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| **Department** | Industrial and Organisational Psychology | | |
| **Discipline** | Industrial Psychology | | |
| **Research Focus Area** | Open distance e-learning (ODeL), higher education | | |
| **Supervision Team** | Dr L Tonelli, Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology  Dr Magda Bezuidenhout, Department of Human Resource Management  Dr Aleksandra Furtak, Department of Human Resource Management  Ms T Kola, Department of Human Resource Management  Dr LSA Mbati, Open Distance Learning Research Unit (ODLRU) | | |
| **Total intake for 2024** | 4 (3 Masters and 1 PhD) | | |
| Industrial and Organisational Psychology Departmental link: [IOP Research Focus Areas](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Economic-and-Management-Sciences/Schools,-departments,-bureau,-centres-&-institutes/School-of-Management-Sciences/Department-of-Industrial-and-Organisational-Psychology/IOP-Research-Focus-Areas) | | | |
| **Supervision Team details:** | **Academic Profile** | **Capacity** | |
| **Dr L Tonelli**  Office : NS Radipere 3-108  Email: [leyl@unisa.ac.za](mailto:leyl@unisa.ac.za)  ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6092-6740> | **Academic profile**  Dr Louise Tonelli is a lecturer in the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology. She publishes in the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology in national and international journals, book chapters in books and has presented papers both nationally and internationally at various conferences. Her field of interests are systems psychodynamics, qualitative research methods, such as Interactive Qualitative Analysis (IQA) and Listening Posts (LP), and ODeL. Dr Tonelli supervises both masters and doctoral students. | **Capacity**  1 Master’s | |
| **Dr LSA Mbati**  Office: 004 Robert Sobukwe Bldg.  Email: [mbatilsa@unisa.ac.za](mailto:mbatilsa@unisa.ac.za)  ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1182-2654> | **Academic Profile**  Dr Lydia Mbati is a Senior Researcher in the Open Distance Learning Research Unit (formerly Institute for Open and Distance Learning) at Unisa. She is also a Professional Development and Research Associate in the Academic Development Open Virtual Hub (ADOVH) DHET Project. Dr Mbati holds a master’s in educational technology from the University of the Free State, South Africa and a Doctorate in Curriculum Development and Instructional Design from Unisa. Her research focus is on online learning from a pedagogical and social justice standpoint. She is currently involved in professional development of academic staff in pedagogic approaches for enhancing 4IR skills in university students. Dr Mbati has supervised several postgraduate students, has presented in national and international conferences and is widely published in local and international journals. Her predominant research methodological approach is qualitative and mixed methods. | **Capacity**  1 Master’s  1 PhD | |
| **Dr Aleksandra Furtak**  Office: NSR 3-10  Email: [hyraam@unisa.ac.za](mailto:hyraam@unisa.ac.za)  ORCID: [0000-0003-1180-5835](http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1180-5835) | **Academic Profile**  Dr Aleksandra Furtak is a senior lecturer in the Department of Human Resource Management, lecturing in compensation practices. She is registered with the SABPP and the HPCSA as an Industrial Psychologist. In 2020 she graduated with a PhD degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology through Unisa focusing on well-being, which is also her main research interest. She furthermore co-authored a book on remuneration management, has published articles in accredited journals and co-supervises postgraduate students in the Human Resource Management department. | **Capacity**  1 Master’s  (Joint super-  vision) | |
| **Dr M Bezuidenhout**  Office: NSR 3-11  Email: bezuiml@unisa.ac.za  ORCID: [0000-0001-8873-7573](http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8873-7573) | **Academic Profile**  Dr Magda Bezuidenhout is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Human Resource Management. She completed her PhD in 2016. She has a strong Human Resource practitioner and management background. Magda has over two decades wide-ranging South African Government and Parastatal institution experience in the field of Human Resource and specifically remuneration management. She is a registered general practitioner at the South African Board of Personnel Practitioners (SABPP); and a registered Master Reward Specialist with the South African Reward Association (SARA), She has published several articles in accredited journals. As a learning facilitator, Dr Bezuidenhout is involved in post-graduate supervision (both masters and doctoral students). and lecturing in the field of remuneration management. She furthermore contributed chapters in Human Resource Management books and is a co-author of the book: “Remuneration Management: A South African Perspective”. Her main research interest concerns employee remuneration, including executive remuneration (both within private and public sectors). Her predominant research methodological approach is quantitative methods. | **Capacity**  1 Master’s  **(Joint supervision)** | |
