

**College of Education:  
Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies (CIS)  
2027 research niche (focus) areas**

- ICT in education/educational media
- Open distance learning (ODL) and e-learning (ODEL)
- Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS)
- Curriculum theory and practice
- Curriculum development
- Assessment of teaching and learning
- Experiential learning (work-integrated learning/teaching practice)
- Curriculum and feminism
- Education, pedagogy and practice
- Curriculum of Social Sciences, Life Sciences, History, Accounting, Business Studies, Economics and other school subjects
- Teacher professional development/mentorship/in-service training
- Quality assurance in education
- Decolonisation pedagogy
- Gratitude in education
- Adult education curriculum
- Environmental education curriculum
- Mathematics education curriculum
- Curriculum and citizenship education
- Indigenous education
- Teaching practice in an ODL context
- Teaching and learning
- Experiential learning (work-integrated learning/teaching practice)
- Open education resources (OERs)
- e-Portfolios
- Teaching poetry in HL/FAL English classrooms
- Teaching literature in HL/FAL English classrooms
- The role of textbooks and alternative materials in the English classroom
- English language teaching (HL/FAL)
- Responsible citizenship
- Human rights and democracy
- Language teaching
- Multi-grade teaching
- Social media (blogs, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc) as teaching strategies
- Self-directive learning and self-regulated learning
- Game-based learning
- Cooperative learning
- Alternative assessment

## Research projects that postgraduate students can participate in

| Name of project | Brief description of the project | Project leader | No of available positions for MEd students for 2027 | No of available positions for PhD students for 2027 |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| -               | -                                | -              | -                                                   | -                                                   |

## Focused M&D programmes

| Name of programme                                                                  | Qualification code | Curriculum                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Master of Education in Curriculum Studies                                          | 98434              | Research proposal module and full research dissertation                    |
| Master of Education in Open Distance Learning                                      | 98999              | Four coursework modules, research proposal module, and a mini dissertation |
| PhD in Education (Streams: Curriculum Studies – CUS; Open Distance learning – ODL) | 90019              | Research proposal module and full research thesis                          |

## Details of individual supervisors and their research interests or fields of expertise

| Name of supervisor | Research interest/field of expertise                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | No of positions for MEd students still available for 2027 | No of positions for PhD students still available for 2027 |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Prof P Biccard     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mathematics education</li> <li>Teaching practice</li> <li>Teacher professional development</li> <li>Distance education</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                      | 1                                                         | 1                                                         |
| Prof EC du Plessis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum studies (theory and development)</li> <li>Open distance learning (ODL) and e-learning (ODeL)</li> <li>The CAPS</li> <li>Distance education in a community of practice</li> <li>Teaching practice in an ODeL context</li> <li>Assessment of teaching and learning</li> </ul> | 0                                                         | 0                                                         |
| Dr NP Dlamini      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geography education</li> <li>Curriculum studies</li> <li>Teacher development</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Social Sciences</li> <li>ICT in education</li> </ul>                                                                                                                         | 1                                                         | 1                                                         |
| Mr W Flanagan      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Education (accounting, business studies, economics and EMS)</li> <li>Curriculum studies</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                            | 0                                                         | 0                                                         |

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |   |   |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative learning</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |   |   |
| Dr NB Gcabashe  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commerce education (Business Studies, Economics &amp; Accounting)</li> <li>• ICT integration in education</li> <li>• Curriculum Studies</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODeL context</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                       | 1 | 1 |
| Dr D Lees       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiential learning</li> <li>• Teacher professional development/mentorship/in-service training</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODL context</li> <li>• Teaching and Learning</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                              | 0 | 1 |
| Prof MW Lumadi  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum and Instruction</li> <li>• Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS)</li> <li>• Business studies which includes economics subject methodologies</li> <li>• Economics education</li> <li>• IKS and ECD</li> <li>• Human resource management</li> <li>• Technology-integrated teaching and learning and Teaching practice</li> </ul>                                    | 1 | 2 |
| Dr SB Mahlambi  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of teaching and learning</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Education, pedagogy and practice</li> <li>• Curriculum and citizenship education</li> <li>• Mathematics education curriculum</li> <li>• Curriculum theory and practice</li> </ul>                                                                                                                       | 2 | 1 |
| Prof MM Maja    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching English first additional language</li> <li>• Teacher development</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODeL context</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 0 | 0 |
| Dr TB Maphumulo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiential learning (work-integrated learning/teaching practice)</li> <li>• Teacher professional development/mentorship/in-service training</li> <li>• Education, pedagogy, and practice</li> <li>• Teaching &amp; learning and inclusion in the InterSen Phase</li> <li>• Mathematics teaching in the Intermediate phase</li> <li>• Barriers to learning and interventions</li> </ul> | 3 | 3 |
| Prof AS Mawela  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open distance learning (ODL) and e-learning (ODeL)</li> <li>• Assessment of teaching and learning</li> <li>• Curriculum of social sciences,</li> <li>• Teacher professional development/mentorship/in-service training</li> <li>• Environmental education curriculum</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Open education resources (OERs)</li> </ul>                             | 2 | 2 |
| Prof S Meeran   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematics education curriculum</li> <li>• Curriculum theory and practice</li> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2 | 1 |

