

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (MPA)

What is the MPA?

The purpose of the course work **Master of Public Administration (MPA - 07251151)** is to obtain a professional post-graduate degree in public administration which is the public sector's offering equivalent to the private sector's Master of Business Administration (MBA). As a professional degree for the public sector, the MPA prepares individuals to serve as managers in the executive arm of national, provincial, and local government and increasingly in non-governmental organisations.

What is the core focus of the MPA?

The MPA places a focus on the systematic investigation of executive organisation and management functions. Facilitation includes the roles, development and principles of public administration, public policy management and implementation. The MPA equips the graduates with skills and knowledge covering a broad range of topics and disciplines relevant to the public sector.

What entails the Curriculum?

There are five prescribed compulsory modules, two elective modules and a mini-dissertation (PAD 898). All must be completed to obtain the degree. The prescribed compulsory modules must be completed successfully in year one before candidates may register for the elective modules in year two. Consult the Postgraduate Regulations and Syllabi, Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences regarding the curriculum for the course work MPA (07251151) available on the University of Pretoria website www.up.ac.za.

What are the prerequisites for admission to the degree?

Interested candidates must consult the Postgraduate Regulations and Syllabi of the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences for the minimum admission requirements. The following requirements are important:

- 1) A relevant bachelor's degree with an academic record with an average of 60 % of the subjects completed.
- 2) At least three years administrative and managerial experience, preferably in the public sector, as deemed adequate and appropriate by the Director of the School of Public Management and Administration.

A maximum of 50 students can be admitted by the SPMA Departmental Postgraduate Committee.

How do candidates apply for admission?

The period for application is 1 June to 30 September every year for the following academic year. No late applications will be allowed. Shortlisting will take place during October and the Postgraduate Committee will inform the successful/unsuccessful applications via the Faculty Administration towards the end of November of the result.

The **application process** is as follows:

- 1) Complete the application documents on line before the due date.

- 2) The application should consist of the following:
 - a) Online application via the university website (www.up.ac.za)
 - b) Relevant application fee applies and can be paid at the university cashiers or an Internal Transfer can be made.
 - c) Certified copies of the official academic transcripts.
 - d) Certified Copies of all qualifications obtained.
 - e) Full Curriculum Vitae.
 - f) Hard copy of the application to be submitted before or on the due date to the Postgraduate Coordinator of the School of Public Management and Administration, University of Pretoria.

- 3) **Application fee:** Consult student affairs.

- 4) **Note: Application does not mean admission.**

How do candidates register for MPA studies?

Successful candidates register at the first day of the first block and register for all the compulsory modules for year one. Note that students need to register every year until the qualification is completed.

What about class attendance?

As per the regulations of the University of Pretoria - class attendance is compulsory for all the modules. Classes are offered on a block release system that is 1 x week (Monday - Friday) per module, 8:30 – 16:00.

Time table for academic semesters.

Consult the SPMA website for the time table for the classes and the examination dates.

What is the duration of study and maximum time to finish a qualification?

The programme extends over a minimum period of two years, but must be completed within three years after the first registration for the degree. The Dean may, at the recommendation of the Departmental Postgraduate Committee, cancel the registration of a student during any academic year if his/her academic progress is not satisfactory.

What entails the teaching methodology?

A modular approach forms the basis of the overall teaching methodology. For each module there is a comprehensive study guide comprising of an organisational component and study component. The organisational component deals with :

- 1) The general premise and educational approach.
- 2) Important contact information.
- 3) Study guide, study material and reference documents.
- 4) Time arrangements.
- 5) Assessment details.

The study guide is a tool to successfully assist students through the learning module and contains a comprehensive selection of study material that will form the basis for the learning module in terms of reading comprehension, content knowledge and preparation for class presentations, lectures and the final examination. The study guide will be available on the ClickUP system (for registered students only) per module code and all students must obtain all listed study material prior to attending the scheduled block week for the learning module. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the prescribed book(s) and where applicable download, print the listed prescribed sources per study unit.

What is the assessment process and important criteria?

