job titles for specialists in this field include behavioural data analyst, memetics researcher/influencer, and consumer behavioural analyst<sup>2</sup>.

## Behavioural economics

The field of behavioural economics blends ideas from psychology and economics, and it can provide valuable insight that individuals are not behaving in their own best interests<sup>3</sup>. Behavioural economics studies these decision errors by understanding the design of the human mind (neuroscience). Both behavioural economics and cognitive psychology try to understand how individuals can make more effective decisions. Behavioural economics applications are found in many different contexts, such as government (policy), marketing research organisations, advertising agencies, financial institutions, and academic institutions.

### Further reading:

- <https://www.behavioraleconomics.com/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/science-choice/201705/what-is-behavioral-economics>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.careersinpublichealth.net/careers/behavioral-scientist/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.fit.edu/archive/careers-options-behavioral-science/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/science-choice/201705/what-is-behavioral-economics>

## Art therapy

There is no formalised registration category with the Health Professions Council of South Africa for art therapy. In terms of professional training, there would not be one best route to take, since clinical, counselling, and educational psychologists could use forms of art therapy in their work. While you are busy with your undergraduate psychology modules that you need to complete to get to your chosen postgraduate programme, you could start making contact with practitioners in this area to find out more about their backgrounds and possibly get more practical recommendations.

Art Therapy (<http://www.arttherapy.co.za/>) offers several workshops and courses in this field. Their website also contains some useful information about the field. The Art Therapy Centre also offers training programmes and descriptions of their projects. You could consider becoming involved with art therapy on a volunteer basis while busy with your formal studies.

## Music therapy

The music therapist uses music to restore, maintain and improve mental and physical health. The Department of Music, University of Pretoria, offers a Masters in Music Therapy (<http://www.up.ac.za/en/music/article/44462/training-in-music-therapy>).

Further online resources related to music therapy in South Africa:

- South African Music Therapy Association  
(<https://www.facebook.com/southafricanmusictherapy/>)
- South African Network for Arts Therapies Organisation (SANATO)  
(<https://sanata.org>)

## Social Work

The Unisa Department of Social Work offers the following definition of social work: “Social work focuses on the interaction between individuals, groups and communities and their social environments. It includes the following: the facilitation of people to address their problems stemming from their social interactions; empowering people to promote their welfare and to develop their abilities, resources, and potential. The principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work”.

As with all other “helping” professions, prospective social workers have to be interested in individuals and their stories, as well as possess excellent interpersonal communication skills. Social workers work within a variety of contexts, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs); community-based organisations (CBOs); voluntary and private and religious welfare organisations; government sectors (local, provincial and national); private business, clinics, and hospitals. Social workers work closely with psychologists, counsellors, health care professionals, legal advisors, and lawyers.

Psychology can be taken as a major for the BA Social Work degree. This means that once you are qualified as a social worker, you could continue your studies in psychology to become a registered counsellor and/ or psychologist, in addition to being a registered social worker.

## Play therapy

Play therapy uses a variety of techniques that give traumatised children the opportunity to communicate feelings, emotions, experiences, and behaviour through play (<http://gestaltplaytherapy.co.za>).

Where to apply?

- The University of Pretoria offers a [Master's in Social Work with specialisation in Play-based intervention](#)

# Psychiatry

According to the South African Society of Psychiatrists (<http://www.sasop.co.za>), a psychiatrist is “a medical doctor, who has specialized in the field of Psychiatry. To be able to practice, a Psychiatrist must be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), as a Psychiatrist, under the specialist register”.

Psychiatrists have medical training and can examine, diagnose, and treat patients with a medical illness that can lead to mental problems. Psychiatrists are also trained in psychotherapy and therefore can treat patients through psychotherapeutic interventions. Psychiatrists can prescribe medication and psychotherapy to treat mental illness.

A Psychiatrist must first complete a medical degree. This is usually indicated as an MBChB or MBBCh degree. This qualification takes six years to complete. An internship follows that takes another year, and South African doctors are then required to complete one year of community service.

After this, a doctor could specialise and become a “specialist”. It takes another four years of study to gain the qualification to practice as a Psychiatrist. This qualification is usually indicated as an MEd Psych or a FF Psych or FC Psych.

