University of Pretoria Yearbook 2017

PhD (04260004)

Duration of study	2 years
Total credits	360

Programme information

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

1. Research methodology (RHP 902) 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 904)
An oral defence of the research proposal including an assessment of the feasibility of the thesis statement, research question or questions and argument to be developed in the DPhil thesis is required. A draft research proposal including a bibliography that covers the main fields to be covered by the study, the thesis 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 thesis. (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 906) (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.

The criterion for the award of the doctorate is original research. The degree will not be conferred until work equivalent to at least two years of study has been completed.

Also consult General Regulations G.42-G.56.

Admission requirements

Subject to the stipulations of the relevant General Regulations, a candidate for the PhD programme must be in possession of at least an MPhil degree, or an equivalent degree.

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

The Faculty Board may grant exemption from the above conditions.

A candidate for the DPhil PhD programme must submit a writing portfolio consisting of the MPhil mini-dissertation/dissertation and/or other recent research-based essays, assignments or the like, as well as a letter of motivation and a preliminary research statement (an 800 word description of the proposed research field indicating a research topic, the broad scope of the proposed study, a tentative research problem and an indication of how the proposed doctorate will contribute to scholarship in the relevant field).

A candidate will only be admitted to the PhD programme if he/she obtained at least 65% (or the equivalent of this mark) for the dissertation or mini-dissertation of the preceding master's degree (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 PhD 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 input of an independent expert) before making a final decision.

The dean, on advice of the postgraduate committee, may advise a candidate to enrol for the MPhil: Research programme instead of the PhD programme.

Additional requirements

Subject to the stipulations of the relevant General Regulations, a candidate for the DPhil programme must be in possession of at least an MPhil degree, or an equivalent degree.

Foreign qualifications are subject to SAQA evaluation.

The Faculty Board may grant exemption from the above conditions.

A candidate will only be admitted to the DPhil programme if he/she complies with a standard of competence in applicable subjects as determined by the head of department, also taking into account the candidate's academic record and any applicable experience.

A candidate will only be admitted to the DPhil programme if the Faculty can provide a suitable supervisor in light of the applicant's preliminary research proposal.

Pass with distinction

Thesis and article
The DPhil degree is conferred by virtue of a thesis, and an oral defence of the thesis. The topic of the thesis must be relevant to a discipline in the field of legal studies, and be approved by the Dean. (See the relevant General Regulation for finalisation of the thesis.) The final copy of the thesis must be accompanied by a proof of submission of an article to an accredited journal. The article must be based on the research that the student has conducted for the thesis 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 thesis is properly prepared by the student.

Oral defence of the thesis
After receipt of the reports of the external examiners, the supervisor arranges an oral defence opportunity for the candidate chaired by the head of department, during which the candidate is required to do a presentation in defence of the thesis.

Curriculum: Year 1

Minimum credits: 360

Core modules

Research methodology 902 (RHP 902) - Credits: 5.00
Research proposal and oral defence of the research proposal 904 (RHP 904) - Credits: 5.00
Thesis and oral defence: Law 990 (DPI 990) - Credits: 360.00

Curriculum: Final year

Minimum credits: 360

Core modules

Research proposal and oral defence of the research proposal 904 (RHP 904) - Credits: 5.00
Thesis and oral defence: Law 990 (DPI 990) - Credits: 360.00

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.