



Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology

Fakulteit Ingenieurswese, Bou-omgewing en
Inligtingtegnologie / Lefapha la Boetšenera,
Tikologo ya Kago le Theknološhi ya Tshedimošo

Department of Informatics

MCom (Informatics) MIT (Information Systems)

Brochure 2022

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1 Research in Informatics (Information Systems)

1.1 Informatics (Information Systems) as discipline

Modern organizations cannot function without information and the technology with which they gather, store, compute and make information available. The successful application of technology is however more than just writing computer programs. Yes computer programs are essential, but an understanding of the business within which the organization functions, and an understanding of the use of information and information technology to support the objectives of the organization, are far more important. This can clearly be seen in the description of the discipline:

Informatics (Information Systems) is a multi-disciplinary subject, where information, information systems, and the integration thereof into the organization, are studied for the benefit of the entire system (individual, organization and community).

1.2 Research areas in the Department of Informatics

In general, research in the department deals with fundamental concepts of information and information systems, humans as part of the information system and the broader system, and IS in service of the organization and the community.

The five focus areas are:

- IS and Organisations
- IS and Education
- ICT for Sustainable Development
- Data Science
- Human-computer Interaction

A detailed summary of each faculty member's research interest can be found at <https://www.up.ac.za/informatics/article/2034127/research>

1.3 Objective of Masters studies (research)

A Masters graduate has an in-depth and broad knowledge of a specialized area of the discipline, is well versed in the scientific method and has proven, through independent and guided research, that he/she can apply the scientific method in a scientific study. The candidate must submit a research article (which might be presented to a journal for possible publication) together with the dissertation at the end of the Masters studies.

2. Supervision

The success of the Masters studies depends to a large extent on the successful partnership between the student and supervisor.

All students will receive a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) required by UP via e-mail from Rhona van der Merwe. The MOU needs to be signed by the supervisor and student once the student has registered for the Masters degree.

According to the MOU and the rules within the department, each of the role players has certain responsibilities as described below:

2.1 The role of the supervisor

- The most important role of the supervisor is to guide the student and not to give active assistance to the student.
- The supervisor expects regular contact (either face to face or via e-mail) at least once every three months. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange these sessions and to report on his/her progress during these sessions.
- These reports must be clearly written in an acceptable standard of English. It is not the supervisor's duty to do "rough editing" and she/he will merely concentrate on content and structure.
- The supervisor will give feedback on any submitted work within one month.
- The supervisor has to provide motivation to faculty administration for continuation of the student's Masters study if its duration exceeds three years.

2.2 The role of the student

- It is the student's responsibility to arrange sessions (either contact or virtual) with the supervisor and to submit written reports for discussion.
- The student has to determine whether no other similar study has already been undertaken.
- The student is responsible to arrange for language editing and to apply the correct referencing styles.
- The student has to write the research proposal under guidance of the supervisor and other lecturers.
- The student should have laptop/PC and internet access off campus for online/take home assignment purposes.

3. Admission Requirements and Procedures

3.1 Academic requirements

A prospective Masters student must be in possession of a four year degree in IT/IS. An attainment of at least **65%** for the honours degree in IT/IS (or equivalent) or fourth year is required. International students - see point 8. All students are expected to do the course 'Advanced topics in IS Research' which will be presented in the first half of the year. During this course candidates will be prepared for Masters studies. Candidates must obtain at least **60%** for the assignments in order to register for the Masters programme. The course cannot be repeated. Successful students can proceed to register for the Masters programme in the second half of the year, or the following year.

Supervision of postgraduate students is a time consuming process, thus, the Department **reserves the right to limit the number of students** accepted into the programme. All reasonable measures will be undertaken to ensure that students who meet the minimum requirements are accepted.

More information about the seminar is given in point 6.

4. Difference Between MCom(Informatics), MIT(IS) and MIT(ICT Management)

Note that the MIT(IS) and MCom(Informatics) are both full dissertation Masters degrees. In contrast, the MIT(ICT Management) degree consists of certain courses and a mini-dissertation. More info on the **MIT (ICT Management) degree** can be obtained from Mrs Rhona van der Merwe.

Email: mita@up.ac.za

Telephone: 012 420 6321

5. Application Procedure

- A Masters candidate must apply for the degree online at www.up.ac.za. The MCom(Informatics) is administered by the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences whereas the MIT(IS) degree is administered by the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology.
- After the application has been submitted online, the candidate needs to complete the Masters questionnaire (see addendum 1) and send it to Mrs Rhona van der Merwe (rhona.vandermerwe@up.ac.za).
- Consider the research interest of the lecturers at <http://www.up.ac.za/en/informatics/article/2414608/individual-academics-research-focus-areas> and contact a potential supervisor for possible supervision.
- In addition, the candidate has to send an electronic version of his/her completed Hons Research paper to Mrs Rhona van der Merwe.
- The candidate will be informed middle December, at the latest, of the status of the application.