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |   |   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education, pedagogy and practice</li> <li>• Decolonisation education</li> <li>• Indigenous education</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |   |   |
| Prof TI Mogashoa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> <li>• Social sciences</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Teaching practice</li> <li>• Adult education</li> <li>• English First Additional Language</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 1 | 2 |
| Prof MP Modise   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> <li>• Technology-integrated teaching and learning</li> <li>• Student support in ODL/e-learning</li> <li>• Teacher professional development</li> <li>• Academic professional development</li> <li>• ODL</li> <li>• e-learning</li> <li>• e-Portfolios</li> <li>• MOOCs</li> <li>• Digital transformation</li> <li>• Flipped class pedagogy</li> <li>• Technology Adoption</li> <li>• Systematic Review</li> </ul> | 1 | 1 |
| Dr MM Moila      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ODeL</li> <li>• Mathematics education</li> <li>• Teacher professional development</li> <li>• Education pedagogy and practice</li> <li>• Instructional design</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 3 | 1 |
| Dr F Mukhati     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Assessment of teaching and learning</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODL context</li> <li>• Teacher professional development</li> <li>• Curriculum of geography and social sciences</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                         | 0 | 1 |
| Prof PK Mudau    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> <li>• Business education (economics, accounting, business studies, EMS)</li> <li>• Teacher professional development</li> <li>• e-Portfolios</li> <li>• E-assessment in open distance e-learning (ODeL)</li> <li>• e-Learning (ODeL)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                   | 0 | 1 |
| Ms K Naidu       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching poetry in HL/FAL English classrooms</li> <li>• Teaching literature in HL/FAL English classrooms</li> <li>• The role of textbooks and alternative materials in the English classroom</li> <li>• English language teaching (HL/FAL)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                    | 1 | 0 |
| Prof VA Nkonyane | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> <li>• Teacher development</li> <li>• Decolonisation pedagogy</li> <li>• Empowering rural schools and schools from disadvantaged backgrounds into centres of excellence</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 2 | 2 |

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |   |   |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
|                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gratitude in education (GiE)</li> <li>• Teaching black learners how to learn vis-a-vis teaching them how to pass</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                  |   |   |
| Dr P Sibisi         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open distance learning (ODL) and e-learning (ODEL)</li> <li>• Experiential learning (work-integrated learning/teaching practice)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                  | 1 | 1 |
| Prof MJ Taole       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODL context</li> <li>• Technology-integrated teaching and learning and teaching practice</li> <li>• Teacher professional development</li> <li>• Language teaching</li> <li>• Multi-grade teaching</li> </ul>                       | 4 | 4 |
| Prof G Van den Berg | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT in education</li> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> <li>• E-learning</li> <li>• Open and distance learning (ODL)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                  | 1 | 1 |
| Dr MX Majola        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open distance learning (ODL) and e-learning (ODEL)</li> <li>• Formative Assessment</li> <li>• E-Portfolios</li> <li>• Business Studies</li> <li>• Accounting Education</li> </ul>                                                                                                            | 2 | 1 |
| Dr MM Moleko        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher professional development/mentorship/in-service training</li> <li>• Mathematics education curriculum</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODL context</li> <li>• Universal Design</li> <li>• Instructional Design</li> </ul>                                                            | 0 | 1 |
| Prof NP Khumalo     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of teaching and learning</li> <li>• Experiential learning (work-integrated learning/teaching practice)</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODL context</li> <li>• Teaching and learning</li> <li>• English language teaching (FAL)</li> <li>• Multigrade teaching</li> </ul>       | 0 | 2 |
| Prof Dumsani Mncube | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum Studies</li> <li>• Climate Change Education</li> <li>• Self-Directed Learning</li> <li>• Decolonised and indigenised curriculum</li> <li>• Technology-integrated teaching and learning</li> <li>• Curriculum of Geography, Environmental Studies and Tourism Education</li> </ul> | 2 | 3 |
| Prof B Plaatjies    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum theory and practice</li> <li>• Curriculum of Language Education</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODL context</li> <li>• Language teaching</li> <li>• Education, pedagogy and practice</li> <li>• Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS) (In languages)</li> </ul>    | 1 | 1 |