| **Ms T Kola**  **E-mail:** | **Academic Profile**  Ms T Kola is an academic assistant in the Department of Human Resource Management. She prefers qualitative research. | **Capacity**  **1 Master’s**  (Joint supervision) | |
| **Model of supervision** | Students will be allocated to a supervisor but will be required to work independently within the requirements of higher degree studies. Additionally, students will be guided through online tutoring regarding:   1. Research methodology 2. Doing a literature review 3. How to write a research proposal 4. Ethics in research 5. APA 7th edition Referencing   As part of the qualification, students will be expected to write and present a full research proposal to a panel of academics for approval, and obtain ethics clearance from the institutional ethics committee, before continuing with the actual research project. | | |
| **Application procedure** | Apply for a space in this focus area using the **formal UNISA online application procedure** outlined on <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default>.  Remember you must first apply for a **student number** | | |
| **Selection criteria: Master’s/Doctorate** | Refer to the UNISA application website for general M&D qualification admission criteria. In addition to the admission criteria contained in the *my*Choice brochure, applicants are required to prepare:  **Masters students:** a research outline (max 5 pages) describing the following:   1. A proposed topic and motivation for the study 2. Research problem and objectives 3. A brief review of relevant literature 4. Research design: Motivation for a quantitative or qualitative study 5. Ethics considerations and access to the research context 6. List of references (use APA 7th edition referencing guidelines)   **Doctorate students:**a research outline (max 20 pages) describing the following:   1. A proposed topic and motivation for the study 2. Problem statement and research aims 3. A brief review of relevant literature 4. Research design: Motivation for:    1. a qualitative/ mixed-method choice of study    2. Research participants: Population and sampling strategy    3. Measuring instruments    4. Research procedure    5. Qualitative data analysis 5. Ethics and access to research context 6. Envisaged contribution of the study 7. List of references (use APA 7th edition referencing guidelines)   🖝 To prepare your research outline as required above, **GO TO** the IO Psychology departmental website to **download a research outline guide**:     * **Masters students**: [Apply: Department of IO Psychology/Masters-degrees](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Economic-and-Management-Sciences/Schools,-departments,-bureau,-centres-&-institutes/School-of-Management-Sciences/Department-of-Industrial-and-Organisational-Psychology/Masters-degrees) * **Doctorate students:** [Apply: Department of IO Psychology/Doctoral-degrees](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Economic-and-Management-Sciences/Schools,-departments,-bureau,-centres-&-institutes/School-of-Management-Sciences/Department-of-Industrial-and-Organisational-Psychology/Doctoral-degrees)   🖝 On the front page indicate the relevant Research Focus Area (RFA) that you are applying for. It must be clear **HOW** your proposed study aligns with the topic and methodological focus of this RFA. | | |
| **Selection procedure** | In addition to minimum academic requirements, the following criteria will be applied to assess your research outline:   1. **Relevance to the Research focus area.** 2. **Academic merit of the research topic**: Quality in terms of originality and impact of the topic’s reach and significance toward adults in the African/South African-located work context. Applicants must justify the research problem (in practice and in terms of existing research gaps) and the contribution of the study to advance knowledge in the field. 3. Demonstrate clarity about the **core constructs** and a fair knowledge base of the most recent research. 4. Evidence of **critical thinking**: The candidate’s skills and abilities in analysing, applying, and evaluating information. 5. **Academic writing skills:** The extent to which the research outline convey coherent and well-developed arguments that are supported with relevant evidence; the logically sequence of paragraphs; the use of appropriate diction and sentence structures, and the use of correct grammar, punctuation, spelling and syntax. 6. **Access** to the research context and research participants. | | |
| **Documents to support application** | 1. **Proposed research outline** (max 5 pages [masters] or max 20 pages [PhD]) 2. **One-page** abbreviated **CV** including: 3. Academic qualification 4. Work experience 5. Contact details 6. Personal motivation for the study 7. Previous research, if any | | |
