University of Pretoria Yearbook 2020

MPhil (04250004)

Minimum duration of study	2 years
Total credits	200
NQF level	09

Programme information

If admitted, a student can register immediately for the MPhil programme. The following two or three modules must be registered for and completed within one year of registration:

1. Research methodology (RHP 802) offered by the Faculty of Law.
(If the student can show sufficient evidence of competence in research skills required at postgraduate level the Postgraduate Committee of the Faculty of Law on recommendation of the supervisor, may exempt the student from this module.)

2. Research proposal and oral defence of the research proposal (RHP 804).
An oral defence of the research proposal including an assessment of the feasibility of the dissertation statement, research question or questions and argument to be developed in the MPhil dissertation is required. A draft research proposal including a bibliography that covers the main fields to be covered by the study, the dissertation statement, research question or questions and argument must be sent to the examination panel three weeks prior to the oral defence. (Such a draft research proposal must first be approved by the supervisor.) The student must convince the adjudicating panel of the feasibility of the topic and his or her knowledge of the research subject and ability to conduct the research. Where required by the panel, the draft proposal must be further reworked in light of the comments at the oral defence and a final proposal submitted to the satisfaction of the supervisor before the student may embark on the writing of the dissertation. (No exemption can be granted from this requirement.)

A student who does not complete the abovementioned two modules within one year of registration may be excluded from the Faculty and if he/she seeks readmission to the Faculty, may submit a written request to the Dean that his/her application for readmission to the Faculty be considered in terms of the set procedure.

3. Structured research proposal preparation (RHP 806) (non-credit-bearing)
The supervisor may prescribe that a particular student must follow a structured programme to be determined by the supervisor and approved by the Postgraduate Committee. The supervisor may also set the requirements, as approved by the Postgraduate Committee, for complying with the module.

Admission requirements

Admission requirements and limitation of student numbers

At least an honours degree in an academic discipline relevant to legal aspects in South Africa or Africa as well as to the contents of the specific MPhil (coursework) programme,
OR

any other qualification in an academic discipline relevant to legal aspects in South Africa or Africa as well as to the contents of the specific MPhil (coursework) programme that allows admission to a master's programme at the institution where the undergraduate qualification was obtained. If the duration of that qualification is less than four years, substantial proven practical or professional experience in legal aspects in South Africa or Africa will furthermore be required, subject to the discretion of the Dean.

A candidate for the MPhil programme must submit a writing portfolio consisting of recent research-based essays, assignments or the like, as well as a letter of motivation and a preliminary research statement (a 500 word description of the proposed research field indicating a research topic, the broad scope of the proposed study and a tentative research problem).

Where applicable a candidate must apply to SAQA for an evaluation of their foreign qualification.

A candidate will only be admitted to the MPhil programme if he/she obtained a minimum average mark of 65% (or the equivalent of this mark) with respect to the prescribed modules of the honours or preceding programme (or an equivalent degree). Where an average of below 65% was achieved, the student may be admitted on recommendation of the relevant head of department after consultation with potential supervisor(s) and consideration of other factors, including relevant work experience, other academic qualifications and any relevant professional admission examination.

A candidate will only be admitted to the MPhil programme if the Faculty can provide a suitable supervisor in light of the applicant's preliminary research statement and writing portfolio. If the potential supervisor is not satisfied with the preliminary research statement, the potential supervisor should assist the candidate in developing and formulating a research statement before a final decision on admission to the programme is taken.

Where a potential supervisor declines to accept a candidate for a reason other than the lack of capacity (current supervision load or lack of relevant expertise), the dean on advice of the postgraduate committee may issue appropriate directives to the relevant head of department (such as obtaining the recommendation of an independent expert) before making a final decision.

Additional requirements

Also consult General Regulations G.30-G.56 as well as the LLM/MPhil Policy document of the Faculty of Law.

Research information

With regard to the curriculum, the relevant General Regulations apply and the dissertation counts 100% for the final mark. The dissertation consists of 36 000-48 000 words – including footnotes but excluding the list of contents and the bibliography. The topic of the dissertation must be relevant to a discipline in the field of legal studies, and be approved by the Dean. The final copy of the dissertation must be accompanied by a proof of submission of an article to a journal. The article must be based on the research that the student has conducted for the dissertation and be approved by the supervisor.

Agreement
A written agreement between the student and supervisor should be signed. The document serves as the basis for the interaction between the student and the supervisor. It indicates their individual roles, responsibilities and expectations and making it clear that they are entering into a binding undertaking with each other. The supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that the mini-dissertation is properly prepared by the student.

Pass with distinction

For the degree to be awarded with distinction a student must obtain a minimum of 75% for the dissertation.

Curriculum: Year 1

Minimum credits: 200

Core modules

Dissertation: Law 890 (MPI 890)

Module credits	200.00
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Law Deans Office
Period of presentation	Year
Module content	

Research methodology 802 (RHP 802)

Module credits	5.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	40 seminars
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Law Deans Office
Period of presentation	Semester 1 and Semester 2

Module content

(a)Planning and organising a research project
(b) Drafting a research proposal: Hypotheses and Research question
(c) Theory in research and methodological approaches to legal research
(d) Language
(e) Citation and ethics of citation
(f) Drafting of chapters and presentation
(g) Substantive themes in legal research

Research proposal and oral defence of the research proposal 804 (RHP 804)

Module credits	0.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Law Deans Office
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Curriculum: Final year

Minimum credits: 250

Fundamental modules

Dissertation: Law 890 (MPI 890)

Module credits	200.00
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Law Deans Office
Period of presentation	Year
Module content	

Research proposal and oral defence of the research proposal 804 (RHP 804)

Module credits	0.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Law Deans Office
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

The information published here is subject to change and may be amended after the publication of this information. The General Regulations (G Regulations) apply to all faculties of the University of Pretoria. It is expected of students to familiarise themselves well with these regulations as well as with the information contained in the General Rules section. Ignorance concerning these regulations and rules will not be accepted as an excuse for any transgression.