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |   |   |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| Prof M Tshelane  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Leadership – Promoting ethical and future-focused curriculum change.</li> <li>• Participatory Research – Using PALAR to co-create solutions with schools and communities.</li> <li>• Postgraduate Supervision – Embedding Ubuntu and ethical co-learning in supervision.</li> <li>• Digital Innovation – Reflect on Mobile Augmented Reality (MAR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for inclusive, transdisciplinary teaching and learning.</li> </ul> | 4 | 2 |
| Dr TM Aphan      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Studies</li> <li>• Accounting Education</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 2 | 0 |
| Dr M Malatji     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language teaching</li> <li>• Technology in Education</li> <li>• Parent teacher collaboration</li> <li>• Teaching Practice in an ODeL context</li> <li>• The teaching of Reading in schools</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 1 | 1 |
| Dr E Chauke      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English language teaching (HL/FAL)</li> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> <li>• Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS)</li> <li>• Assessment practice</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 1 | 1 |
| Dr S Moto        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Teaching practice in an ODL context</li> <li>• Technology-integrated teaching and learning and teaching practice</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2 | 0 |
| Prof CB Mpungose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum studies (theory and development)</li> <li>• Learning platforms (face-to-face, e-learning, blended, hyflex)</li> <li>• Open distance learning (ODL) and e-learning (ODeL)</li> <li>• Technology-integrated teaching and learning</li> <li>• Social media (blogs, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc)</li> <li>• Learning management systems (canvas, moodle and others)</li> <li>• Artificial intelligence (AI)</li> </ul>                                          | 1 | 1 |
| Dr VR Nkuna      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography Education</li> <li>• Social Science Education</li> <li>• Tourism Education</li> <li>• ICT Integration in Education or Computer Enhanced Pedagogy</li> <li>• ODeL</li> <li>• Assessment and Quality Assurance</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 2 | 1 |
| Dr N Sitsha      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open distance learning (ODL) and e-learning (ODeL)</li> <li>• Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS)</li> <li>• Assessment of teaching and learning</li> <li>• ICT integration in education</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 2 | 1 |
| Dr SL Tshabalala | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English language teaching (HL/FAL)</li> <li>• Curriculum of Social Sciences,</li> <li>• History, and other school subjects</li> <li>• Gratitude in education</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 1 | 1 |

|             |                                                                                                                                                                      |   |   |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum theory and practice</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Curriculum and citizenship education</li> </ul> |   |   |
| Dr B Tshite | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Studies</li> <li>• Accounting Education</li> </ul>                                                                 | 1 | 1 |
| Ms N Wongo  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> </ul>                                                                                               | 1 | 1 |

## Models of supervision

The individual and co-supervision models are used. Co-supervision is mostly done for mentoring purposes and multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinary (MIT) research. Some supervisors in the College supervise across departments. Students are therefore advised to review the lecturer profiles of other departments in the College when identifying a suitable supervisor.

## Opportunities regarding external supervision

External supervisors may be considered if a suitable supervisor is not available in the Department. However, this will depend on the Department's financial viability.