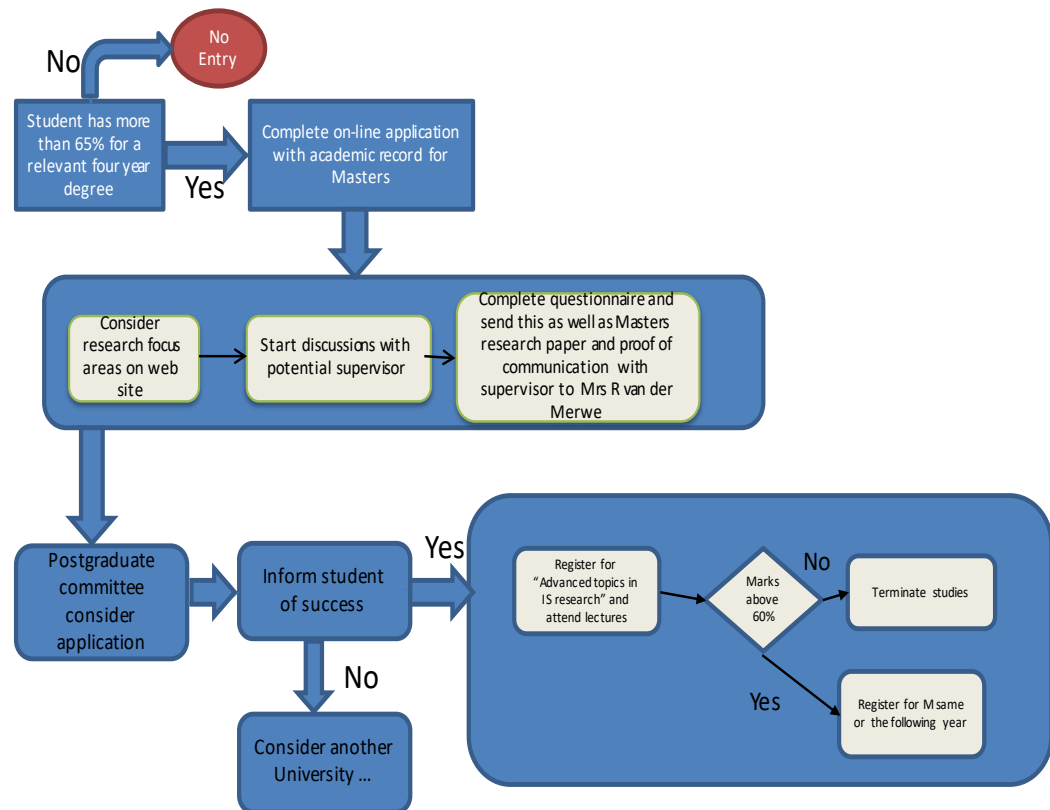


Figure 1: The application process

6. Application Dates

The official closing date for Masters applications for 2022 is 31 October 2021 (MCom(Informatics)) and 30 November 2021 (MIT(IS)). We cannot guarantee processing Masters applications for those candidates who apply online after 31 October 2021. However, these applications will be considered for 2023.

7. Registration, Re-registration and Study Fees

You will be informed whether you have been provisionally accepted as a Masters candidate. For students doing the MIT(IS) degree, you then need to register online as a Masters preparatory student. More information is provided in the next section.

Once you have passed the 'Advanced topics in IS Research' course with at least **60%** in July, you can register for the Masters programme. From then on students have to re-register for the Master's degree every year of their studies (www.up.ac.za/online-registration). From the third year of registration the student will need a permission letter from the supervisor to be able to register.

With the registration of the Masters you will get an online contract which will also be available on the Student Portal (Student Portal – online contract – complete the form – download – sign). Hand in the original at Client Service Centre or courier it to the University. Pay your registration fee by using your student number as reference. After 24 hours it should be effective on the system. Complete your on-line registration on your student portal under ‘registration’.