Learn more about psychiatry on the following websites:

- American Psychiatric Association (<http://www.psych.org>)
- More about psychiatry (<http://www.psychiatry.org/about-apa--psychiatry/more-about-psychiatry>)
- The Royal College of Psychiatrists (<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/>)
- A Career in Psychiatry booklet (<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/discoverpsychiatry/acareerinpsychiatry.aspx>)
- World Psychiatric Association (<http://www.wpanet.org/>)

# Psychological Society of South Africa

## About PsySSA

The Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) advances South African psychology as a science and profession of global stature and promotes psychological praxis as relevant, proactive, and responsive to societal needs and well-being. PsySSA has dedicated its work to the construction and development of post-apartheid South African Society. The Society is also involved in ongoing negotiations with the government, other legislative bodies, and the private and civil society sectors to contribute to issues affecting South Africa's rapidly changing environment. As the representative body of psychologists in the country, the Society lobbies for members and advocates for psychology as a vital science and relevant practice. The Society provides a valuable networking facility for all members. PsySSA publishes the quarterly leading psychology journal in Africa, the South African Journal of Psychology as well as PsyTalk.

PsySSA has a [number of divisions](#) that members can belong to including neuro- and forensic psychology, psychology in public services, sexuality and gender, and more.

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For more information about PsySSA and becoming a member, visit the website at <http://www.psyssa.com/>.

## PsySSA Student Division

You can join PsySSA as a student member. The [Student Division](#) focuses on student matters and is interested in being a voice for psychology students. Goals of the Student Division include: researching different concerns regarding psychology students (survey and round tables); exposing psychology students to the academic and professional discipline of psychology (i.e. PsySSA Conference); creating opportunities for psychology students to engage in mentorship opportunities; assisting the community through community projects (giving student volunteer experience); connecting students to professionals and researchers in their respective fields of interest; addressing the mental health stigma in South Africa among the youth; and assisting psychology students to connect with professionals to gain skills to produce publishable material.

# Your education plan

## Which degree should you start with?

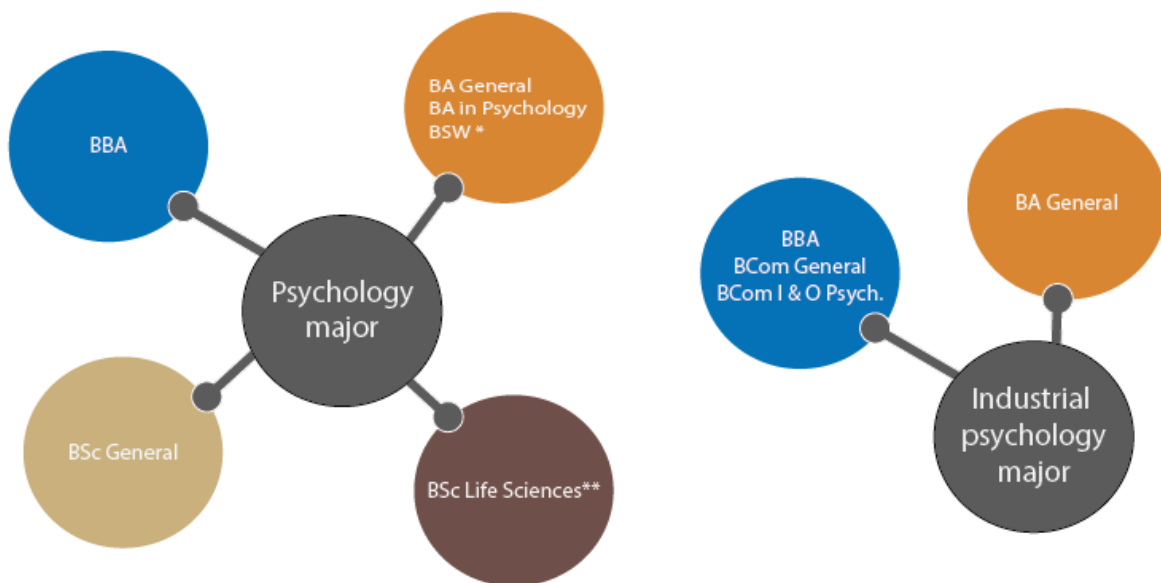
Theoretically, it does not matter which degree you complete, as long as you are including psychology as your major subject (in other words, you include it on first, second and third level). Your choice of which first degree to complete would be informed by your

interests and career vision and for which kind of opportunities you would want to prepare yourself for. For example, even if you say you are interested in clinical psychology, these individuals work in a variety of contexts and have different backgrounds. For

example, someone interested in neuropsychology and forensic psychology may find it beneficial to have a science background (for example, a BSc in Psychology and Physiology), whereas someone interested in community psychology, may find it helpful to have a development studies (BA General) or social work (Bachelor of Social Work) background.

