

## Instruction Letter

# MA Clinical Psychology Application Process for the 2025 Intake

### Compulsory Application Process

It is important to complete both Step ONE and TWO and the two parts in Step TWO. Follow the instructions carefully to avoid disqualification due to incomplete applications.

#### Step ONE: Online Application for Admission to UP

**Prospective Students:** First complete the **Compulsory Online Application for Admission** to UP via the online link at <https://www.up.ac.za/online-application>

**Current UP Students:** First complete the **Compulsory Internal Application** via your Student Portal → Student Centre → Internal Application

#### Step TWO: Online Departmental Application Process

Secondly, and only once you completed the UP-Admission Process (Step ONE), do you complete the **Compulsory Online Departmental Application Process**, which consists of THREE parts:

##### Part ONE: Online Departmental Application:

This **online departmental application** needs to be completed via a **Google Form Platform** available at <https://forms.gle/WNTfsE3wX6BvC4rG9>. It is essential to complete all sections. Instructions are built into the form in all sections to guide you through the process.

##### Part TWO: Referee Report Form:

You, as an applicant, are required to **email the link for the online Referee Report Form** available at <https://forms.gle/7RCmEXn8TSA9nFxU8>, to the **two referees** you identify in your application. Ensure you capture the referees' information in the **Online Departmental Application** (link above in part ONE). You also need to follow up with your referees to ensure they complete and submit the Referee Report Form **no later than 24h00 on 31 May 2024**.

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Introduction...*

## MA Clinical Psychology Application Process for the 2025 Intake

### Introduction

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking an interest in applying to the Master of Arts (MA) in Clinical Psychology degree programme, in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pretoria.

The MA in Clinical Psychology degree programme provides an integrated professional and academic education and training programme which equips a successfully selected student to practice as a registered Clinical Psychologist in South Africa. After completion of the degree programme, the student can apply to the Professional Board for Psychology of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) for registration as a Clinical Psychologist. Such registration is subject to the conditions stipulated by the Professional Board for Psychology at the time.

The MA in Clinical Psychology degree comprises one year of full-time study with 50% of the degree entailing both theoretical coursework and practical patient-related casework and 50% entailing a research component. The coursework component of the MA in Clinical Psychology degree provides the student advanced and applied education and training in four core fields needed to professionally orientate the student towards becoming a Clinical Psychologist, namely:

- *Clinical Assessment & Patient Management* – This module covers advanced methods and techniques in clinical psychological, neuropsychological, as well as psycho-legal and forensic assessment in the context of multi-disciplinary public healthcare and patient management. In this module there is a specific focus on a holistic and patient-centred clinical approach to psychological assessment.
- *Clinical Interventions & Therapeutics* – This module provides in-depth coverage of the theory and application of individual, relationship, familial and group-based modes of psychotherapy with patients across the lifespan within the clinical context. In this module there is a specific focus on evidence-based practice and common factors for psychotherapy as well as psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioural, positive psychology, solution-focussed, and narrative theories of psychotherapy, with specialised training also provided in child attachment-based psychotherapy, play therapy, and systems therapy for families, groups, and relationships.
- *Professional Development & Clinical Practice* – This module provides students with an opportunity to practically apply and reflexively integrate professional knowledge and skills from all the modules in the degree programme through consultation-based work with patients. In this module there is a specific focus on clinically supervised patient-facing casework with patients at clinical sites in Pretoria.
- *Clinical Psychopathology in Context* – This module provides a critical examination of the diagnosis as well as psychological and psychopharmacological treatment of clinical psychopathology as it manifests across the lifespan and, in particular, with patients from diverse backgrounds, different (cultural) worldviews, statuses of subjectivity (i.e. 'race', genders, sexualities, and dis/abilities), and material circumstances. In this module there is a specific focus on child, adolescent, adult, and geriatric psychopathology, in conjunction with diversity psychology and African epistemologies of mental health.