Any registration problems (e.g. ‘Financial unsuitable’, ‘Hold’, ‘Change of modules’), must be directed to Faculty Administration:

EMS (MCom)

Ms Lerato Krappie	EMS Foyer Room 1-5	012 420 5387	lerato.krappie@up.ac.za
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EBIT (M.IT (IS))

Mrs Stefanie Steenberg	Engineering Building 1 Room 6-6	012 420 5315	stefanie.steenberg@up.ac.za
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International queries & ‘Hold’:

Mrs Jenny Lambinon	jenny.lambinon@up.ac.za
Mrs Wiida le Roux	wiida.leroux@up.ac.za

7.1 Study fees

The estimated fee for the Masters degrees in 2020 was in the vicinity of R18 000. More information on study fees can be found at <https://www.up.ac.za/student-fees>

Fee Inquiries:

Mrs Sophy Seefane	sophy.seefane@up.ac.za
Mr Frans Mothogoane	frans.mothogoane@up.ac.za
Ms Komane Lehong	komane.lehong@up.ac.za

8. Registration of the ‘Non-examination Purposes’ Course

Registration is done after notification that you have been accepted as a Masters candidate at the Department of Informatics. You need to register online as a Masters preparatory student for program EN003 Engineering PG, plan 12290001 *Non-examination purposes*, Class No 8610 (if you are interested in doing the MIT(IS) degree) or CN004 Econ and Mn Sc PG, Class no 8723, plan 07290001 *Non-examination purposes*, for the prospective MCom(Informatics) students. The code ‘ZZZ Masters preparatory’ will appear on your academic record.

Procedure to follow 2 weeks before the starting date of the 1st Seminar class

After receiving an e-mail from the Post Graduate Coordinator, Prof Matthee, confirming that your application was approved for the INF seminar or for the preparatory work, the following steps must be taken:

1. Register online from 4 January 2022 at www.up.ac.za
2. Log onto the student portal.
3. In the middle of the page you will find the block “Student Centre”.
4. In the block, click on [Student Centre](#).
5. Register by following the steps provided.
6. Complete the Student Contract and upload it on the system as indicated.
7. The original contract must be handed in at Student Service Centre (SSC) or be couriered to the University, (courier address: Student Contracts, University of Pretoria, University Road, Hillcrest, 0002), or handed in physically at the post box located at the Engineering Entrance 3, University Road.
8. E-mail a copy of the contract to Ms Demas (verona.demas@up.ac.za).
9. If the original contract is not received by SSC or Ms Demas, you will not be able to continue to register as there will be a block on the registration process.
10. Pay the fee of R1420 (amount as in 2021). Use your **student number** as the reference number. Banking details : www.up.ac.za – Fees and Funding – Fees – Banking details (ABSA or Standard Bank).
11. After the contract is delivered and the ‘hold’ is lifted, send a copy of proof of payment to Ms Malinga (rose.malinga@up.ac.za) to waive the balance on your student account. (**Always provide your student number.**)
12. Contact Mr Kenneth Nkanyana (kenneth.nkanyana@up.ac.za) to assist with the ‘block lift’ on the registration. As soon as Mr Nkanyana *gives you permission to register*, do so immediately. Please copy rhona.vandermerwe@up.ac.za in the email. (**Always provide your student number.**)
13. The ‘block’ will return within 24 hours.
14. You will be registered for PG Engineering Non-examination purposes.
15. On your Proof of Registration you will see the following: (example below)

Term: 20xx	Program: Engineering PG		Plan: Non exam. purposes		
Module Code	Module Name	NQF	Credits	%	Results
ZZZ888	Doctoral preparatory	09	1.00		

Weighted average for term: 0.00 Cumulative weighted average: 0.00

16. All INF seminar students: once you are registered for the module, your name will be added to the INF seminar ClickUP page. ZZZ888 will also appear on your ClickUP page but will show that it is unavailable. We do not create a page for that module but a separate page for the INF seminar. This is where you will find all information regarding the seminar.

NB: To complete the registration it is very important to do step 6 and 10 as soon as possible.

9. Submission

The following dates are important when the student considers submission of the final dissertation:

- 30 June / 27 February: student informs the supervisor that he/she plans to submit before 31 August / 30 April.
- 31 August / 30 April: student submits a signed submission form and examination copies (ring bound and electronic copies).
- 15 January / 15 June: student submits e-copies with corrections (as suggested by external examiners); supervisor checks that all corrections have been done; student submits UPeTD upload form.
- 22 January / 22 June: student submits hardbound copies.

10. 'Advanced Topics in IS Research' Course

10.1 Preliminary dates and venues

Schedule

Preliminary dates (subject to change)

Date	Activity	Time	Venue
4 March 2022	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
1 April 2022	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
13 May 2022	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
3 June 2022	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
29 June 2022	Due date final assignment		

10.2 Seminar Course coordinator contact details

Lecturer	Phone number	Email Address
Prof Machdel Matthee	012 420 3365	machdel.matthee@up.ac.za

10.3 Learning content

1. The philosophy behind the main research paradigms in IS research.
These are the positivist, interpretive and critical social paradigms. Students are challenged to become aware of and question the underlying assumptions in IS thinking.
2. A discussion of various Information Systems Theories.
This includes systems and social and information theory as applied in Informatics.
3. Research methods and approaches in Information Systems.