We realise that it may be confusing and there is not a guarantee as to which field you will eventually work in, as your experiences while you are studying in terms of working and volunteering will shape your career identity. As you progress with your studies and expand your network and knowledge of opportunities related to psychology, you will be able to identify more options to consider.

Psychology or industrial and organisational psychology can be completed as a major for the following degrees:



\* Bachelor of Social Work

\*\* Bachelor of Science in Life Sciences Psychology and Physiology Stream (with Genetics) (98053 - PPG)

# College of Human Sciences

## General degree

Programme	Number of majors	Further studies
BA General	Two major subjects. You will select Psychology and/or Industrial and Organisational Psychology as your major(s)	Honours in either major subject (minimum admission requirement: an average of at least 60% for your major subject)

Use this table to explore how other majors for the BA General can help you to broaden your career opportunities:

Major subject	Possible career opportunities	Possible work environments
Anthropology	Anthropologist; cultural officer; museum careers; community development officer; health educator; social impact assessor	Universities; government departments; museums; consultancies
Communication Science	Communications practitioner; public relations practitioner; marketing practitioner; journalist; fundraiser; event's organiser; lecturer; teacher; researcher	Government; media and entertainment industry; NGOs; public relations companies; Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); publishing; advertising; broadcasting; film companies; corporate communication departments



Major subject	Possible career opportunities	Possible work environments
Criminology	Correctional services officer; crime prevention consultant; forensic criminologist; police officer; researcher; victim counsellor; lecturer	Universities; universities of technology; research institutions; Department of Correctional Services
Development Studies	Development researcher; development facilitator; development officer; development consultant; public servant; training officer	Local, provincial, national & international development and community organisations; research organisations; political organisations
Economics	Economist; economic analyst; financial analyst; trust administrator; investment banker; securities analyst; teacher; lecturer; research analyst; consultant; behavioural psychology consultant or researcher; choice architect	NGOs; labour organisations; government; research organisations; semi-state organisations or parastatals; banks/ financial institutions; market research firms; analysing/ forecasting companies; consulting companies; Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); behavioural research organisations

Major subject	Possible career opportunities	Possible work environments
Languages	Author; broadcaster; copywriter; editor; interpreter; journalist; language policy planner; lexicographer; publisher; terminologist; translator	Publishing; government; public relations firms; marketing & advertising; tourism industry; diplomatic service; import/export companies; international trade and banking; hospitality; education
Sociology	Lecturer; sociologist; social researcher; policy design; monitoring and evaluation research	Education; NGOs; government; development agencies

## Specialisation degrees

Programme	Number of majors	Further studies
<a href="#">BA in Psychology</a>	This is a new degree and further information should be available in December 2022	
BA Social Work	Upon completion of this programme you will be a professional social worker and have completed a major in Psychology	Master's in Social Work or Honours in Psychology (minimum admission requirement: an average of at least 60% for your major subject)

# College of Science, Engineering and Technology

## General degree

Programme	Number of majors	Further studies
Bachelor of Science General	One or two majors (Psychology will be one of these)	Honours in either major subject (minimum admission requirement: an average of at least 60% for your major subject)

Use this table to explore how your second major can help you to broaden your career opportunities:

Major subject	Possible career opportunities	Possible work environments
Geography	Conservationist; geographer; educator; tour guide; environmental impact assessor; environmental consultant; environmental researcher	Government; education; tourism organisations; environmental conservation bodies; industrial sector; military institutions
Operations Research	Operations researcher; data/quantitative analyst; consultant	Public and private companies; mining companies; financial institutions; production companies; research organisations; consulting firms

Major subject	Possible career opportunities	Possible work environments
Statistics	Econometrician; market research statistician; social research statistician; statistical consultant; statistician; data analyst; data scientist	Banking and financial industry; chemical industry (research and development); agriculture (plant breeding, animal production); meteorology; telecommunications; market research; consulting firms; social research institutions/ companies; own business
Computer Science/ Information Systems	Programmer; Database administrator; lecturer; software developer; technical writer; training specialist; Artificial Intelligence developer; human-computer interface (HCI) specialist; business analyst; customer relationship manager; IT consultant	Banks and financial services; consulting firms; computer manufacturers; computer training; government; health care; insurance companies; mining industry; education; software development companies; Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
Physiology	Physiologist; research scientist; lecturer; laboratory technician; medical sales representative	Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); government departments; laboratories; industry; hospitals; pharmaceutical companies; biotechnology companies

