

Postgraduate Brochure



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
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Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology

Fakulteit Ingenieurswese, Bou-omgewing en
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Tikologo ya Kago le Theknolotši ya Tshedimošo

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DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATICS MCom(INFORMATICS) MIT(INFORMATION SYSTEMS)

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1. Research in Informatics (Information Systems)

1.1 Informatics (Information Systems) as discipline

Modern organisations rely heavily on information and the technology used to gather, store, process, and disseminate it. The effective use of technology, however, goes beyond merely writing computer programs. While coding is essential, a deeper understanding of the organisation's business context and how information technology can support its goals is even more crucial. This is evident in the definition of the discipline:

Informatics 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, the department's research focuses on the fundamental concepts of information and information systems, the role of humans within these systems, and the application of information systems to benefit organisations and the broader community.

The five focus areas are:



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 The Objective of a Research-based Master's study

A Master's graduate has extensive and comprehensive knowledge in a specialised area of the discipline and is well versed in the scientific method. Through independent and guided research, s/he is able to demonstrate his/her ability to apply the scientific method in a scientific study. At the conclusion of his/her Master's study, the candidate must submit a research article, potentially for journal publication, along with his/her dissertation.

2. Supervision

The success of the Master's studies depends to a large extent on the successful partnership between the student and his/her supervisor.

All students will receive a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) required by UP via email from Ms. Rhona van der Merwe. The MOU must be signed by both the



supervisor and the student once the student is successfully registered for the Masters degree.

According to the MOU and departmental rules, each role player has specific responsibilities as outlined below:

2.1 The role of the supervisor

- The supervisor's primary role is to guide the student rather than provide active assistance.
- The supervisor expects regular contact (either face-to-face or via email) at least once every three months. It is the student's responsibility to arrange these sessions and report on their progress.
- Research reports must be clearly written in an acceptable standard of English. The supervisor is not responsible for "rough editing" and will focus solely on content and structure.
- The supervisor will provide feedback on any submitted work within one month.
- If the Master's study extends beyond three years, the supervisor must provide motivation to faculty administration for the student's continuation.

2.2 The role of the student

- The student is responsible for arranging sessions (either in-person or virtual) with the supervisor and submitting written reports for discussion.
- The student must ensure that no similar study has already been undertaken.
- The student is responsible for arranging language editing and applying the correct referencing styles.
- The student must write the research proposal and final report under the guidance of the supervisor and other lecturers.
- The student should have access to a laptop/PC and internet off-campus to complete the research report.

3. Research-based Master's Degree versus Coursework Master's Degree

The Department of Informatics offers two research-based Master's degrees and one coursework Master's degree:

- **Research-based Master's degrees:** MCom (Informatics) and MIT (Information Systems)
- **Coursework Master's degree:** MIT (ICT Management)

For the research-based Master's degrees, students are required to submit a full Masters dissertation along with a research article, potentially for journal publication. In the



coursework Master's degree, students complete course modules at the Masters level and a mini-dissertation.

This brochure provides information on the two research-based Master's degrees. For more information on the coursework Master's degree, please download the MIT (ICT Management) brochure from the Informatics website: <https://shorturl.at/IROCv>, or email Mrs Rhona van der Merwe on: rhona.vandermewer@up.ac.za.

4. Application and Registration Process for a Research-based Master's Degree

4.1 Admission requirements

For the MCom(Informatics) degree:

1. Relevant **BComHons degree**
2. A cumulative weighted average of **at least 65%** for the **BComHons degree**

For the MIT(Information Systems) degree:

1. **Honours degree** in a **relevant information technology field**
2. Cumulative weighted average of **at least 65%** for the **honours degree**

For international students:

1. Provide proof of SAQA accreditation. Visit the SAQA website on: www.saqa.org.za
2. In some cases the following tests might be required:
 - Test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL): www.ets.org/toefl
 - International English Language Testing System (IELTS): www.ielts.org15