## Contact details of the department

Prof MM Maja: Nkoana Simon Radipere Building, 6-64; Tel: 012 429 6201; e-mail: [majam@unisa.ac.za](mailto:majam@unisa.ac.za)

Prof PK Mudau: Nkoana Simon Radipere Building, 6-74; Tel: 012 429 4033; e-mail: [mudaupk@unisa.ac.za](mailto:mudaupk@unisa.ac.za) (CoD)

## Minimum admission requirements for master's and doctoral studies in the College of Education

### Master's of Education

An appropriate Honours Degree in Education, or a postgraduate diploma, or a 480 credit Bachelor of Education Degree with a minimum of 96 credits at NQF level 8. The average mark obtained for the degree shall be 60%. All students should have completed a module in research methods and methodologies as part of their previous level 8 qualification. Students who do not meet these requirements may follow an alternative pathway (e.g. RPL, submitting a portfolio or working through a prescribed reading list – refer to Possible alternative pathways). The application should accord with the various research focus areas/areas of specialisation of the Department, the Department's capacity to provide expert supervision and the requisite qualifications listed above.

### Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education

An appropriate Master's of Education Degree preferably related to the field of study is required. The average mark obtained for the degree shall be 60%. Students who do not meet this requirement may follow an alternative pathway (e.g. RPL or submit a portfolio – refer to Possible alternative pathways). The application should accord with the various research focus areas/areas of specialisation of the Department, the Department's capacity to provide expert supervision and the requisite qualification listed above.

## Supporting documentation to be submitted with the application

### For a master's degree:

All relevant documentation as specified by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support.

Students should submit a short research outline of 600 to 750 words which sketches the intended research project, the research approach, problem statement, a short literature review and a working title. In addition, a list of five scholarly articles and two books that have been consulted to compile the research outline should be provided. These sources should be predominantly recent, with the exception of (classical) theories which can only be found in old sources. The Harvard referencing method should be used. Students should provide a declaration that they have consulted the relevant department's website prior to submitting their application and should propose the name of his/her preferred supervisor. Any form of plagiarism in the research outline is unacceptable.

#### **For a doctorate degree:**

All relevant documentation as specified by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support.

Students should submit a short research outline of 800 to 900 words which sketches the intended research project, problem statement, the research approach, a short literature review and a working title for the project. In addition, a list of ten scholarly articles and four books that have been consulted to compile the research outline should be provided. These sources should be predominantly recent, with the exception of (classical) theories which can only be found in old sources. The Harvard referencing method should be used. Students should provide a declaration that they have consulted the relevant department's website prior to submitting their application and should propose the name of his/her preferred supervisor. Please note that any form of plagiarism in the research outline is unacceptable.

PLEASE NOTE: Students should clearly indicate in their research outline that they intend to focus in their PhD studies on Curriculum Studies or Open Distance Learning. It is therefore imperative that the focus area is indicated in the first heading of the research outline, for example, *PhD in Education, focusing on Open Distance Learning* or *PhD in Education focusing on Curriculum Studies*.

Selection procedures followed in the selection of candidates for postgraduate studies  
All applications will be considered simultaneously by the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee, the chair of the Department, the director of the School and the head of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for purposes of fairness and transparency. Only candidates who meet the minimum eligibility criteria will be considered.

The Department's supervision capacity and availability of external supervisors will be the first and most important selection criterion. No applicant will be admitted without a supervisor being allocated to the student. If a student requests to be supervised by a particular supervisor, but the supervisor is not available because of his/her existing supervision load, it is the Department's prerogative to allocate an alternative supervisor (internal or external). Further selection will be done based on the following selection criteria (the weight attached to each criteria is indicated between brackets as a percentage of the overall evaluation): the student's academic record and experience in research (30%); understanding of research methods as displayed in the research outline (30%); academic writing skills (30%); and addressing of past inequalities by taking race, gender and disability status into consideration (10%).

The Department will keep record of all the applications and reasons will be provided for unsuccessful applications.

#### **Possible alternative pathways**

The following alternative pathways exist for applicants who do not meet the admission requirements:

University of South Africa, College of Education: Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies  
Research focus areas for 2027