## College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences

### Specialisation degree

Programme	Number of majors	Further studies
Bachelor of Science in Life Sciences Psychology and Physiology Stream (with Genetics)	Two majors (Psychology and Physiology)	Honours in either major subject (minimum admission requirement: an average of at least 60% for your major subject)

## College of Economic and Management Sciences

Programme	Number of majors	Further studies
Bachelor of Commerce Generic degree	Two majors (Industrial and Organisational Psychology will be one major)	Honours in either major subject (minimum admission requirement: an average of at least 60% for your major subject)
Bachelor of Business Administration	Two major subjects (Business Management and Psychology or Industrial and Organisational Psychology)	Honours in either major subject (minimum admission requirement: an average of at least 60% for your major subject)

Programme	Number of majors	Further studies
BCom Industrial and Organisational Psychology	One major (Industrial and Organisational Psychology)	Honours in Industrial and Organisational Psychology (minimum admission requirement: an average of at least 60% for your major subject)

Use this table to explore how your second major can help you to broaden your career opportunities:

Major subject	Possible career opportunities	Possible work environments
Business Management	You may select modules from various fields, for example, retail-, financial-, risk-, marketing- and human resource management. Your choice would determine other career opportunities	Private and public sector; NGOs; consulting firms; self-employment

## Postgraduate qualifications

### Postgraduate qualifications in Psychology

- MA in Psychology (Full Dissertation)
- MA in Psychology (Full Dissertation) Research Consultation
- MA in Clinical Psychology (coursework)(selection degree)

- PhD in Psychology

Download the research interest areas in the Department of Psychology here:

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Research-focus-areas/College-of-Human-Sciences>.

## Industrial and Organisational psychology

- MCom in Industrial and Organisational Psychology (Full Dissertation)
- MCom in Industrial and Organisational Psychology (coursework)(selection degree)
- PhD in Psychology (Industrial and Organisational Psychology)
- PhD in Psychology (Consulting Psychology)

Download the research interest areas in the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology here:

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Research-focus-areas/College-of-Economic-and-Management-Sciences>.

## Activity

Complete the following table with ideas about your study planning:

Your interest:				
Course Title		Admission requirements	Why this course?	What am I not sure of?
Major(s)				
Other subjects				
e.g.	Bachelor of Science Majors: Psychology Other subjects: Computer Science	NSC; Maths HG D	Will enable me to combine my interest in psychology and computers	I am not sure how this degree will help me to be a registered research psychologist – is it enough?
1				
2				
3				
4				

Take a few minutes and write down short answers to the following questions. Be honest with yourself, and write down what you feel.

Which qualification(s) have you identified that you would want to explore further?



How long do you anticipate studying?

How many modules will you need to take per semester to finish your undergraduate degree?

What do you anticipate will be the most difficult part of completing your degree?

Are you confident you will be able to overcome any possible challenges related to your studies?

Were you able to answer these questions? How confident do you feel about your plan? These are important questions to think about since students who have a clear plan and who are prepared to overcome possible obstacles that may arise along the way are much more likely to succeed at Unisa. In other words, just thinking positively about your future can help you get to where you want to be.

# Prepare for career opportunities

Many people believe that a degree will lead directly to a career specifically related to the major(s)/ specialisations for that degree. The fact is that degrees do lead to careers, but the relationship between the major(s)/ specialisation you choose and the career you build for yourself is complex. Many graduates follow careers that are seemingly not related to their chosen major(s)/ specialisations. Various career management techniques will assist you in managing your career in psychology:

1. Develop and reflect on your transferable skills
2. Start with a career portfolio
3. Volunteer work
4. Enhance your employability

## Develop your skills

### **Develop and reflect on your transferable skills**

Your degree will equip you with subject-specific knowledge and several work-related skills (transferable skills), for example, the ability to learn fast in new situations, to work independently, and to analyse, evaluate and interpret data. You should be able to identify and articulate the skills that you feel you are gaining through your studies. While you are busy with your studies, you need to reflect continuously on how you could apply the skills that you are learning to contribute to your professional development and who will be able to benefit from what you already know.