Across all of the above listed coursework modules, there is a sustained focus on a critical, context-sensitive, and patient-centred approach to understanding, assessing, diagnosing, and treating psychopathology through, on one hand, international trends in scientific research and best clinical practice in psychotherapy as well as, on the other hand, indigenous and African epistemologies of mental health and well-being.

The research component of the MA in Clinical Psychology degree allows the student the opportunity to complete a mini-dissertation on an topic approved by the Head of the Department of Psychology and the Postgraduate and Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities.

The philosophical orientation which organises the educational approach and curriculum of the MA in Clinical Psychology degree at the University of Pretoria is that of a *Scientist-Practitioner-Activist* model. This aims to integrate international perspectives on Clinical Psychology theory and practice with the broader decolonial project in South African psychology and an access-enhancing orientation to public mental health, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalised in South African society. The MA in Clinical Psychology programme therefore aims to produce Clinical Psychologists who are capable of engaging in cutting-edge Clinical Psychological research and knowledge-production, rigorous and professional Clinical Psychological practice, as well as intensive and incisive critical theorising and social justice work as it relates to Clinical Psychology.

In totality, the MA in Clinical Psychology programme comprises of one-year full-time academic study (Year 1), followed by a one-year full-time internship in Clinical Psychology (Year 2) at a state facility accredited for intern training in Clinical Psychology, and, finally, a one-year community service placement (Year 3) at a state facility accredited for community service in Clinical Psychology. The first year of academic study (Year 1) is an advanced postgraduate degree programme which is intensive, demanding, and full-time; to this effect, all students are expected to be financially independent and ideally have access to their own transport in order to meet the obligations of practical training and patient-related casework which occurs at sites, clinics, and hospitals off the campuses of the University of Pretoria. For a student to move from their academic study (Year 1) to their internship (Year 2), the student must successfully complete and pass all the modules that constitute the coursework component of the Clinical Psychology degree and must have made substantial progress towards the completion of their research-based mini-dissertation. For a student to move from their internship (Year 2) to their community service (Year 3), the student must have completed their mini-dissertation and successfully pass the national Professional Board Exam in Clinical Psychology, as per HPCSA regulations.

The selection process for admission into the MA in Clinical Psychology at the University of Pretoria is highly competitive, with the Department of Psychology receiving hundreds of applications each year from around South Africa. In this regard, the academic performance and personal suitability of each application to the MA in Clinical Psychology is carefully considered and thoroughly scrutinised. With that said, it is important to remember that application to this degree does not guarantee selection, and that participation in the selection process does not guarantee acceptance into the MA in Clinical Psychology. We encourage each applicant to apply as widely as possible in light of how competitive the application process is at the University of Pretoria.

The approach governing the application and selection processes for the MA in Clinical Psychology programme are derived from the strategic mission and goals of the Department of Psychology and the University of Pretoria. Selection procedures are aligned with institutional policy and informed by the historical, educational, and social contexts within which the programme is based and, furthermore, professional benchmarks and developments which allow the Department of Psychology to select the most competitive, adaptive, and suitable candidates for training in Clinical Psychology. The academic and institutional policy framework of the University of Pretoria is also brought to bear to ensure transformation and representation throughout the selection process and, ultimately, the selection and enrolment of a diverse and inclusive class of students for the MA in Clinical Psychology.

What follows in the remaining pages of this Instruction Letter is an outline of the application and selection process as well as links to the University of Pretoria's Application Form, the Department of Psychology's Application Form, and the Referee Report Form. All these forms need to be completed and submitted as part of your application to the MA in Clinical Psychology degree programme. It is important that you adhere to the requirements of the application process, or your application will be considered incomplete, and not undergo any further consideration.

The Department of Psychology wishes you the best in your application to our programme.

Sincerely,  
**Dr Jarred H. Martin**  
**Programme Manager: MA Clinical Psychology**

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**Outline of the Application & Selection Process...***

## Outline of the Application & Selection Process

The following information outlines the application and selection process to be followed when applying for the MA Clinical Psychology programme. Step 1 outlines the minimum academic requirements to submit an application for the MA in Clinical Psychology degree at the University of Pretoria. Steps 2 and 3 focus on application-related information. Steps 4 and 5 outline the selection process.