- Applicants with degrees that have different structures from normal South African honours or master's degrees, applicants whose degrees do not clearly correspond to the Department's admission requirements (e.g. no mark awarded for previous dissertations, no clear evidence of having completed a research-related module as part of the previous qualification, etc) or applicants who do not meet the admission requirements but who possess applicable experience in research or working experience relevant to the field of interest, that may qualify them for admission to a master's or doctoral degree will be required to apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL). Prior academic and research activities by the applicant will be evaluated in accordance with formal Unisa RPL procedures and the outcome of the RPL process will be submitted to and approved by the chair of the Department. If the approved outcome of the RPL process is positive, the applicant will be allowed to proceed with an application for admission, subject to all terms and conditions governing the admission process.
- Applicants who apply for a master's degree on the strength of a postgraduate diploma or a 480 credit bachelor's degree with a minimum of 96 credits at level 8 and who have not completed a module in research methodology, will be required to obtain knowledge about research methods and methodology by working through a prescribed reading list which will be forwarded to them by the chair of the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee upon request from the student. The student will have to complete and pass a number of assignments related to research methodology. The student may reapply in subsequent years.
- Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirement of 60% may apply for an alternative pathway by submitting a portfolio containing a motivation letter indicating reasons for wanting to do the qualification and for selecting the specific area he/she is applying for, a CV highlighting experience relevant to the field of interest and evidence of engagement with research which could include one or more of the following: a written report of a scholarly nature, a literature survey, a paper presented at a conference, a published article and a research outline sketching the intended research area, a problem statement and a working title. A list of five articles and two books that have been consulted to compile the research outline should be provided.

The following alternative pathways exist for applicants whose applications were unsuccessful:

- Students who have been refused admission because of limited capacity within the Department or because their topic was not viable may reapply in subsequent years. It should be clearly indicated that it is a reapplication. The normal selection process will apply in case of reapplications.
- Students who were unsuccessful because of an inadequate research outline may revise their research outline and may reapply in subsequent years.
- A student whose application was unsuccessful because of inadequate academic writing skills may reapply in subsequent years provided that he/she can provide proof of measures put in place to improve his/her academic writing skills (e.g. enrolled for and passed a course in academic writing skills).

## **Application procedures and when to apply**

The Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies will not make use of differentiated registration dates. Applications for admission and registration will take place in accordance with the dates set by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support for bulk applications and registrations.

Students should:

- apply for a student number, following the steps outlined in <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Apply-for-a-student-number-and-apply-for-admission>
- apply for a space in one of the focus areas using the online application process

Once acceptance in the research focus area and the allocation of a supervisor have been confirmed, they may register for the research proposal module.

Admission requirements, selection criteria and selection information relevant for prospective master's and doctoral students

## **Minimum admission requirements for master's and doctoral studies in the College of Education**

### **Master's of Education**

A Honours Degree in Education in Inclusive Education, Special Education or Learning Support, Remedial Education, Disability Studies or an appropriate postgraduate diploma, or a 480 credit Bachelor of Education Degree in Inclusive Education with a minimum of 96 credits at NQF level 8. The average mark obtained for the degree shall be 60%. All students should have completed a module in research methods and methodologies as part of their previous level 8 qualification. Students who do not meet these requirements may follow an alternative pathway (e.g. RPL, submitting a portfolio or working through a prescribed reading list – refer to Possible alternative pathways). The application should accord with the various research focus areas/areas of specialisation of the Department, the Department's capacity to provide expert supervision and the requisite qualifications listed above.

### **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education**

A Master's of Education Degree in Inclusive Education/Special Education/Disability Studies/Remedial Education or a module in Inclusive Education/Special Education/Disability Studies/Remedial Education at master's level. The average mark obtained for the degree shall be 60%. Students who do not meet this requirement may follow an alternative pathway (e.g. RPL or a portfolio of evidence – refer to Possible alternative pathways). The application should accord with the various research focus areas/areas of specialisation of the Department, the Department's capacity to provide expert supervision and the requisite qualification.

## **Supporting documentation to be submitted with application**

### **For a full research master's:**

All relevant documentation as specified by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support.

Students should submit a short research outline of 600 to 750 words, which sketches the intended research project, the research approach, problem statement, short literature review and a working title. In addition, a list of five scholarly articles and two books consulted in compiling the research outline should be provided. These sources should be predominantly recent, with the exception of (classical) theories, which can only be found in old sources. The Harvard referencing method should be used. Students should provide a declaration that they have consulted the relevant department's website prior to submitting their application and should propose the name of his/her preferred supervisor. Any form of plagiarism in the research outline is unacceptable.

### **For a doctorate degree:**

All relevant documentation as specified by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support.

Students should submit a short research outline of 800 to 900 words which sketches the intended research project, problem statement, the research approach, a short literature review and a working title for the project. In addition, a list of ten scholarly articles and four books that have been consulted to compile the research outline should be provided. These sources should be predominantly recent, with the exception of (classical) theories which can only be found in old sources. The Harvard referencing method should be used. Students should provide a declaration that they have consulted the relevant department's website prior to submitting their application and should propose the name of his/her preferred supervisor. Please note that any form of plagiarism in the research outline is unacceptable.