[For more information visit: <https://www.up.ac.za/international-cooperation-division>]

All prospective students are expected to register for and complete the **INF seminar module** on *Advanced topics in IS Research* before they will be allowed to register for either of the researched-based Master's degrees. This seminar is presented in the first 6 months of the year and is aimed at preparing prospective students for their Master's studies. Prospective students must obtain at least **60%** for all seminar assignments in order to register for the Master's programme. Important to note is that the seminar can only be attended **ONCE**. If a prospective student fails the seminar, s/he will not be allowed to register for it again and will therefore forfeit their chance of applying for a research-based Masters in the Department of Informatics. Successful students can proceed to register for one of the research-based Master's programmes in the following year.

Supervision of postgraduate students is a time-consuming process, and as any Department has only a limited supervision capacity, the Department **reserves the right to limit the**



number of students accepted into the programme. All reasonable measures will though be undertaken to ensure that students who meet the minimum requirements are accepted.

4.2 Application dates

The official closing date for research-based Masters applications for 2025 is:

- MCom(Informatics): 30 September 2024
- MIT(Information Systems): 31 October 2024

We cannot guarantee the processing of Masters applications for candidates who apply online after the 31st of October 2024. However, these applications will be considered in 2025 for the 2026 intake.

4.3 Steps to apply for a research-based Masters

1. **Step 1:** Familiarise yourself with the research areas of possible supervisors in the Department of Informatics, as only topics in line with these areas will be considered. You can find information on a possible supervisor and their research focus areas/topics of interest here: [Department of Informatics Individual Research Focus Areas](#).
2. **Step 2:** Email a potential supervisor and inform him/her of your intend to apply for a research-based Masters (either the MCom(Informatics) or MIT (IS) degree) and the topic you want to pursue, to seek their approval of taking you on as a possible Master's student. Keep their email confirmation reply on file as you will need to submit this with your Master's application.
3. **Step 3:** Complete the online Google Form Masters Application Questionnaire at: [Online Masters Application Questionnaire](#).
4. **Step 4:** Apply online for the research-based degree (either MCom(Informatics) or MIT(Information Systems)) at: <https://www.up.ac.za/online-application>.
[Watch this video if you need more information on the registration process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpuOW48BfD4>.]
[Please note that the MCom(Informatics) degree is administered by the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS), whereas the MIT(Information Systems) degree is administered by the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (EBIT).]
5. **Step 5:** Send the following information/documents to Mrs Rhona van der Merwe via email: rhona.vandermerwe@up.ac.za. [Note: she is our administrative post-graduate liaison within the Department of Informatics and your direct link to information should you have any administrative questions related to the **academic side** of your application].
 1. Your Name and Surname
 2. The name of the research-based Master's degree that you have applied for i.e. MCom(Informatics) or MIT(IS)



3. An electronic copy of your Honours Research Paper in .pdf format
4. The name of your potential Master's supervisor
5. A copy of the email you received back from your potential Master's supervisor (indicating that s/he is willing to take you on as a Master's student, should your application be successful).
6. A confirmation that you've completed the online Google Form Master's Application Questionnaire (you can merely state in your email that you've completed it – we will be able to locate it online).
6. **Step 6:** The University's online application system will route your application to the post graduate coordinator for consideration once you've applied online. Once a decision is made by the departmental post-graduate committee, the decision will be captured on the system and you will be informed accordingly. **Note:** The committee will not be able to process your application if there are any outstanding information or documents (see step 5 above), so please assist us in providing everything that's needed at once.

4.4 Registration for the INF Seminar module

Note that although you apply online for one of the research-based Master's degrees, you first have to complete the INF Seminar (for non-degree purposes) successfully, before you will be allowed into one of the Master's programs (for degree purposes). The system will therefore notify that you've been allowed to the INF Seminar (see **step 3** below for the **specific program** it will allow you to, depending on the Master's degree you want to register for). Once you receive proof that your application for one of the two programs (the system's **codes** for the **INF Seminar**) has been successful, you need to register for this program for non-degree purposes. Once this is done, you will be recognised as a **Master's preparatory student** and we will add you to the class list of the **INF Seminar** on our side. **Note:** This seminar is thus attended by students who have preliminarily been successful in their applications for MCom(Informatics), MIT(Information Systems), and PhD(IT).

