

The PhD by Publication

In keeping with international trends in doctoral studies, UNISA will be offering an additional route to the doctoral degree in the form of the PhD/ DBL by Publication from 2024. This is a different route to the PhD than the usual one, which is often referred to as a PhD by thesis or a PhD by monograph. The PhD by Publication may not be something that you know much about, so this page is intended to offer you some basic information.

Please note: In order to accommodate the different scholarly conventions in different disciplines, all Colleges have developed their own College-specific PhD by Publication guidelines documents. If this is an option you would like to explore, you thus need to contact the M&D Offices in your College to discuss these College-specific requirements.

General Principles about the PhD by Publication:

- The PhD by Publication does not replace the traditional PhD by monograph that UNISA has always offered. This is an additional option that we are now making available to our doctoral students.
- Applicants will still need to meet the usual entry requirements for PhD studies. Colleges have put in place additional entry requirements for the PhD by Publication. These additional entry requirements are clearly articulated in the College-specific documents.
- All candidates pursuing the PhD by Publication are **required to complete a formal research proposal and obtain ethics approval**, just as is required for the PhD by monograph. Ethics approval must be granted **before any data collection may commence**.
- The same academic standards need to be met for the successful completion of the PhD by Publication. This should not be regarded as an easier option. There will be no compromises in terms of the scholarly rigour and quality assurance that UNISA upholds for all our qualifications.
- Not all students or projects will be suited for this option. The supervisors and managers in Postgraduate and Research Offices in the Colleges will be able to advise you about the suitability of this option for you. We recommend that you consult the experts in your Colleges and allow them to guide you when you decide

whether you want to pursue a PhD by Publication. These colleagues have your best interests at heart, and they will help you make the best possible decision for you and your project.

- You cannot use “old” work that you have published as part of the article requirements for the PhD by Publication.
- All the articles must be developed and submitted while you are registered at UNISA for the PhD by Publication.
- The PhD by Publication involves much more than publishing the College specified number of articles and pasting them into a portfolio.
- Colleges have specified the number of articles that will be required as well as the state of publication that is required. For instance, they may require that some articles must be published, some accepted for publication, and some submitted and advanced to the peer review phase. Please check the requirements as stipulated in the relevant College-specific documentation.
- The articles must clearly form part of a larger, coherent, significant and original contribution to knowledge.
- The final submission must include an introduction, conclusion and discussion chapter that ties together all the articles and demonstrate how they build your contribution to scholarship.
- In addition to your chosen journals’ internal peer review processes, the final portfolio will be examined by 3 examiners as per UNISA’s usual doctoral examination processes. The examination will include an assessment of the written component and a *viva voce* (oral defense).
- Your supervisor will play a crucial role throughout your doctoral candidature in terms of guiding your scholarly development via feedback and assisting you with the selection of appropriate journals.

The journals to which you submit the articles that will form part of your PhD by Publication portfolio must either be on the DHET accredited list, or they must be on one of the indices that DHET recognises for subsidy purposes. Your supervisor will assist you with access to the correct lists and will offer guidance on how to avoid predatory.