| **Research scope** | Distance education as a distinctive type of educational delivery developed from correspondence education and currently includes various new types of delivery such as offline, digitally supported, internet supported and fully online learning. These various types of distance education all share the characteristic that students are separated from the participating institution in terms of space, place and time. Being separated from an institution allows students flexibility and choice, but it also may result in feelings of isolation, lack of peer support and not having access to on-campus resources. Technology often serves to bridge the various types of distance in an open distance e-learning (ODeL) context.  The Coronavirus pandemic disrupted nearly every aspect of higher education and institutions had to adopt online teaching and learning at an unprecedented rate. These abrupt changes came with hardly any time for institutions and academics to plan for, prepare and implement new systems and arrangements. Academic staff members may feel overburdened because of the additional responsibilities that online teaching brought. Predictions about post-pandemic future of digital learning is mixed. Some see a revolutionary change while others predict a moderate expansion and unevenness retaining some form of hybrid learning and teaching. The recent paradigm shift in the higher education sector envisions a sector in which digital technology is applied as an interconnected complex environment allowing for online teaching and learning. From the perspective of the lecturer as a professional service worker tasked with ensuring the satisfaction of fee-paying students as customers the student-lecturer relationship may have important ramifications for student throughput and lecturers work performance, well being etc and ultimately the larger system of Higher Education Institutions.  Finally, the growth of the private higher education sector in Africa remains low in terms of global standards. This sector, however, may assist in addressing deficiencies in the public sector, creating job opportunities, enhancing managerial competence and contributing to an entrepreneurial culture in a higher education context. | | |
| **Reading:**  **Subject Field** | **This is a selection of open access articles and books in this research focus area that you can access online on Google Scholar. ‎Further reading over and above these are essential (for instance, on higher education)**  Anderson, T. (Ed.). (2008). [*The theory and practice of online learning*](https://www.aupress.ca/books/120146-the-theory-and-practice-of-online-learning/)*.* Edmonton, AB: Athabasca University Press.  Anderson, T. (2016). [Theories for learning with emerging technologies.](https://bdigital.uvhm.edu.mx/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Emergence-and-Innovation-in-Digital-Learning.pdf#page=51) *Emergence and innovation in digital learning: Foundations and applications*, *1*, 35-50.  Bates, A. T. (2018). [*Teaching in a digital age: Guidelines for designing teaching and learning*](https://www.tonybates.ca/teaching-in-a-digital-age/).  Brown, T. & Mbati, LSA (2015). [Mobile Learning: moving past the myths and embracing the opportunities](http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/2071). *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning 16*(2).https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v16i2.2071  Conrad, D. & Openo, J. (2018). *Assessment Strategies for Online Learning: Engagement and Authenticity.* Edmonton, AB: Athabasca University Press.  Council on Higher Education (CHE). 2014. [*Distance Higher Education Programmes in a Digital Era: Good Practice Guide*.](https://open.saide.ngo/repository/opensaide/CHE_-_Distance_Higher_Education.pdf) Pretoria: CHE.  Dron, J., & Anderson, T. (2014). [*Teaching crowds: Learning and social media*](https://www.aupress.ca/books/120235-teaching-crowds/). Athabasca University Press.  Guppy, N., Verpoorten, D., Boud, D., Lin, L., Tai, J., & Bartolic, S. (2022). The post-COVID-19 future of digital learning in higher education: Views from educators, students, and other professionals in six countries. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *53*(6), 1750–1765. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13212>  Mhlanga, D., Denhere, V., & Moloi, T. (2022). COVID-19 and the Key Digital Transformation Lessons for Higher Education Institutions in South Africa. *Education Sciences*, *12*(7). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12070464>  Nixon, E., Scullion, R, (2022). Academic labour as professional service work? A psychosocial analysis of emotion in lecturer–student relations under marketization. *Human Relations, 75(9).* doi.org/10.1177/00187267211022270  Martins, N. & Ungerer, L.M. (2015). [Virtual teaching dispositions at a South African open distance learning institution.](https://cyberleninka.org/article/n/602149/viewer) *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 171, 929 – 936. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.211  Roberts, J.J. (2018). [Future and changing roles of staff in distance education: a study to identify training and professional development needs.](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01587919.2017.1419818?casa_token=KymnM7oQ2I0AAAAA%3ApN_mvlx2BaplpcTvXMVKK5UqkuoeWdMD8jz75-AuVc30x2AFc0pSXHtg_tVYEStnWGCjt4zP-Q) *Distance Education*, *39*(1), 37-53.  