Each module involves the development of skills and continuous assessment on the basis of specified learning outcomes. Individual class presentations will be assessed based on assessment criteria. Integrated assessment will be done through an assignment and assignment reader to be handed in on a specified date. The summative assessment will take the form of a written examination as scheduled per MPA examination time table and available on ClickUp.

In summary the following assessment opportunities are provided:

- 1) **Module mark**. A module mark will comprise of:

- a) Class assessment (Where applicable and method/type will be noted as such in the study guide)
 - b) Assignment Reader (Where applicable)
 - c) Individual Assignment
 - d) Written examination
- 2) **Written Examination.** To qualify for the written examination, students must obtain an average module mark of 45% or higher. The average between the module mark and the mark obtained during the examination will constitute the final mark for a specific module. A student need to obtain an average mark of 50% to pass a module. Faculty Administration will provide the official results as no results will be made available by the SPMA staff.

Summary of overall examination and pass requirements

- 1) A subminimum of 45% is required in the examination in each of the modules.
- 2) Credit is obtained for each module in which a final mark of at least 50% has been achieved.
- 3) Only one supplementary examination in a maximum of two modules is permitted.
- 4) A candidate may not present himself/herself for an examination in the same module more than twice, except with the approval of the Dean, on the recommendation of the Director of the School of Public Management and Administration.
- 5) In the context of this regulation the phrase "may not sit an examination more than twice in the same module" as it appears in General Regulation G.32(b).2, implies that a candidate may not sit for an examination in a module, including one supplementary examination, more than three times.
- 6) Supplementary examinations cover the same subject matter as was the case for the examinations.

How does the mini-dissertation (PAD 898 Module) link with the overall modular approach?

The process flow for completion of the mini-dissertation is available on Click up - NME 801 pages. The following are applicable for successful completion of the mini-dissertation:

- 1) Attend NME 801 Research Methodology module.
- 2) Compile a research proposal as the assignment for the NME 801 module – a year mark will be allocated.
- 3) Register in year two of the study for the PAD 898 mini-dissertation and it is the responsibility of the student to maintain the registration if not completed during the year.

- 4) Submit amended research proposal (or a new proposal) to the SPMA postgraduate committee.
- 5) A supervisor will be allocated.
- 6) Compile a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with deliverables and mile stones.
- 7) Obtain ethical clearance.
- 8) Conduct research in consultation with the supervisor.
- 9) Prepare final draft.
- 10) Submit draft for language, layout editing and submit language certificate from a subject language specialist. A data base is available on such UP registered language practitioners.
- 11) Submit for examination.

Examination of mini-dissertation

- 1) Submission of final work must be submitted during the 1st week of April for examination in May and 1st week of September for examination in October.
- 2) If required, corrections/alterations suggested by the examiner to be conducted to the satisfaction of the supervisor before final mark submitted to Faculty Administration as per cut-off dates for graduation.
- 3) Results will be made by Faculty Administration and not by the supervisor or any staff member of the SPMA

What entails the Plagiarism Policy?

Consult the General regulations: Section A G30 – 41 & G57 – 60 of the University of Pretoria pertaining to postgraduate matters.

What entails the policy for deregistration or termination of registration?

Should a candidate fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress at any phase of his/her period of study, the supervisor may, in consultation with Faculty Administration provide the candidate a warning letter indicating the seriousness of the matter. The candidate will then be placed on probation and be monitored for a period of three months. Should the candidate fail to rectify his/her progress and/or improve his/her performance, he or she will have his/her registration terminated by the Dean on the recommendation of the Postgraduate Committee (General Regulation G.4).

Are there any appeal procedures against termination of registration?

A candidate can appeal the decision to terminate his/her registration. An Appeals Committee would be formed consisting of the Vice-Principal responsible for Research and Postgraduate Studies and two members of the Senate Committee for Research. The two members of the Senate Committee for Research are appointed by the Vice-Principal. The candidate must state his/her case in writing and a written response should be solicited from the supervisor. The Appeals Committee will base its judgement on the written submissions. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

Who are the important role-players?

MPA Programme Leader.

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