

**MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY (Coursework)  
(Selection Degree) (90119)**

**INFORMATION BROCHURE**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for taking an interest in our MA in Clinical Psychology Programme at the University of South Africa. Our programme is comprehensive and runs over a two-year full time (face-to-face) period. Our MA Clinical Psychology Degree is a professional degree that leads to registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) as a Clinical Psychologist (under the auspices of the HPCSA, provided that you adhere to all the requirements of both the academic institution (Unisa) and the HPCSA, including that you pass and successfully complete the MA degree, successfully complete a 12-month internship at an accredited institution, pass the HPCSA board exam and complete a 12-month community service year).

The programme is comprehensive, and rigorous, and requires students who are selected to be dedicated, hard-working, and committed to being trained as a clinical psychologist. In addition to the academic requirements of the programme, there is a strong emphasis on both personal and professional development.

**2. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Admission to apply for the Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology programme is open to candidates in possession of an Honours degree in Psychology or an accredited BPsych degree, with a minimum of 60% average. Students who also hold an appropriate postgraduate diploma or a 480-credit bachelor's degree with a minimum of 96 credits at NQF level 8 in psychology with an average of 60% can apply for admission into the programme. A student who is admitted on the strength of a postgraduate diploma or a 480 credit bachelor's degree with a minimum of 96 credits at NQF level 8 and who has not completed a module in research methodology may be required to complete such a module at NQF level 8 for non-degree purposes (NDP) before he/she will be allowed to apply. International students must meet the English language requirement. The candidate must have obtained a minimum of **60%** average for their honours in psychology degree/BPsych Degree to be eligible to apply. The programme is competitive, and we have a significant number of applicants per year, and so only those applicants with a minimum of 60% average will be considered. According to the HPCSA, candidates with a criminal record, or criminal charges against them, are not eligible to apply, and therefore cannot be admitted to the programme. You will be required to submit a police clearance certificate with your application (no third-party certificates will be accepted). A candidate should live within easy reach of the main campus of the University of South Africa in Muckleneuk, Pretoria, for the duration of the course as students are required to be available for training purposes five days a week, from



Monday to Friday from 08h00-until the close of the working day. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent health and safety regulations, a large portion of the 2020 academic year was conducted online. The 2021 academic year will be a hybrid of both online and on campus teaching, however, when regulations permit, training will continue on campus. Thus, applicants should be prepared to relocate if selected.

### 3. APPLICATIONS

Applications for the MA Clinical Psychology Masters Programme open on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2021, and closes promptly on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2021, 16h00. Please apply online and ensure that you submit all the necessary documentation (you will be informed of what documents to submit in the online application forms). No hard copy applications will be accepted. In addition, incomplete applications will not be considered. You can access the online application at

[https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_a4X2d88Gj7gIng1](https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a4X2d88Gj7gIng1) . As part of the online application process, you are required to select two referees, who will be required to complete referee forms. The referees that you select should be known to you in an academic or professional capacity, who can comment on certain aspects of your skill set and characteristics. Referees should not be a personal acquaintance, family member or friend. The referee forms can be accessed at [https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1YLHcA29DnWLACF](https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1YLHcA29DnWLACF).

**Please note: NO** late or incomplete application forms will be accepted. It is also your responsibility to ensure that the referees you have selected submit their referee forms on time. Incomplete or late referee forms will not be considered, and thus your application will not be considered.

### 4. SELECTION

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subsequent lock-down and health and safety regulations in 2020, the 2020 selection process was conducted online, via Microsoft Teams. Preparations will be made for face-to-face interviews in 2021, however, if necessary, selections may be conducted online. Applicants will be informed of any changes and the logistics of selection week if invited for interviews (if invited for selections, you will be notified by email approximately 2-3 weeks before the interviews). Selection week will be conducted from the 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

Due to the intensive nature of the course, only a limited number of students are selected annually (approximately 10 annually). This section attempts to outline the selection procedures in a transparent manner. Understandably, the selection process can be stressful and challenging, however, in order to ensure a fair process, the selection procedures are rigorous.

Students who are interested in applying for the course must complete the online application form first and ensure that all the relevant documentation is submitted on time. Instructions will be provided on the online application form, and you will be guided through the online application process and the submission of supporting documents. Remember, incomplete applications will **not** be considered.