**Step 1:** First, the applicant must ensure they meet the minimum academic requirements to submit an application for the MA in Clinical Psychology at the University of Pretoria.

**Step 2:** Second, and only after the criteria for Step 1 are successfully met, the applicant must complete the **Online Application for Admission to Study** process via <https://www.up.ac.za/online-application> (for unenrolled prospective students) or the **Internal Application** process (for currently enrolled students) via the University of Pretoria's **Student Portal >> Student Centre >> Internal Application**. This step should be completed before the closure of the application process at 24h00 on 31 May 2024.

**The following documentation needs to be pre-prepared, on standby, and in an electronic format for immediate upload on the Online Application for Admission to Study:**

- Certified Copy of your ID
- Certified Copy of your FULL ACADEMIC RECORD (**indicating your accumulative weighted average**)
- Certified Copy of your UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE
- Certified Copy of your HONOURS DEGREE, if completed
- Certified Copy of ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS, if applicable
- Certified Copy of your SAQA Certificate (for Non-South African Qualifications)

**\*\*No supporting documentation will be accepted via email, courier, or facsimile**

**Step 3:** Third, and only after Step 2 is successfully completed, can the applicant then complete the **Online Departmental Application Form** via Google Forms at <https://forms.gle/WNTfsE3wX6BvC4rG9>. It is essential to complete all sections. Instructions are built into the form in all sections to guide you through the process. Students also need to email the link for the **Department of Psychology Referee Report Form** at <https://forms.gle/7RCmEXn8TSA9nFxU8> to their chosen Referees. Ensure that you complete the correct Online Application Form e.g., the MA Clinical Psychology Departmental Application Form (submitted as part of Step 3), which are specifically handled by the Department of Psychology and designated specifically for applicants to the MA in Clinical Psychology programme.

The Department of Psychology's **Online Departmental Application Form** requires an applicant to upload a set of supporting documentation (listed below). Note that these documents are different to those submitted during Step 2 (UP Online Application for Admission Process).

1. A standard headshot colour photograph of yourself.
2. Each applicant will need to pre-prepare a Personal Essay, prior to opening and completing the Online Departmental Application Form (Google Form). The instructions for the Personal Essay are as follows:
  - **Heading:** The heading for this essay should read "Personal Essay - Name Surname".
  - **Format:** It should be typed MsWord, making use of the Times New Roman font, font size 12, 1.5 line spacing,
  - **Length:** No more than two typed pages.
  - **Focus:** The Personal Essay should be a brief but rich description of your life history, or particular focal aspects thereof, in which you reflect on the meaning and impact of experiences which have not only shaped who you are and your perspectives of and relations with others and the broader world, but, moreover, how these experiences have brought you to be interested in and suitable for the science and profession of Clinical Psychology.
3. In addition to the above, each applicant will also need to pre-prepare a brief Research Concept Proposal, prior to opening and completing the application form. The instructions for the Research Concept Proposal are as follows:
  - **Heading:** The heading for this essay should read "*Research Concept Proposal - Name Surname*".
  - **Structure:** The Concept Proposal must include the following sections and section headings, in the following order:
    - o Proposed Title
    - o Research Question(s)
    - o Aim(s)
    - o Rationale
    - o Summary of Preliminary Literature Review
    - o Proposed Research Methodology and Method; and
    - o References

- **Format:** It should be typed in font Times New Roman, font size 12, with 1.5 line spacing, in Ms Word format and no more than two typed pages (excluding reference list); references in the reference list must be formatted according to the American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition style guidelines.
  - o Please note that when your Research Concept Proposal is vetted it will be screened through plagiarism and AI detection software to assess originality.
  - o Applicants can view the research expertise which exists in the Department of Psychology to supervise research interests at [2025 Research Themes and Focus Areas](#).
- 4. Lastly, applicants with disability/ies will also need to upload one of the following documents:
  - A report from the Disability Unit of the institution where you are currently completing your Honours degree, verifying your disability/ies and outlining any additional assistances/accommodations likely to be required in the event you are selected, or
  - A report from an applicable healthcare professional verifying your disability/ies and outlining any additional assistances/accommodations likely to be required in the event you are selected.

