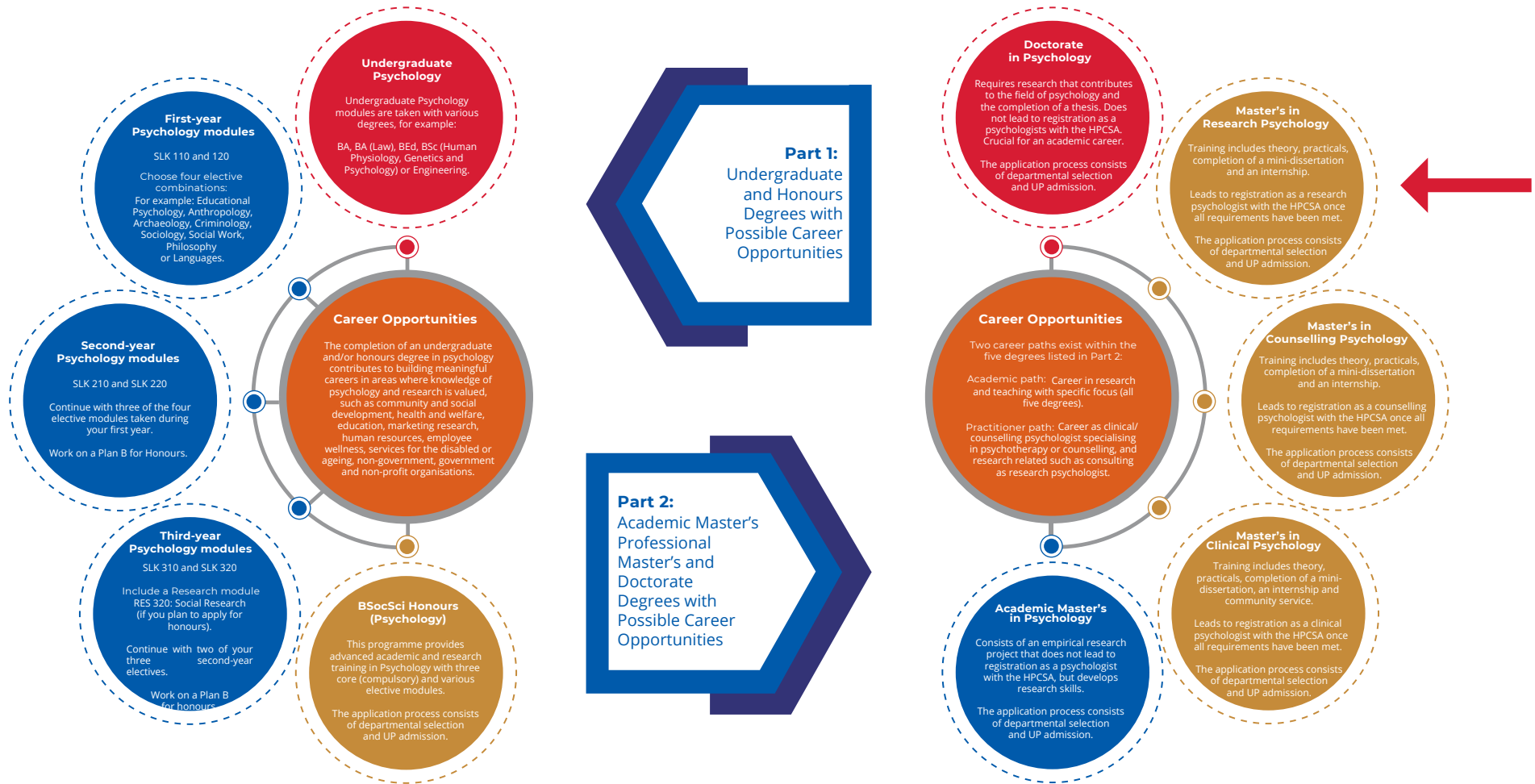


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Information about the Professional MA Research Psychology Programme

What is a Research Psychologist

Research Psychology is a professional psychology category concerned with the use, development, and application of research methodologies and the advancement of psychological knowledge in understanding human behaviour. Research psychologists have advanced assessment knowledge, including the use of psychological tools, administration, scoring, and interpretation of psychological assessments. They contribute to developing, validating, translating, and adapting psychological tests for the South African population.

