

## Programme Descriptor and Application Process

### **MEd Education Law management and Policy and MEd Educational Leadership**

The Department of Education Management and Policy Studies (EMPS) in the Faculty of Education is proud to offer two masters degree programmes, these being the MEd Education Law Management and Policy (MEd ELMP) and the MEd Education Leadership (MEd EL).

Both these programmes have a maximum duration of 2 years, and for both you will be assigned to a supervisor based on the topic you select for your research dissertation. However, the major difference between the two programmes is that one (MEd ELMP) is a research master's programme, and the other (MEd EL) is a coursework master's programme - the details of these two programmes are as follows:

The **MEd ELMP** programme consists of:

- a. The completion of 1 compulsory course work module (NMQ800) presented over the course of 6 Saturday contact sessions between February and July in the 1st year of registration. In this module, students are guided and directed towards the development and successful defense of a research proposal.
- b. The completion of a full scope (100 - 130 pages) research dissertation under the guidance of an allocated supervisor in which you report on the research study developed and proposed during NMQ800.

The **MEd EL** programme consists of:

- a. The completion of 4 compulsory modules, namely NMQ800 - research proposal development - the same as for MED ELMP, HFE880 - human and financial management in education, LVO880 - education law and LBL880 - leadership in education. These modules are presented on 15 Saturday contact sessions between February and October in the 1st year of registration.
- b. The completion of a dissertation of limited scope (65 - 85 pages) under the guidance of an allocated supervisor in which you report on the research study developed and proposed during NMQ800.

The requirements for acceptance into both these programmes are the same - (1) an average of 60% for the honours degree, (2) a preliminary research proposal that shows both a unique research interest and an acceptable level of methodological understanding, and (3) the successful completion of a short test on academic reading and writing and (4) a satisfactory personal interview with a panel of academics from the Department, with the additional requirement for the MEd EL programme that the candidate must have a measure of leadership and management experience at school or district/departmental level, or at a higher education institution (public or private), for example has worked as a head of department, a deputy principal, a principal, a departmental official, programme coordinator, campus principal etc.

As far as the 7-9 page application research proposal is concerned, the only guideline is that the topic should fall within the scope of our Department's field of interest, namely education law, management, policy and leadership. Although this proposal will (a) help us make an informed decision on whether to admit you or not (it's not the ONLY factor though - see below) and (b) help us to assign you to a supervisor if you are admitted, this proposal is not cast in stone, and both you and your supervisor may decide to make changes to it as the proposal writing process and the NMQ800 module unfolds.

Your proposal should include the background to the problem you would like to investigate, a statement of the actual problem that you have identified, the research questions you would like to answer, a short review of literature (journal articles etc.) related to your topic, and the methodology (approach, design, data collection instruments, sampling strategy and participants) that you propose to use. Please also remember to include a reference list.

Once received, your application is passed through an initial screening at Student Admin to determine whether it meets the basic criteria - 60% for a honours degree or some other valid post-graduate qualification (this applies mostly to foreign students - all foreign students are requested to have their qualifications vetted by the South African Qualifications Authority - SAQA - before submission of an application. The SAQA website can be found at [www.saga.org.za](http://www.saga.org.za)). Once this initial screening has been completed, the applications are passed on to the Programme Coordinators for the two programmes for further vetting - at this point the preliminary proposal is read to determine whether the application fits into the Department's research focus and whether it represents a viable research project.

Applicants whose applications pass this second round of vetting are then invited to attend an interview and write a test. On the day of the interview, a group of applicants write a short methodology and academic article reading test based on an 'unseen' article - this article is handed to the members of the group 30 minutes before the test commences to allow everyone to read the article at least once before the test - applicants are then be allowed to keep the article with them during the test for reference. Once the test has been written, the applicants each attend a 20 - 25 minute individual interview with a panel consisting of members of the Department.

Once all the applicants who made it to the interview stage have been interviewed and the tests marked, the Programme Coordinators in cooperation with the Head of Department of EMPS make the final decision on admittance, based on (1) the results of the tests and the interviews, (2) the suitability and 'researchability' of the preliminary proposal and (3) the supervision capacity available in the Department for the following year - understandably, each supervisor in each Department has a maximum supervision capacity, in other words each supervisor has a maximum number of Masters and PhD students that he or she can supervise. This number is determined by among other things each supervisor's research and teaching work load and also on their supervision experience and current supervision load. The supervision capacity for the Department for any given year also depends on how many M and PhD students graduate at the end of that year, which in turn determines how many M and PhD applications can be accepted for the following year. This is also the reason why, although you may indicate on your application your preference of supervisor, the Department is unfortunately not always able to guarantee that you will be assigned to your first choice of supervisor.

The application process is open from February, and the closing date is 31 August every year. Please find the application form at

<http://www.up.ac.za/en/faculty-of-education/article/15752/academic-programmes>

Please also note that although the Programme Coordinators (Dr Eberlein for MEd EL and Dr Adeyemo for MEd EMLP) coordinate and can therefore answer questions on the academic side of these programmes, the administration and application process is dealt with by Student Administration, and all inquiries regarding the actual application process and the submission of applications must be directed to Mrs Pulane Tau ([pulane.tau@up.ac.za](mailto:pulane.tau@up.ac.za)).