Failure to upload the **personal essay, research concept proposal, and disability-related documentation** will result in an application being designated incomplete and not undergoing further processing or consideration. This documentation will only be accepted via the [Online Departmental Application Form](#), and will not be accepted via email, courier, or facsimile. This step should be completed before the closure of the application process at 24h00 (midnight) on 31 May 2024.

**Step 4:** This step entails an internal shortlisting process as part of which applicants are identified and invited to participate further in the selection process

**Step 5:** Shortlisted applicants are invited to participate in the selection process at the University of Pretoria.

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Steps of the Application Process*

## Steps of the Application Process

### Step ONE

#### Step 1: Minimum Academic Requirements to Submit an Application for the MA in Clinical Psychology

The minimum academic requirements to submit an application for the MA in Clinical Psychology degree are based on the minimum requirements ultimately needed for admission into degree, as approved by the University of Pretoria, namely: (1) an accredited BSocSciHons in Psychology, or BA Honours in Psychology, or relevant Honours degree; and (2) a cumulative weighted average of at least 70% for said Honours degree. In this regard, the following candidates are eligible to apply:

- a. **Students who are currently enrolled in an Honours degree in Psychology:** Students currently in progress with an Honours degree in Psychology at an accredited and recognised higher education institution should ensure: (1) that the cumulative weighted average for their undergraduate degree is no less than 70% (i.e. 70% or more); and (2) that the Honours degree for which the applicant is currently enrolled will be completed by the end of the academic year. Students currently in progress with an Honours degree are required to submit an institutionally stamped copy of the Honours degree transcript which reflects their semester 1 module marks as soon as it becomes available after their application and no later than 11 July 2024 by 16h00. These transcripts can be emailed to at [psych.coursework@up.ac.za](mailto:psych.coursework@up.ac.za).
- b. **Students who have completed an Honours degree in Psychology:** Students who have completed an Honours degree in Psychology at an accredited and recognised higher education institution should have graduated this degree with a cumulative weighted average of no less than 70% (i.e. 70% or more).

**Please Note:** Prospective applicants should not proceed with an application if they do not meet the abovementioned minimum academic requirements for admission into the MA in Clinical Psychology. In addition, just because an applicant meets the abovementioned academic criteria does not guarantee automatic shortlisting, selection, or admission to the degree programme. The above academic criteria indicate academic eligibility to apply for the degree programme.

### Step TWO and THREE

#### Step 2: Online Application for Admission to the University of Pretoria

- a. **Prospective students:** It is compulsory for all prospective students to first complete the **Online Application for Admission** process before completing the **Online Departmental Application Form**. This process can only be completed online. Go to [www.up.ac.za/online-application](http://www.up.ac.za/online-application) to complete the online process.
- b. **Currently enrolled students:** Currently enrolled students at the University of Pretoria need to complete the compulsory Internal Application process through the **Student Portal >> Student Centre >> Internal Application**.

**Please Note:** The applicant cannot proceed to Step 3 without completing the online application for admission. Also, the completion of the online application for admission does not mean the applicant has been accepted into the MA Clinical Psychology degree programme.

#### Step 3: Online Departmental Application Form for the MA in Clinical Psychology

- a. After completing Step 2 all applicants must complete **Online Departmental Application Form** at <https://forms.gle/WNTfsE3wX6BvC4rG9> and, with this, upload all the required supporting documentation, to complete the application for selection to the MA Clinical Psychology programme.
- b. Applications will close at 24h00 on 31 May 2024.
- c. It is also crucial that each applicant ensure that their identified referees personally complete the **Referee Report Form** before 24h00 on 31 May 2024 through the link <https://forms.gle/7RCmEXn8TSA9nFxU8>.