## Some important psychology-related skills

### **Project management**

Planning

Resource management

Budgeting

Reporting

### **Life-long learning skills**

Willingness to learn

Information management

Access information

Interest in ideas

Curiosity

Desire to learn

### **Communication skills**

Reading

Writing

Presenting

Negotiating

Facilitating

Report-writing

Team collaboration

Networking

Multicultural awareness

### **IT and data skills**

Spreadsheets

Word processing

Internet

Databases

Presentations

Web 2.0 tools

Analysing and presenting complex data sets

### **Social responsibility**

Sustainability

Environmental responsibility

Ethical awareness

Community involvement

### **Research**

Networking

Data mining

Knowledge management

Data collection

Critical evaluation

Data analysis

Applying multiple perspectives to psychological issues

### **Problem-solving and reasoning skills**

**Interpersonal skills: appreciating diversity**

## Sources

Griesel, H., & Parker, B. (2009). Graduate attributes: A baseline study on South African graduates from the perspective of employers. Higher Education South African & The South African Qualifications Authority: Pretoria.

HE Academy. Student Employability profiles. Available: [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/student\\_employability\\_profiles\\_apr07.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/student_employability_profiles_apr07.pdf)

Louw, J. (n.d.). Careers in applied psychology. Retrieved from <http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/psychology/career/CareersApplied.pdf>.

Reardon, R. C., Lenz, J. G., Sampson, J. P., & Peterson, G. W. (2009). Career Development and Planning: A comprehensive approach (3rd ed.). Ohio, USA: Cengage Learning.

## Skills reflection

Module passed in the last semester	Skills developed	How can I use the skills to add value to an organisation, or help them solve specific problems?

## Start with a career portfolio

Your career management portfolio could help you keep track of the information that you need to gather to manage your career. It could include information about yourself, job opportunities, occupational information, and the different fields in psychology. Learn more about compiling a career portfolio here:

<http://bit.ly/2WaPes7>.

## Work experience for psychology students

Becoming a professional psychologist is very competitive. Each university that trains psychologists selects approximately 8-14 students annually for the various training programmes. It is therefore important for you to consider how you will increase your chances of being selected for a postgraduate training programme.

### Volunteer work

As a volunteer, your studies in Psychology will come alive and you will be enriched and in a position to build up an important network of people who could comment on your professional abilities. You may be wondering how volunteering is related to your studies and your career. We would encourage responsible volunteering where the organisation and community that you are supporting benefit. You also have the opportunity to apply and further develop your skills and knowledge as a student to support

the community. Your volunteer work links to your career vision and planning: before you volunteer, think about where you would want to invest your effort.

Volunteering will help you to:

- figure out whether a specific field of work is for you or not;
- find out information about a specific field;
- connect with others and maintain relationships;

- network with others in your field of interest.

Some questions to think about:

- Which organisations or communities would benefit from my skills and knowledge?
- How would this organisation or community contribute to my career vision?
- What conduct is expected of a professional in this organisation and in my future career?
- What are you hoping to gain from your volunteer activities?

Your volunteer work could lead to other opportunities, so it is important to treat it professionally: keep to your commitment, communicate when you cannot volunteer, and update your portfolio with examples of what you have learned and achieved. As a volunteer, you are already working as a professional – you need to conduct yourself as you would conduct yourself in a work environment. As you are volunteering, you are building your reputation (your “brand”): you would not want to build a reputation as an exploiter or as an unreliable worker.

Your volunteer environment will help you to develop what is valued in professional environments. This includes punctuality, problem-solving, and effective communication. In this sense, volunteering contributes to your development as a unique graduate: one who has subject-specific knowledge and an understanding of professional workplace behaviour. The one thing to remember about volunteering is that your conduct needs to be accountable and ethical. Consider that you are contributing to the community and at the same time you are building your skill sets for the workplace – you need to balance self-interest with that which may benefit others. Your work within the community must be done with the utmost respect.

Identify volunteer opportunities in your area through conversations with members of your community. Also, search for organisations online. Make a list of the organisations that you would want to contact about exploring volunteer opportunities:

Volunteers normally work under the supervision of psychologists and social workers. Organisations making use of

volunteer counsellors include Lifeline (counselling); SADAG (South African Depression and Anxiety Group); Nicro, Childline and Rape Crisis (abused women and children); Alcoholics Anonymous (addictions); Hospice Association of SA and St Luke's Hospice (death and dying); FAMSA and ACVV (relationships/family counselling); ATICC and AIDS Helpline (HIV/AIDS) and Triangle Health Care Project (sexuality).

Note that being trained as a volunteer counsellor, without professional psychological qualifications, does not qualify you to be a professional counsellor or psychologist or to practice independently. However, volunteering helps you to contribute to a community and learn valuable skills. Volunteering will allow you to clarify

your interests related to helping others and expanding and strengthening your network.

Check which volunteer organisations are active in your community. The Department of Social Development has a complete list of non-profit organisations in each province available on their website at <http://www.npo.gov.za/PublicNpo/Npo>.