10.4 Assessment

Assignments.

10.5 Application for ethical clearance

MCom(INF) Students: Applications submitted online.
Go to: Faculty EMS - Committees – Research Ethics.

M.IT (IS) Students: Applications submitted online.
Go to: Faculty EBIT – Research Ethics.

12. INF890/ISY890: Dissertation

The compulsory dissertation which you start with once you have registered for the Masters degree, is typically a 35000 word individual report of independent research under the guidance of a supervisor. The purpose of the dissertation is to demonstrate that:

- The student can plan and execute research.
- The student can interpret some practical context in terms of the theory presented in the courses and come to appropriate conclusions.
- The student can interpret and present his/her research findings.

13. General Information

- Contact Student Services Centre at ssc@up.ac.za for information regarding fees and bursaries or visit <http://up.ac.za>
- Details about M.IT in ICT Management and other IT programmes in the School of IT: <http://sit.up.ac.za> or Kenneth Nkanyana (kenneth.nkanyana@up.ac.za).
- Contact ssc@up.ac.za for information on other courses.
- Compare <https://www.enterprises.up.ac.za/> for information on certificate courses.
- Information Science Department: <https://www.up.ac.za/information-science>
- Computer Science Department: <https://www.up.ac.za/computer-science>
- For academic information regarding postgraduate courses in Informatics, contact Mrs Rhona van der Merwe at rhona.vandermerwe@up.ac.za

14. International Students

Visit: <https://www.up.ac.za/international-cooperation-division>

International students have to provide proof of SAQA accreditation. In some cases the TOEFL/IELTS tests might be required.

- SAQA: www.saqa.org.za
- TOEFL (Test of English as a foreign language): www.ets.org/toefl
- IELTS (International English Language Testing System): www.ielts.org

15. Avoiding Plagiarism: A Guide for Students

What is plagiarism?

You commit plagiarism when in any written work you use another person's words, ideas or opinions without acknowledging them. This is done when you copy the work word-by-word (verbatim); or submit someone else's work in a slightly altered form (such as changing a word with one meaning to another word with the same

meaning) *and* you do not acknowledge the borrowing in a way that shows from whom or where you took the words, ideas or reasoning.

You must provide references whenever you quote (use the exact words), paraphrase (use the ideas of another person in your own words) or summarise (use the main points of another's opinions, theories or data).

Irrespective of how much of the other person's work you use (whether it is one sentence or a whole paragraph), or whether you do it unintentionally or deliberately - if you present the work as your own without acknowledging that person, you are committing theft. Because of this plagiarism is regarded as a *very serious* contravention of the University's rules which can lead to expulsion from the University.

Regardless of who gives you permission to use his/her former assignments or research to hand in as your own, you are not permitted to do so as it is nonetheless a form of plagiarism. In the same regard you are not allowed to let anybody copy your work with the intention of passing it off as his/her work.

While academic staff teach you about systems of referencing and how to avoid plagiarism, you too need to take responsibility for your own academic career. Speak to your lecturer if you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required.

Information brochures on this topic are available at the Library.

<http://www.library.up.ac.za/plagiarism/index.htm>

ADDENDUM

1. Masters Questionnaire



Masters application questionnaire 2022

Dear Masters candidate,

In order to familiarize ourselves with our Masters candidates we urge you to first consider the research focus areas in the Department of Informatics before you complete the questionnaire. Please answer the questions as truthfully as possible – we are committed to provide you with good supervision and our first step is to understand the reason you want to study towards a Masters and what your interests are.

Consider the research interest of the lecturers at <http://www.up.ac.za/en/informatics/article/2414608/individual-academics-research-focus-areas> and contact a potential supervisor for possible supervision.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Briefly describe the role you perform in your current job.
2. Who/what influenced you the most in your life?
3. Give a short description of the research done for your Honours research paper. Would you be interested to continue with this research or do you prefer to do a new topic?
4. Why do you want to do a Masters? (At least 300 words).
5. Where did you do your Honours? Why do you want to study with the University of Pretoria?
6. Considering the topics in the research focus areas in the Department of Informatics:
 - a. What is your broad topic of interest that aligns to one of the focus areas?
 - b. What is the specific problem that you would like to address in this area?
 - c. Why is it important and why are you interested in this topic?
 - d. Are there any other topics that interest you? Name them.

7. Who did you identify as a potential supervisor?
Attach some evidence of communication with this potential supervisor (either a letter of the supervisor or e-mail correspondence).