The first round of selections entails a thorough review of application forms by several members of the selection and training team. This is our first introduction to you as potential applicants, and so keep this in mind when you complete the application form. Applicants who are short-listed from their online applications forms will be invited for the second round of selection interviews to be held at the main campus in Muckleneuk, Pretoria. Being short-listed at this stage does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. The initial group invited to round two will be split into two smaller groups, each group will then be interviewed either on the Monday or the Tuesday of selection week. Applicants will be informed as to the relevant day that they should be present for the second round of the selection process should they have been short-listed. Being short-listed at this stage does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. If successful, applicants from both groups (Monday and Tuesday groups) will then be invited back to attend round three of selections, which will be held on Wednesday. Being short-listed at this stage does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. Only those applicants who are short-listed on the Wednesday will be invited back for the fourth round of selections to be held on Thursday (and possibly Friday). We will continue the selection process until a final decision has been made as to the successful applicants. A full week, Monday to Friday, is reserved for the selection process in Pretoria, and so applicants therefore need to make themselves available for the entire week should they be invited for the follow up rounds. Selection week will take place from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021. Should you be short-listed at any time, you will be informed via email. The interviews conducted on campus range from group interviews, group activities, written tasks and individual interviews. These are at the discretion of the selection and training team. Remember, being short-listed on any given day does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. As a reminder, applicants who are selected for interviews will be informed closer to the time regarding whether the interviews will be conducted in person on campus, or online. This will be dependent on the national regulations and state of the pandemic.

Due to the significantly large number of students who apply, you are not guaranteed a place in the course even if you meet the minimum requirements. Our selection process involves scrutiny of the application forms, your academic record, the referee letters, and potential candidate's performance in the selection interviews. In addition, we ensure that we adhere to policies of transformation and diversity in selecting the final successful group of applicants.

Application forms can be accessed online:

([https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_a4X2d88Gj7glnq1](https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a4X2d88Gj7glnq1)). All

applications must be done online, and no hard-copy applications will be accepted. Referee forms can be accessed online at

[https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1YLHcA29DnWLACF](https://unisapsychology.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1YLHcA29DnWLACF)

Applications must reach the University **by no later** than 16:00 on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2021.

Late applications will **not** be considered. Also note, it is your responsibility to ensure that the referee forms have been submitted. An incomplete application will not be considered.

#### 4.1 THE COURSE

The curriculum covers theoretical, practical and research training, and extends over two full-time academic years, **excluding internship**. All modules must be successfully

completed and passed, with a minimum of 50% to obtain the degree. A student who is already in possession of a masters or doctoral degree in Psychology may, with the approval of Senate, submit a comprehensive research report in the place of the dissertation of limited scope. A breakdown of the modules is included in the table below:

YEAR 1		YEAR 2	
Module Code	Module Name	Module Code	Module Name
PYC5901	Ethics, Legislation and professional psychological practice	PYC5906	Psychological and Psycho-legal Assessment
PYC5902	Ecosystemic Theories	PYC5907	Neuropsychology and neuropsychological Assessment
PYC5903	Psychopathology and psychodiagnostics	PYC5908	African Epistemologies
PYC5904	Psychological Assessment	PYC5909	Family Therapy: Theory and practice
PYC5905	Child and Adult Therapeutic Skills and strategies	PYC5912	Psycho-Legal Intervention and Practice
PYC5911	Community Mental Health Care Practice	PYC5913	Clinical Psychotherapeutic Practice
MPCHS91	Research Proposal	PYC5914	Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy
		DLCPS91	Dissertation of limited scope

We recognize your previous learning and rely on the knowledge you gained in your undergraduate and honours degrees. Each module must be passed with a minimum of 50% in order to progress to the following year. Students may be excluded from the program at any time on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress, unethical behaviour, and/or behaviour considered to be inappropriate for professional psychology practice (regardless of academic performance).

Due to the demands of the course, successful applicants are not permitted to do any other full-time or part-time work during the 2-years of the programme. In addition, you are responsible for funding your studies. This means that you need sufficient funds for the academic fees, prescribed books and academic requirements, and items such as rent, household expenses, groceries, daily travel to Unisa and the weekly clinics, study registration, books, computer equipment, internet access and printing, etc. Unisa bursaries are only available in the second year of study, but only if you have passed the first year of the course, as well as the proposal module (MPCHS91) successfully. Access to a bursary is not guaranteed, and is at the discretion of the university, and you should thus plan accordingly.