Unisa's Directorate: Counselling and Career Development runs a Student Mentor Programme that provides senior Unisa students with an opportunity to be mentored in terms of their graduateness skills. In turn, students are empowered to provide support to others. Visit the website at <http://bit.ly/2MQBnpE> for more information.

## Activity

Identify volunteer work activity

**Make a list of the organisations that you would want to contact about exploring volunteer opportunities.**

**What are you hoping to gain from your volunteer experience?**

**What can you contribute to an organisation?**

## Enhance your employability

Your employability refers to your ability to gain initial employment, maintain employment, and obtain new employment if required. In simple terms, employability is about being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. There are many aspects related to maximising your employability,

including managing your personal brand, job-searching skills, networking, writing a CV, writing a cover letter, including networking, CV-writing, cover letter writing, and how to manage job interviews.



## Why is your employability important?

Today's careers are not what they used to be: Lifetime employment is a thing of the past: It is not unusual for an individual to hold about six different occupations during their careers, each with several jobs. The reasons for this are technological advances, globalisation, economic shifts, and changing social norms. Careers are boundaryless: your career can cut across different industries and

companies. Instead of seeing your career as a ladder, you can view it as a web. Career success is defined in many different ways: The big house and fancy car are not the only measures of success. Some people choose to follow a more balanced lifestyle with more time to spend with their family. Where, when, and for whom you work are not necessarily fixed: Flexible work hours, working from home, part-time, temporary and contract work are all part of today's world of work.

Source: Greenberg, J. & Baron, A. Behaviour in Organisations. 8th edition. Pearson Education Inc: New Jersey.

## How can you develop your employability skills?

- Work through the information and activities on the *Prepare for job opportunities* section of the Directorate: Counselling and Career Development website (<http://bit.ly/2ufeSA6>).
- *The Muse* career website (<https://www.themuse.com/advice>) provides career advice related to your career questions.
- The Monster website (<http://www.monster.co.uk/>) provides several articles related to employability issues. Click on "Career Resources" and "Browse Career Advice" (at top of the page) to access career-related information.

## Self-confidence

Your personal experiences (for example, your relationships with your parents and siblings; how you related to peers, and how you compare yourself to others) shape your self-confidence. Low self-confidence in all areas of your life, mainly how you negotiate relationships, your career, and your studies.

How much you believe in yourself or you do not believe in yourself affects your success in your career and studies. Low self-confidence affects your career and your studies in several ways:

- Your confidence determines your effort and determination in terms of your studies and your career. For example, if you do not believe that you can pass a particular module, you also do not spend time studying, since when you start studying you feel like “what is the use – I will fail in any case”.
- If you keep on telling yourself that, you are not capable of completing your qualification because you have low self-

confidence, challenges in your studies act as confirmation that you are a failure. You will then also not go out and get help since you do not think that it will make a difference – you are not hopeful that this could change how you perform.

- Even when you experience challenges that are normal for all students to experience, you tell yourself it is a confirmation that you cannot make it.
- You spend disproportional amounts of time and energy gathering evidence or reinforcing your belief that you cannot make it so that it becomes a reality.
- When you do things well or when you get positive results you deny them. You find it hard to accept that positive things can happen in your life and you find external factors that have contributed to the results or success.
- You will make statements such as “Maybe I was just lucky this

time – the other candidates did not accept the offer due to a low salary offer” or “Maybe the lecturer felt sorry for me.”

- When you are presented with an opportunity, you will not use it since you are concerned about failing.
- You project a negative attitude towards yourself and others. You find it hard to appreciate the strengths of others and you are critical of others.
- You will not take risks to advance in your career because you think you will not make it. For example, you will not apply for an internship because you decide that you will not be selected even though you meet all the requirements.
- You are always concerned about how other people negatively think about you- you will not go and talk to the lecturer or ask other people because you think they will think you are stupid.

On the other hand when you have a healthy self-image:

- You accept yourself for who you are and you acknowledge that there are things you do well and things you do not do well.
- You use your strengths in one area to build your self-confidence in other areas.
- You acknowledge things people appreciate about you since you use these as a reaffirmation to develop areas where you feel you have room for growth.
- You believe you can achieve your desired career goals and you put your energy and resources toward your vision. This affects your studies in that you can talk to others about your study-related challenges and you are proactive in terms of managing your studies since you know why you are studying.
- You can recognise and make use of presenting opportunities since you believe that you can contribute.
- You can help others understand your potential and you appreciate how others could contribute to your development.
- You are more able to deal effectively with feedback on

your performance since you can integrate the feedback with your self-knowledge.