Programme Description

The MA Research Psychology programme provides integrated professional and academic training equipping the candidate to function as a specialist researcher in psychology and leads the student to be able to apply for an internship in Research Psychology and, thereafter, undergo a Professional Board Exam in Research Psychology. After successfully completing a Professional Board Exam, the student can apply to the Professional Board for Psychology of the HPCSA for registration as a Research Psychologist. Such registration will be subject to any professional conditions and requirements stipulated by the Professional Board for Psychology and the HPCSA at the time of registration.

Qualification Journey (+- 2 Years)

In order to practice as a Research Psychologist in South Africa, students need to complete a Master's programme (i.e., MA or MSc) in Research Psychology at a Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) accredited tertiary institution in South Africa. This full-time programme is presented at the University of Pretoria (UP) for one year. Following this year, students will then need to complete a supervised paid internship in Research Psychology at an accredited institution in South Africa, which takes one year. Once a student has completed their internship, they will need to write and pass the HPCSA Board Exam in Research Psychology. Only after completing this 2-year qualification journey can a person register with the HPCSA and practice as a Research Psychologist in South Africa.

Application Period:

- 01 April to 31 May (annually)

Application Criteria:

- BSocSci Honours or BA Honours in Psychology **or** a relevant honours programme (not educational or industrial psychology)
- A cumulative weighted average of at least 70% for the honours programme

Admission into the Programme through the Selection Process:

- Admission into the programme is by selection only
- All applications are evaluated by a selection committee and shortlisted
- Shortlisted applicants are invited to participate in a selection process
- Through the selection process, suitable applicants are identified for admission
- Selection is highly competitive, with only a small number of places available each year for the admission of students
- Given the competitive nature of this programme, all applicants are encouraged to apply to as many institutions which offer this programme
- Due to the large number of applications received by UP each year, applicants are not provided detailed and/or individualised feedback if their application is unsuccessful

Structure:

- The programme comprises one year of full-time academic study and one year of professional training, 50% of the programme entails advanced theoretical and practical coursework; and 50% entails a research component, which takes the form of a mini-dissertation
- In addition, the programme entails a period of professional internship in Research Psychology

Admission into the Programme Requires Registration for the Following Modules:

Year 1:

PSY 801: Research methodology

This module exposes students to research methodology, including quantitative and qualitative methodology, as well as mixed methods

PSY 802: Project management

This module equips students with a diverse set of practical research skills to apply in various settings. Students are exposed to community research theory, programme monitoring and evaluation, and policy development

PSY 803: Psychological theory

The module introduces students to theories relevant to research in psychology. These theories deal with new developments related to Research Psychology, thus providing students with opportunities to identify research problems and questions relevant to their own research

PSY 804: Psychometrics

This module will demonstrate the process of test development from the perspective of Classical Test Theory (CTT) and Item Response Theory (IRT)

PSY 895: Mini-dissertation: Research Psychology

A research project under the guidance of a study leader is done. The mini-dissertation must be on a topic with a psychological perspective. It is expected from the student to conceptualise, plan, execute and document the research

Year 2:

PSY 895: Mini-dissertation: Research Psychology

Continuation of the research project under the guidance of a study leader (see description under year 1)

PSY 805: Internship: Research Psychology

The aim of this module is to enable students to participate in a period of professional internship in Research Psychology

Career Opportunities:

In South Africa, Research Psychologists can go on to work in a variety of areas once registered and qualified, including:

- Research centres, corporations, non-profit organisations and government
- Educational institutions, such as universities, which are responsible for training students in Research Psychology and conducting research that advances the science of Research Psychology
- Undertaking of psychological assessment activities in a variety of settings (health, counselling, education, commerce, etc.).