Steps to take to register online for the **INF Seminar** as from 4 January 2025:

1. **Step 1:** Login to your student portal.
2. **Step 2:** In the middle of the page you will find the block **Student Centre**. Click on this block.
3. **Step 3:** Follow the steps to register for the INF Seminar.

Note:

- If you applied for the **MCom(Informatics)** degree, you need to register for the INF Seminar (in the EMS Faculty) under the following program: **Class no 8723, plan 07290001, Non-examination purposes**.
- If you applied for the **MIT(Information Systems)** degree, you need to register for the INF Seminar (in the EBIT Faculty) under the following program: **Program EN003 Engineering PG, plan 12290001, Non-examination purposes**.



- **Note:** Although you register for a specific program, all students who are preliminary successful with their research-based Master's application will attend the same INF Seminar. In both cases the code **ZZZ 777 Master's preparatory** will appear on your academic record.
4. **Step 4:** Complete the **Student Contract** and **upload** it onto the system as indicated. **Note:** You **ALSO** have to submit a **hard copy** of the original contract. It can be submitted in one of the following ways:
 - **Hand in printed contract** at the **Student Service Centre (SSC)**; *or*
 - **Courier a printed contract** to the University of Pretoria (Courier address: Student Contracts, University of Pretoria, University Road, Hillcrest, 0002); *or*
 - **Drop a printed contract physically into the post box** located at the **Engineering Entrance 3** in University Road.
 5. **Step 5:** E-mail a copy of the contract to Ms Demas (verona.demas@up.ac.za). **Note:** Until both copies of the contract (the **hard copy** and the **electronic copy**) are received, you will not be able to register for the INF Seminar as there will be a block on your student account.
 6. **Step 6:** Pay the INF Seminar fee of about R2000 (the 2024-amount was R1655) and send a copy of the proof of Payment (POP) to Ms Rose Malinga at: rose.malinga@up.ac.za to waive the balance on your student account. Remember to always use your UP student number in all correspondence with the University. **Note:** You **do NOT** have to pay the full UP registration fee. Use your **student number** as the **reference number** when you make the payment. UP's Banking details (ABSA or Standard Bank) are available here: [UP Banking details](#).
 7. **Step 7:** Once both formats of your contract were sent and your payment was done, please send an email to Mr Kenneth Nkanyana at: kenneth.nkanyana@up.ac.za and ask him to assist you with the 'block lift' on your registration. Admin will then register you. Please copy Mrs Rhona van der Merwe in your email to Kenneth at: rhona.vandermerwe@up.ac.za. Remember to always use your UP student number in all correspondence with the University. You will now be registered for the INF Seminar (the program code applicable to the Master's you applied for) and on your Proof of Registration you will see the **ZZZ 777 Master's preparatory** module.

Once you are registered for the INF Seminar, you will be added to the **INF Seminar S1 2025** ClickUP page. This is where you will find all the information regarding the seminar such as the class and assessment schedule and the course content. **Note:** We do NOT make use of the **ZZZ777** ClickUP page for the INF seminar, so you can ignore this page.

4.5 INF Seminar module details

Preliminary dates for the INF Seminar



Note: These dates are subject to change – classes will be presented on a Thursday.

Date THURSDAY	Activity	Time	Venue
6 March 2025	Seminar class	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
10 April 2025	Seminar class	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
8 May 2025	Seminar class	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
29 May 2025	Seminar class	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
27 June 2025	Due date final assignment		

INF Seminar Module coordinator contact details

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

INF Seminar Learning Content

1. The philosophy behind the main research paradigms in IS research. 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.

INF Seminar Assessment

Students complete assignments and work towards a research proposal which is submitted as the final assignment for the Seminar module.