## How do I build healthy self-confidence?

Building self-confidence is a process – it is like building a house: Building your confidence starts with small, practical actions. As you get feedback about your actions, you take some positive things out of it about yourself and appreciate the things you can do well and those you have to develop.

Spend some time each day writing down things you did yesterday that you can be proud of and things you would want to do differently.

Give yourself time to develop – a house cannot be built in a day.

Most importantly, it must not be about thinking about things, but about doing things. This will not always be easy, but you need to take risks and test what you can do and also see the results of your actions. For example, if you want information about your career, take a risk, and send an e-mail to your lecturer with questions to see

what the response is. As you take risks, you need to change your attitude about how you view challenges and yourself. You will start thinking differently about challenges: that they are not meant to prove you as a failure, but rather to learn and discover new things about yourself.

You need to be able to embrace failure as part of the process to succeed. Your failures do not define you as a person: Even when you fail, you do not internalise the experience that you are a failure. You learn from the experience and you try again.

We want you to keep in mind your three circles (career, studies, and personal life) and make sure that you use one of the circles where you have more positive experiences to influence the other areas. For example, in your studies, you are getting good results and you are capable. However, you

feel demotivated every time you think about your family situation.

Think about how the fact that you are succeeding with your studies could affect your career. Could it make you hopeful that you will be able to find a good job and then change your family's situation in the future?

Thinking more about the things you can control (for example, your studies and how this will affect your career), enables you to minimise the sense of helplessness in terms of your family situation. When you focus on the things you can control, you create a positive outlook on yourself, your life, and others.

## My career learning plan

Your career learning plan will help you to stay focused on what you still need to do to find out more about your career development. The career learning plan focuses on the following questions: What is the information you still need? How will you get this information and by when?

Further information needed	Steps to get this information	When?
<i>Where do Monitoring and Evaluation practitioners work in SA?</i>	Start with Google search	14 April
	Talk to a lecturer about referring me to someone who works in this field	15 April

# Frequently-asked questions

I did not obtain an average of 60% for my undergraduate studies at Unisa and now I do not qualify to continue with my Honours degree. What now?

You will not be able to repeat modules that you have already passed at Unisa. You will need to explore the option of completing modules for non-degree purposes at another university as part of their occasional studies programmes. Occasional studies may be done full-time or part-time

depending on the course. Contact the application sections of these institutions for further information. Also, use this brochure to explore other career and study options should you not be able to continue with further studies in psychology or industrial and organisational psychology.

## I did not complete psychology or industrial and organisational psychology as a major for my undergraduate degree and I now want to study further in this field. What now?

Unisa currently restricts enrolment for non-degree purposes due to the implementation of the new enrolment plan. Even though there may still be circumstances where students could qualify to study modules for non-degree purposes, you need to prepare yourself that this may not be a possibility at Unisa. Your first step is to obtain a permission letter from the Department of Psychology or Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and then apply online for admission to the Honours degree (even if you know you do not qualify for direct admission). The College of Graduate Studies (CGS) (which administers the applications for admission and registrations for the Honours qualifications) will then refer the admission records to the relevant academic department. Depending on the decision from the academic department, CGS will then change the

admission qualification from Honours to non-degree purposes and will inform the student on the module(s) to register.

Also, you can explore options at other institutions. Some universities offer modules for non-degree purposes as part of their occasional studies programmes. Occasional studies may be done full-time or part-time depending on the course. Contact different universities for further information.

## I want to be a child psychologist – what should I study?

You will need to ask yourself from what perspective and in which contexts you wish to work with children.

Educational psychologists deal mostly with the problems encountered by children in the education context. Their tasks range from testing learners' intelligence, aptitude, interests, and personality, to assisting learners with learning problems, to career guidance. They might also assist teachers to become more aware of the social factors influencing learners and provide guidance to parents regarding their children.

Clinical psychologists work directly with individuals at all developmental levels (including children), using a wide range of assessment and intervention methods to promote mental health and alleviate discomfort and maladjustment.

Interventions in clinical psychology are directed at preventing, treating, and correcting emotional conflicts, personality disturbances, psychopathology, and the skill deficits underlying human distress or dysfunction.

## Why are only a limited number of students selected each year for the professional training programmes at the Master's level?

These programmes require intensive training that can only be provided by suitably qualified academic staff. Since these departments do not have unlimited resources in terms of staff, only a few students are selected each year so that they can receive quality training and supervision.