PLEASE NOTE: Students should clearly indicate in their research outline that they intend to focus on Inclusive Education in their PhD studies. It is therefore imperative that the first heading of the research outline should read: *PhD in Education, focusing on Inclusive Education*.

Selection procedures followed in the selection of candidates for postgraduate studies  
All applications will be considered simultaneously by the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee, the chair of the Department, the director of the School, the head of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research and the M&D coordinator for purposes of fairness and transparency. Only candidates who meet the minimum eligibility criteria will be considered.

The Department's supervision capacity and availability of external supervisors will be the first and most important selection criterion. No applicant will be admitted without a supervisor being allocated to the student. If a student requests to be supervised by a particular supervisor, but the supervisor is not available because of his/her existing supervision load, it is the Department's prerogative to allocate an alternative supervisor (internal or external). Further selection will be done based on the following selection criteria (the weight attached to each criteria is indicated between brackets as a percentage of the overall evaluation): the student's academic record and experience in research (30%); understanding of research methods as evident from the research outline (30%); academic writing skills (30%); and addressing of past inequalities by taking race, gender and disability status into consideration (10%).

If deemed necessary, the Department may request an interview with the applicant.

Only a limited number of students per year can be accommodated in the MEd in Inclusive Education (course work) – qualification code: 98444. Students who are not admitted into the MEd in Inclusive Education (course work) may be considered for the full research MEd in Inclusive Education if a supervisor is available.

The Department will keep record of all the applications and reasons will be provided for unsuccessful applications.

Possible alternative pathways

The following alternative pathways exist for applicants who do not meet the admission requirements:

- Applicants with degrees that have different structures from normal South African honours or master's degrees, applicants whose degrees do not clearly correspond to the Department's admission requirements (e.g. no mark awarded for previous dissertations, no clear evidence of having completed a research-related module as part of the previous qualification, etc) or applicants who do not meet the admission requirements but who possess applicable experience in research or working experience relevant to the field of interest, that may qualify them for admission to a master's or doctoral degree will be required to apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL). Prior academic and research activities by the applicant will be evaluated in

accordance with formal Unisa RPL procedures and the outcome of the RPL process will be submitted to and approved by the chair of the Department. If the approved outcome of the RPL process is positive, the applicant will be allowed to proceed with an application for admission, subject to all terms and conditions governing the admission process.

- Applicants who apply for a master's degree on the strength of a postgraduate diploma or a 480 credit bachelor's degree with a minimum of 96 credits at level 8 and who have not completed a module in research methodology, will be required to obtain knowledge about research methods and methodology by working through a prescribed reading list which will be forwarded to them by the chair of the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee upon request from the student. The student will have to complete and pass a number of assignments related to research methodology. The student may reapply in subsequent years.
- Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirement of 60%, may apply for an alternative pathway by submitting a portfolio containing a motivation letter indicating reasons for wanting to do the qualification and for selecting the specific area he/she is applying for, a CV highlighting experience relevant to the field of interest and evidence of engagement with research which could include one or more of the following: a written report of a scholarly nature, a literature survey, a paper presented at a conference, a published article.

The following alternative pathways exist for applicants whose applications were unsuccessful:

- Students who have been refused admission because of limited capacity within the Department or because their topic was not viable may reapply in subsequent years. It should be clearly indicated that it is a reapplication. The normal selection process will apply in case of reapplications.
- Students who were unsuccessful because of an inadequate research outline may revise their research outline and may reapply in subsequent years.
- A student whose application was unsuccessful because of inadequate academic writing skills may reapply in subsequent years provided that he/she can provide proof of measures put in place to improve his/her academic writing skills (e.g. enrolled for and passed a course in academic writing skills).

### **Application procedures and when to apply**

The Department of Inclusive Education will not make use of differentiated registration dates. Applications for admission and registration will take place in accordance with the dates set by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support for bulk applications and registrations.

Students should

- apply for a student number, following the steps outlined in <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Apply-for-a-student-number-and-apply-for-admission>
- apply for a space in one of the focus areas using the online application process

Once acceptance in the research focus area and the allocation of a supervisor have been confirmed, they may register for the research proposal module.