## **THEORY**

The theoretical aspects of the programme are covered in weekly lectures, seminars and workshops, and include (but not limited to):

- Ecosystemic Psychology
- Psychotherapy (child, individual, group and family psychotherapy according to the systemic and other theoretical models)
- Psychological Assessment (test administration, scoring, interpretation and report writing with regards to various psychological instruments for example: intelligence measurements and personality assessment)
- Psychopathology and Psychodiagnostics (diagnosis according to the DSM-5 classification system and the ICD-10 classification system, as well as explanations of psychopathology according to various perspectives).
- Neuropsychology (introduction to neuropsychology and neuropsychological assessment and report writing)
- African Epistemology (integration of African perspectives to psychology and health/pathology, research, and community, etc)
- Psycho-legal Psychology
- Community Psychology (assessment of and interventions in community and transcultural contexts)
- Research (various research designs and methods)
- Ethics and professional psychological practices (rules and procedures according to Health Professions Council of South Africa)

## **PRACTICAL**

This includes the application of all the theoretical aspects covered in 4.1 in various contexts, such as:

- Unisa Psychotherapy Clinic
- Community based practical sites in and around Pretoria/Johannesburg
- Psychiatric and Psycho-legal practical sites
- Clinic and case management
- Liaison with referral agents and other related professionals
- Training in report writing
- Group dynamics through experiential group processes

All practical work is done under strict supervision by the course trainers.

## **RESEARCH**

- Weekly research seminars focusing on the theoretical and practical aspects of research are conducted during your first year of training
- In addition, first year clinical students will be required to present their research proposal defenses; and second year clinical students will be required to present their research to a panel of trainers and members of the department
- A dissertation of limited scope is planned and executed in collaboration with a supervisor. In addition, all students are expected to complete a publishable article based on the dissertation of limited scope

- Completion of the degree depends on the acceptance of the dissertation, in conjunction with passing all modules with a minimum of 50% each.

## **5. PRESENTATION OF THE COURSE**

### **5.1 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TRAINING**

It is assumed that students are well acquainted with basic theoretical knowledge as a result of their undergraduate and honours studies. Weekly lectures, theoretical seminars and workshops take place during both years of the course. The practical work consists of weekly workshops and regular supervised practice in assessment and therapeutic skills in various contexts. During workshops, practical demonstration and application of various theories and techniques take place. Students are required to do weekly supervised practical work at the above-mentioned sites (these sites are subject to change). For supervisory and self-evaluating purposes audio-visual recordings of practical work are required.

### **5.2 THE DISSERTATION OF LIMITED SCOPE**

For the degree to be completed within the prescribed period, the dissertation has to be submitted for examination before the 30th of October of the second year of training. In order to conform to these requirements, it is essential that a dissertation title as well as the research proposal be approved and officially registered by no later than September of the first year of study. Once your supervisor is satisfied with your proposal, it must be reviewed and approved by the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee (dHDC) and the Departmental and/or College Ethics Review Committee before you can commence with the research dissertation.

### **5.3 ASSESSMENT**

As part of the evaluation process, students will be expected to submit individual and group assignments, portfolios, written assignments and tests, other related projects, as well as attend oral examinations twice a year. The course is designed as a continuous assessment programme, which means that students will be evaluated and assessed throughout the year, and all assessments count towards the final mark per module. This also implies that there are **no** supplementary exams, should a student fail. Candidate's progression and performance is monitored throughout the year. Trainers meet regularly to discuss, evaluate and monitor each candidate's performance. If a student fails a module, you will not be permitted to progress to the next year of training.

## **6. EXAMINATION**

As per the continuous assessment design of the programme, students are assessed throughout the year, and all assessments contribute to the final marks of each respective module. In the middle and at the end of both academic years, oral and written examinations are conducted. The end-year oral examinations are moderated by an external examiner, to ensure that students achieve the necessary competencies to progress to the next year of training. A student may not enter the second year of study

unless all first-year modules are passed with a minimum of 50%. If a module is failed, you will not be permitted to continue into the second year. Likewise, a student may not enter internship unless all second-year modules are passed with a minimum of 50% each. After successful completion of the theoretical and practical examinations at the end of the second year, as well as after the successful completion of a dissertation, the relevant MA degree is conferred.

## **7. INTERNSHIP**

In order to conform to the requirements for professional registration laid down by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) a candidate must, in addition to the MA in Clinical Psychology Degree, successfully complete an internship of 12 months' duration at an accredited training institution and serve another 12 months' community service at an approved and supervised site. Please refer to [www.hpcsa.co.za](http://www.hpcsa.co.za) for details of accredited internship and community placement sites. The internship is not part of the MA Clinical Psychology course, but is a requirement for registration with the HPCSA. The course and the internship may not be done concurrently. Please note that according to the HPCSA rules and regulations, interns must have completed **both** their degree (which implies successful completion of the coursework and research dissertation) as well as the board exam before commencing with the community service year.

## **8. CONTACT**

**The Programme Coordinator is Dr Nikki Themistocleous (Ph.D.)**

Department of Psychology

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**The Programme Administrator is Mrs Endriette Meyer**

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**The Postgraduate Assistance is Ms Thandiwe Ndaba**

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For more information please contact the course administrator, Mrs Endriette Meyer at [meyerew@unisa.ac.za](mailto:meyerew@unisa.ac.za) or (012) 429-8307.

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