## What do I do if I am not selected for a professional training programme (such as the MA in Clinical Psychology)?

Don't let this discourage you from exploring the options available to you with a completed degree and/or Honours degree. You have already learned many skills that are relevant to different environments. For example, use your counselling and communication skills to facilitate youth groups to talk about issues confronting them in their community. Volunteering would be an important way for you to develop practical skills and network with other organisations and people who can recognise your skills and offer you other opportunities you might not have thought of previously. You can read more about career options for psychology students who do not continue with professional training options in a booklet that was compiled by Johann Louw at the University of Cape Town available at <http://www.psychology.uct.ac.za/what-can-i-do-my-psychology-degree>.

## What selection criteria are used for the MA Clinical Psychology programme?

The first round of selection is usually paper-based. Each university will have different types of information that will be requested from you. If you are invited to the selection interviews, selectors will usually observe your ability to communicate, how you relate to others in the group, and deal with the pressure of the selection process. No one can tell you what to prepare, except that you go and allow yourself to be part of the selection process. Some Universities have specific criteria such as proficiency in three South African languages and community work experience. The application information and forms for programmes at different universities will also inform you of whether additional requirements apply.

## I am not close to Pretoria – can I apply for the MA in Clinical Psychology?

Unisa students need to attend regular clinics, workshops, and group discussions, and complete practical work. It is therefore not possible to complete this programme unless you live close to Pretoria.

## Would I be able to practice as a counsellor/psychologist in another country?

Each country and state or province within that country would have different requirements for individuals to practice as counsellors and psychologists. Educational systems are also different. For example, in some countries, you need to have a Doctorate to practice as a psychologist, whereas in others it is a Master's degree. It is recommended that you check with the licensing board/ organisation in the country that you are interested in to find out about the requirements. In South Africa, all psychological practitioners have to be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

## Unisa is currently not offering the BPsych equivalent programme for registered counsellors/ psychometrists – what now?

The undergraduate and Honours degrees in Psychology and Industrial and Organisational Psychology are accredited and the options of doing a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology, Research Psychology, or Industrial and Organisational Psychology and Master's by dissertation remain open after the Honours degree in psychology. You may contact other institutions to enquire about completing training to register as a counsellor or psychometrist. Each institution has

requirements in terms of registering for this programme, even if you have completed your Honours degree. It is important to start thinking about other options you could pursue given your qualifications, skills, interests, and career vision. You are not limited only to qualifying as a registered counsellor/ psychometrist. Use the information and activities in this book to explore more options. View a list of accredited universities and qualifications in South Africa in terms of training in psychology on the HPCSA website at

[https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB\\_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf](https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/PSB_2019/ACCREDITED%20UNIVERSITIES%20IN%20SOUTH%20AFRICA%202018.pdf).

## What practical issues should I consider in terms of the Master's in Psychology (Clinical Psychology)?

Only 6-10 students are selected per year for the Clinical programme (at all Universities that offer this training). If you are not selected, do you have alternative options to further your career development? Do you have support for dealing with not being selected? Financial planning: you will be studying full-time for one or two years. Have you planned how you will fund your studies? Accommodation? Transport? Study-related expenses such as photocopying, printing, and

access to the Internet? How will you plan for their support if you have been earning an income and others depend on you? Support during your studies: The demands of the training require that you need to have substantial support from others - think about people you could talk to about some of the challenges. It might be people who have completed the programme, or just people who could create a space for you to share your experiences.

# Career development services at Unisa

The Unisa Directorate: Counselling and Career Development offers career-, academic- and personal counselling services to Unisa students and the broader community. You can talk to a counsellor about:

- **Career decisions.** I am not sure which career path to follow; I don't know which qualification would be best; I want to change my career direction...
- **Career information.** How can I find out more about a career in ...
- **Employability.** How do I market myself to employers? How can I look for work? How can I compile an effective CV? How do I go about networking with others? How do I put together my career portfolio? How can I meet potential employers? How can I improve my interview skills?)
- **My studies at Unisa.** How can I get started with my studies? How do I plan my studies? How can I study more effectively? I don't feel motivated to continue with my studies... I feel worried about preparing for/ writing the exams. I failed my exams – what now? I need to improve my reading/ writing/ numeracy skills
- **Personal issues.** How can I have better relationships with others? How can I cope more effectively with issues that affect my studies?

Visit our website at <http://www.unisa.ac.za/counselling> to access many self-help resources, or talk to a counsellor by e-mail to [counselling@unisa.ac.za](mailto:counselling@unisa.ac.za).

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