Application for ethical clearance once your research proposal has been accepted

MCom (Informatics) students: Applications submitted online. Go to: [EMS Faculty Research Ethics Committee](#)

MIT (Information Systems) students: Applications submitted online. Go to: [EBIT Faculty Research Ethics Committee](#)

4.6 Registration and re-registration for the MCom(Informatics) and MIT(Information Systems) degrees (after successful completion of INF Seminar)

Once you have passed the **INF Seminar module** with a **minimum of 60%** (in July), you will be eligible to register for the research-based Master's program you were accepted into, starting in January of the following year. Thereafter, you must re-register annually for your Master's



degree. Beginning in the third year of registration, you will need a permission letter from your supervisor confirming satisfactory progress before you will be allowed to re-register.

You will follow the same procedure to register (as stipulated in section 3.4), but you need to now pay the full university required registration fee. Once you've paid and submitted your contract (both copies – electronic and hard copy), you can complete your on-line registration on your student portal under 'registration'.

Note:

- If you applied for the **MCom(Informatics)** degree and passed the INF Seminar successfully, you need to register for the **INF 890** module (in the **EMS Faculty**).
- If you applied for the **MIT(Information Systems)** degree and passed the INF Seminar successfully, you need to register for the **ISY 890** module (in the **EBIT Faculty**).

Any registration problems indicated by statuses such as '*Financially unsuitable*' and '*Hold*', must be directed, via email, to Faculty Administration:

EMS Faculty Admin for MCom(Informatics) – INF 890

Ms Lerato Krappie	EMS Foyer, Room 1-5	012 420 5387	lerato.krappie@up.ac.za
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EBIT Faculty Admin for MIT(Information Systems – ISY 890

Mr Kenneth Nkanyana	Eng. Building 1, Room 6-6	012 420 6735	kenneth.nkanyana@up.ac.za
Mr Matome Raphasha	Eng. Building 1 Room 6-7	012 420 5315	Raphasha.mw@up.ac.za

International queries & 'Hold' status

Mrs Jenny Lambinon	jenny.lambinon@up.ac.za
Mr Smart Maqubela	smart.maqubela@up.ac.za

For both **INF 890** and **ISY 890** the **compulsory dissertation** which you have to complete for the Master's degree, is typically a 35000-word individual report of independent research under the guidance of your 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.



5. Final Submission of Research-based Master's Dissertation

Please note the following dates when you consider the submission of your final dissertation:

- **30 June or 27 February:** The student informs the supervisor that s/he plans to submit before 31 August or 30 April.
- **31 August or 30 April:** The student submits a signed submission form and 2 examination copies (both ring bound and electronic copies).
- **15 January or 15 June:** The student submits e-copies with corrections (as suggested by external examiners); the supervisor checks that all corrections have been done; the student submits his/her UPeTD upload form.
- **22 January or 22 June:** the student submits hardbound copies of his/her final dissertation.

6. Study Fees

Please visit the following page on the UP website for more information on study fees: [Postgraduate Tuition Fees](#)

Or email the SSC at: ssc@up.ac.za

Mrs Sophy Seefane	sophy.seefane@up.ac.za
Ms Rose Malinga	Rose.malinga@up.ac.za
Ms Komane Lehong	komane.lehong@up.ac.za

7. Financial Enquiries

Full financial information is available at: <https://www.up.ac.za/student-fees>. This includes information on payment arrangements, banking details, 2,5% discount, family rebate, UP residences, discontinuation of studies, students studying with a bursary, etc.

Information on how to view your account is available at:

<https://www.up.ac.za/student-fees/article/2735975/statement-of-account>

Information on how when to pay what is available at:

<https://www.up.ac.za/student-fees/article/2735925/when-to-pay-what->

For payments made which are not reflecting on your account, please forward the proof of payment (POP) to: payments@up.ac.za. Note: Payments may take up to 5 days to reflect.



8. General Information

- 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

