

# MCom IOP

The Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology offers prospective Master's students two streams of study towards obtaining a Master's degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology, namely, a Professional coursework programme and a full research dissertation option.

## **MCom IOP Coursework (selection) degree (Professional Degree)**

Qualification code: 90116

The MCom IOP: Coursework-selection degree is a Professional programme (NQF level 9; 240 credits) that contributes towards the requirements for registration as a Psychologist (cat. Industrial) with the Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA).

### **Composition of the Professional coursework programme**

The Professional coursework programme consists of two parts. The first part (Year 1: M1) consists of coursework (distance online learning and compulsory contact workshop sessions), including a Research Proposal module. The second part (Year 2: M2) entails a dissertation of limited scope. In the second year, after completion of the coursework programme and Research Proposal module, students commence with a twelve-month internship period. And finally, after completion of the Master's dissertation, internship programme and the board examination, students may register with the HPCSA as accredited Psychologist (cat. Industrial).

For more information regarding an internship and registration, please consult the HPCSA website or simply [click here](#).

# FIRST YEAR

## M1 year: Professional Coursework Programme (156 credits)

Building on the theory covered in the Honours degree, the Professional Master's degree places the emphasis on applied knowledge and problem solving, diagnostics, assessment, intervention design and evaluation, and the development of professional skills in the various scope of practice areas of the industrial psychologist. The Professional Master's programme covers the fields of organisational, personnel, and career psychology, psychological assessment and psychometrics, professional growth and development, and research. There are six compulsory modules that students have to enrol for in their first year of registration:

**IOP5965:** Organisational Psychology (30 credits)

**IOP5966:** Strategic Personnel Psychology (30 credits)

**IOP5967:** Career Psychology and Wellbeing (30 credits)

**IOP5968:** Psychological Assessment (36 credits)

**IOP5969:** Personal and Professional Development (30 credits)

**MPEMS94:** Research Methodology in Industrial and Organisational Psychology (research proposal module) (no credits)

Tuition in the M1 year is presented in a mixed-mode delivery. The majority of the work entails online activities and involvement, such as submitting assignments, group assignments and online portfolios, as well as engaging in a variety of online activities such as blogs and forums. The compulsory workshops may at times be conducted via virtual platforms such as MS teams. Prospective students therefore need to have daily and unlimited access to the internet.

Attendance of practical classes (face-to-face or virtual) is also compulsory. This means that students need to attend workshops which have been grouped into five blocks/sessions of one week each (25 days in total) in Pretoria. Assessment takes place during the year and students have to obtain a pass mark for each module separately.

A dissertation of limited scope on an approved theme within industrial and organisational psychology is planned by the candidate during the M1 year, as part of the Research Proposal module (MPEMS94).

## SECOND YEAR

### M2 year: Dissertation of limited scope (84 credits)

Students must have passed all six the modules that form part of the M1 year before they may register for the M2 year. During the M2 year the research project, based on the approved research proposal, is carried out by the candidate, documented under the supervision of a designated supervisor from the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and handed in for internal and external examination upon completion. If completion of the dissertation takes longer than one year, students may reregister, provided that there is enough and satisfactory evidence of progression.

### Selection process

As the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology can only accommodate a maximum of 25 students annually for this prestigious programme, a rigorous selection process in the form of a scientific selection battery is employed, based on best practice internationally.

In South Africa, the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 allows for fair discrimination based on, among other things, the inherent requirements of the job, and therefore subscribes towards a more output-based approach during selection. The aim of the output-based approach is therefore to determine whether a candidate has the necessary competencies that are inherently required to perform the role successfully. The competency-based assessment technique followed during the selection of master's students therefore assesses the behaviour linked to the role of an industrial and organisational psychologist.

This selection process entails elimination rounds, which lead to the selection of the final top 25 students, taking into consideration the employment equity expectations of the university and the profession. Students will be

informed after each round whether they have been successful or not. Please take note that it remains the prerogative of the department to eliminate students without providing detailed feedback. You must, therefore, please keep in mind that we can accept only a limited number of students for the Master's degree, and that Unisa reserves the right to accept or reject applications based on selection criteria.

- If you are unsuccessful, you may apply again for the next year's intake. You may also consider applying for the full dissertation option of the Master's degree.

Admission to the coursework/directed Master's degree is based on the following criteria:

## Stage 1 – Pre-selection

A formal application process is followed, during which applicants submit an electronic application form. The completed application form for the 2021 academic year, with all the supporting documentation as indicated in the application form, should be submitted online by **18 September 2020**.

In the pre-selection stage, the following criteria will be applied:

- Applicants applying for the Master's programme need to be in possession of a completed Honours degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology, with a minimum average of 60% obtained for the degree, and with the main subjects covered as specified by the HPCSA. In addition to this, a 480-credit bachelor's degree is required, with a minimum of 96 credits at NQF level 8 in the field of industrial and organisational psychology (IOP), and with an average of 60% obtained.
- At the Honours level, applicants need to have successfully completed modules/subjects that have adequately addressed the following





industrial and organisational psychology subfields:

Organisational Psychology  
Personnel Psychology  
Career Psychology and Employee Wellness  
Psychological Assessment  
Research Methodology

Please note, if the applicant's Honours qualification does not comply with the above requirement, that applicant's application will, regrettably, not be considered.