**Please Note:**

1. No supporting documentation will be accepted via email or facsimile.
2. Referee Report Forms should only be completed by the Referees indicated in the Online Departmental Application Form.
3. Referee Report Forms should only be completed and submitted via the link <https://forms.gle/7RCmEXn8TSA9nFxU8>.
4. Applications which are not fully completed are considered incomplete and do not undergo further processing or consideration.
5. Late applications are not processed.
6. Applicants who do not meet the minimum academic requirements for application and admission into the MA in Clinical Psychology will not be considered.

### Step FOUR and FIVE

#### Step 4: Screening, Evaluation and Shortlisting of Applicants

The shortlisting is a process internal and confidential to the Department of Psychology and the MA in Clinical Psychology degree programme. Each application is stringently evaluated and ranked across a variety of indices, including, academic strength and consistency, personal insight and reflexive depth, research ability and aptitude, community service and volunteerism, work and life experience, appropriateness and coherence of an applicant's

motivation to pursue a career in Clinical Psychology, critical thinking and social awareness, ability to communicate (preferably in multiple South African languages), reports from your chosen references, as well as demographic representation and diversity (inclusive of 'race', gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and dis/ability), amongst other considerations. Each application is evaluated holistically with multiple indices being brought to bear during the shortlisting process. Thereafter, only applicants who are shortlisted will be invited to participate in the selection process.

**Please Note:**

Please Note: The Department of Psychology will contact the shortlisted applicants with their invitation to participate in the selection process via email. Should an applicant not be contacted by the Department of Psychology by 16h00 on 02 August 2024, the applicant should consider their application unsuccessful. All applicants are reminded that due to both the large number of applications the MA Clinical Psychology degree programme receives, as well as the confidential status of the vetting and shortlisting/selection criteria, it is not possible to provide applicants with individualised feedback on their application.

**Step 5: The Selection Week at the University of Pretoria**

The selection week for the MA in Clinical Psychology is scheduled to take place at the University of Pretoria (Hatfield Campus) from **12 August 2024 - 16 August 2024**. Applicants who accept the offer to participate in the selection week must be able to present themselves in person at the designated dates and times during this period. Designated dates and times are non-negotiable. Applicants who accept participation in the selection week should be prepared to absorb any accommodation or travel costs. This is for the private arrangement of each applicant.

The selection week generally consists of a series of individual interviews, written tasks, group-based and interactive activities, and a clinical psychological case presentation. At the end of each day of the selection week applicants are evaluated and shortlisted. Each applicant is emailed at the end of each day, with only the successfully shortlisted applicants invited to participate in the next day of the selection week.

Details about the selection week will be provided to those applicants who are successfully shortlisted for the selection process.

**Please Note:**

1. If you are shortlisted to participate in the selection process, please notify the Department of Psychology should you wish to withdraw by emailing [psych.coursework@up.ac.za](mailto:psych.coursework@up.ac.za) no later than 05 August 2024 at 08h00.
2. Applicants who accept the invitation to participate in the selection process at the University of Pretoria are expected to absorb the costs of any accommodation, travel or otherwise which may be incurred as a result of participation in the selection process.

**Summary of Main Dates: MA Clinical Psychology Applications for the 2025 Intake**

- **02 April 2024:** Applications Open
- **31 May 2024 (24:00):** Applications Close
- **11 July 2024 (16:00):** Submission of 1<sup>st</sup> Semester Transcript for Applicants Currently Completing Honours
- **02 August 2024 (16:00):** Notification of Applicants Invited to Selection Week
- **12 - 16 August 2024:** Selection Week

**Queries Regarding the Application Process**

- All queries related to the application and selection process for the MA in Clinical Psychology should be emailed to [psych.coursework@up.ac.za](mailto:psych.coursework@up.ac.za). This is the only email address through which correspondence will be processed.
- All of the information will also be available on the [Department of Psychology](#) webpage for the Professional Master's programmes.

\*\*\*End\*\*\*