Ungerer, L.M. (2016). [Digital curation as a core competency in current learning and literacy: A higher education perspective.](https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/irrodl/1900-v1-n1-irrodl04876/1064702ar.pdf) *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 17*(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v17i5.2566>  Veletsianos, G. (Ed.). (2016). [*Emergence and innovation in digital learning: Foundations and applications*](https://www.aupress.ca/books/120258-emergence-and-innovation-in-digital-learning/). Athabasca University Press.  Weller, M. (2020). [*25 years of ed tech*.](https://www.aupress.ca/books/120290-25-years-of-ed-tech/) Athabasca University Press.  Qayyum, A., & Zawacki-Richter, O. (Eds) (2018). [Open and distance education in a digital age](https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/23278/1006878.pdf?sequence=1#page=8).  Subotzky, G., & Prinsloo, P. (2011). [Turning the tide: A socio-critical model and framework for improving student success in open distance learning at the University of South Africa.](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01587919.2011.584846?casa_token=j3XWLIj-V7cAAAAA:_FdRtYU2amPmepMj_a5Duu_iDY5JiKTs0LEJASv3Q86MhyGabdv_Qf3bMSoPkLpWZHnanB-ozxjxKoY)*Distance Education*, *32*(2), 177-193.  Zawacki-Richter, O., & Anderson, T. (Eds.). (2014). [*Online distance education: Towards a research agenda.*](https://www.aupress.ca/books/120233-online-distance-education/)  Zawacki-Richter, O., & Qayyum, A. (2019). [*Open and distance education in Asia, Africa and the Middle East: National perspectives in a digital age*](https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/23272/1006884.pdf?sequence=1)(p. 140). Springer Nature.  **Note:** If you have trouble in opening any of the links above, click on the link, then click on edit hyperlink, copy and paste the link in your browser and it should open. | | |
| **Reading :**  **Research Methodology** | **This is a selection of articles on relevant methodology in this research focus area that you can access online on Google Scholar. ‎Further reading over and above these is essential:**  Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2009). *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University.  Creswell, J.W., & Creswell, J.D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (5th Edition). Sage Publishing.  Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International journal of qualitative methods*, *2*(3), 21-35.  Petty, N. J., Thomson, O. P., & Stew, G. (2012). Ready for a paradigm shift? Part 2: Introducing qualitative research methodologies and methods. *Manual therapy*, *17*(5), 378-384.  Probert, A. (2006). Searching for an Appropriate Research Design: A Personal Journey. *Journal of Research Practice*, *2*(1).  Salkind, N.J, (2018). *Exploring research* (9th Edition). Pearson Education Limited.  Schurink, W. J. (2003). Qualitative research in management and organisational studies with reference to recent South African research. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, *1*(3), 2-14.  Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (2006). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences* (2nd Edition). University of Cape Town Press.  Zikmund, W.G., Babin, B.J., Carr, J.C., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business research methods* (9th Edition). Cengage Learning  Web Center for Social Research Methods visit the World Wide Web at: https://socialresearchmethods.net/ | | |
| **Other Open Access Resources:** | Commonwealth of Learning: <https://www.col.org/>  Contact North: <https://contactnorth.ca/>  Council on Higher Education: <https://www.che.ac.za/>  European Distance and E-learning Network: <https://www.eden-online.org/>  International Council of Open and Distance Education: <https://www.icde.org/>  International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning: <http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/about>  Online Learning Consortium: <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/>  South African Journal of Human Resource Management: [https://sajhrm.co.za/index.php/sajhrm#](https://sajhrm.co.za/index.php/sajhrm)  South African Journal of Industrial Psychology: [www.sajip.co.za](http://www.sajip.co.za) | | |
| **Potential M&D research focus areas or research projects**  To be directed by sound literature review, a basic methodological understanding of research as well as availability of research context and participants. | | | |
| **Unit of Analysis** | **Research Focus** | |
| **Individual, Group & Organisation Phenomena** | Assessment, instructional design, open educational resources (OERs), online learning communities, students-as-partners, student success, student support, | | |
| The use of technology in (higher) education in general and in resource-poor environments in particular, Artificial intelligence in education (AIED). Chat GP. | | |
| Professional development of educators, lifelong learning, quality assurance in online, distance and higher education | | |
| Innovation and change in an education context, transformative education | | |