Applicants applying for this option of the Master's programme in industrial and organisational psychology at Unisa should ensure that they will be able to participate and attend **the compulsory 25 days of practical work** scheduled over five blocks/sessions of one week each.

## Stage 2 – Online assessment

All applicants successful in the pre-selection phase will be informed via e-mail of the outcome. Successful applicants will be invited to do online psychometric assessments and will be contacted by a test distributor or an organisation doing the online testing for us, with instructions explaining the forthcoming process. Applicants will have a specified time period within which to complete the online assessments. Those who do not complete these during the specified period will be eliminated from further selection rounds. Applicants who are not able to meet the cut-off norm will be informed and eliminated from the final selection round. Generic feedback will be given in the e-mail notification to unsuccessful applicants. If an applicant wants detailed feedback on the specific psychological tests, it can be obtained from the testing company directly. Professional feedback rates will be charged by the company and this is payable by the applicant. The department will not provide any such feedback.

## Stage 3 – Final selection

- The successful applicants from stage 2 will be invited to the next assessment phase, consisting of the following:
  - Applicants to submit a research outline according to certain guidelines provided during selection stage 3
  - An invitation to a formal panel interview for the final selection process.
- Apart from academic performance and availability to attend the compulsory practical work, personal attributes and the applicant's practical work environment are used as criteria during the final selection process. The mentioned criteria require fulltime employment in an IOP environment or being able to make alternative arrangements to work in such an environment. This is essential, as the majority of assignments are based on students accessing and analysing their organisations in order to engage in practical case studies, tasks and assignments.
- Based on the requirements to register as an industrial and organisational psychologist, consideration will be given to applicants who can gain access to an organisation and supervising psychologist that will enable them to complete the required internship.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications via e-mail. Unsuccessful applicants are always welcome to apply again in the following year.

## Application

[Applications](#) open on 17 August 2020 and close on 18 September 2020. Any application received after the 18th of September 2020 will not be considered.

- \* **Hard copy/paper applications sent to the department via post will NOT be considered.**



## MCom IOP: Full dissertation

Qualification code: 98594 (Option 2)

- **PLEASE NOTE:** This option **DOES NOT** provide registration of the student with the HPCSA as an industrial and organisational psychologist.

This option to obtain a Master's degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology is primarily researched-based. It consists of a full dissertation only and does not lead to professional HPCSA registration as an industrial psychologist. A research Master's degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP) will enable a student to critically identify and generate effective, science-based solutions to behavioural problems in the workplace, thus contributing to enhancing talent-management practices in a work context.

Students will be accepted on the following criteria: suitability and viability of the intended research; adequate supervisory capacity and research expertise in the discipline or department.



## Composition of MCOM IOP Full dissertation

### FIRST YEAR

Students enrol for the research proposal module: MPEMS91. Once students are registered for the module, requirements and guidelines for the research proposal, as well as other additional resources that will aid them with the writing of the proposal, will be available online on a module site. Students will be allocated a supervisor to help them with the formulation of an acceptable proposal. Students will have the opportunity to submit their proposals to the department three times during the course of the module. If the submitted research proposal is still not acceptable upon the third submission, students will not be allowed to register for the dissertation.

The outcome of this module is an acceptable research proposal on an approved theme in industrial and organisational psychology.

### SECOND YEAR

A research project is carried out under the supervision of a supervisor from the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and the dissertation is submitted and handed in upon completion for internal and external examination. Students are also required to submit proof of the submission of an article for review to a scientific journal, based on the dissertation, together with the dissertation. If completion of the dissertation is extended over one year, students may re-register, provided that there is enough and satisfactory evidence of progression.

Students need to obtain a pass mark of 50% for the dissertation in order to obtain this degree.

**Please note** again that directed coursework, practical work or internship does not form part of this degree, and obtaining the degree using this option does **not** lead to registration of a student as an industrial psychologist.



## Admission, application and registration

Admission to the full dissertation (Option 2) Master's degree is based on two main criteria:

- **A completed Honours degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology** with a minimum average of 60% obtained for the degree, and with the main subjects covered as specified by the HPCSA; **or** an appropriate postgraduate diploma with a minimum average of 60%; **or** a 480-credit bachelor's degree with a minimum of 96 credits at NQF level 8 in the field of industrial and organisational psychology, with an average of 60%.
- An acceptable research outline and topic's alignment with the preferred research focus area in the field of industrial and organisational psychology.

## Application and registration

Applicants who wish to apply for the Full dissertation should:

**apply online for a student number:** <http://www.unisa.ac.za>

**apply online for admission to the research proposal module:** [Apply-for-admission](#)

The applicant is required to upload certified documents such as their ID/passport, complete academic records and a research outline, all of which form part of the admission requirements. The applicant must also indicate a proposed title and/or focus area of specialisation for their dissertation. The department's focus areas will be indicated to the prospective student during his/her online application. Applicants should click here to see if they can find an alignment here.

**A student may only register for the Research Proposal module online once he/she has been admitted.**

The College of Graduate Studies (CGS) will evaluate the application and, once approved, will inform the student concerned that he/she is now allowed to register for the research proposal module online, for the next available registration period.

Registration period: January – March 2021

**Click here:** [Master's & doctoral degrees](#)