Master of Arts in Community-Based Counselling Psychology (MACC)

Guide for Applications 2019 for 2020
Dear Applicant

Thank you for applying for the Master of Arts in Community-Based Counselling Psychology (MACC) degree. This course is an exciting, challenging programme that will provide you with a broad range of applied skills. The MACC qualification allows you to register as a Counselling Psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

This booklet is a guideline for applicants. We have tried to provide you with as much information as we can to simplify the selection process. Please read the booklet carefully and contact us if you need assistance.

We wish you every success in your future career in psychology.

Dr Vinitha Jithoo (Programme Co-ordinator)
011 717 4523 vinitha.jithoo@wits.ac.za

Lauryne Lokothwayo (Administrator)
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This booklet has been issued by the:
Department of Psychology
School of Human & Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts in Community-Based Counselling Psychology (MACC) degree is offered by the Department of Psychology in the School of Human and Community Development. It extends over not less than two academic years of full-time study. It comprises two parts:

Part 1: During the first year, (M1) students complete the coursework component and the research report. The coursework component consists of a theoretical and practical programme that is run by the Department and School of Human and Community Development.

Part 2: The second part (usually the second year or M2) of the degree involves a counselling internship of twelve months duration, at an internship site approved by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

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<td>Dates for selection week:</td>
<td>29th July to 2nd August 2019</td>
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Please submit your Postgraduate Admission Form to the student enrolment centre online [http://www.wits.ac.za/postgraduate/applications/submit-an-application/](http://www.wits.ac.za/postgraduate/applications/submit-an-application/)

and Course Department Application Form to the Department of Psychology. Be sure to enclose official university transcripts and one passport/ID sized photograph with your applications.

In addition, please choose two referees from people acquainted with your academic and/or professional performance. Choose people who have an understanding of the needs of the profession. Ask them to complete and send the referee’s reports to the Department of Psychology via e-mail to lauryne.lokothwayo@wits.ac.za to arrive before the closing date.

Lastly, complete an online equity questionnaire: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WitsMAEquity2019](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WitsMAEquity2019)

NB: Incomplete or late application forms will not be accepted, nor applications sent to the Faculty.

Closing date for applications is 20th May 2019.

Dates for selection week: 29th July to 2nd August 2019

Please note that in addition to completing this departmental application form you are also required to complete an application to the university via the Student Enrolment Centre either on-line or in person. Your application will not be processed by the department unless we receive confirmation of such application via the university notification system.

Referee report forms only may be e-mailed by the referees directly to lauryne.lokothwayo@wits.ac.za

Departmental Application form and supporting documents should be sent to:

Ms Lauryne Lokothwayo via courier or hand delivery;

1 Jan Smuts Avenue

Braamfontein

Room U211, 2nd floor Umthombo Building

2001

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Postgraduate Admission Form
- Course or Department Application Form
- Transcripts and Certificates
- Passport Photograph
- Referees’ Reports X2
- Biographical Questionnaire Online, link below;

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WitsMAEquity2019](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WitsMAEquity2019)
SELECTION PROCEDURES

The selection of candidates is carried out by a Selection Panel. The Selection Panel is made up of the MACC teaching staff, representatives from the School of Human and Community Development and representatives from the internship training centres. The Selection Panel is sanctioned by and reports to the Selection Committee of the School of Human and Community Development, as well as to the Head of Department and Head of School:

1. Initial “Paper” Screening: The Selection Panel screens all applications with regard to their academic suitability. An overall mark of 65% in the Honours degree is considered a minimum pre-requisite by the Faculty. However it is not uncommon for the Department to offer interviews only to those applicants who have obtained an Upper Second for their Honours degree. Applicants whose marks are low, who have unfavourable referee reports, and whose stated motivation for wanting to study community and counselling psychology are poor, may be excluded.

2. Invitation to Selection Week: Successful applicants from this “paper” screening stage are invited to attend a five day selection process, in which they will participate in a series of interviews and other selection procedures.

3. Selection Week: The Selection Panel evaluates candidates invited to Selection Week and a possible 12 candidates are chosen. Selection criteria include:
   - Strong academic record
   - Community psychology experience and orientation
   - Counselling experience
   - Appropriate interpersonal skills
   - Empathy and warmth
   - Self awareness
   - Openness to learning
   - Ability of the candidate to add diversity and value to the Masters class, in whatever form that may take
   - Research competency

The Selection Panel will take all of these criteria into account and will be looking for all round potential. The Selection Panel understands that the selection process is gruelling and endeavours to make the experience as constructive as possible. The process may comprise the following procedures:

Individual interviews: Applicants each have two interviews with two different pairs of interviewers from the Selection Panel. These interviewers independently rate candidates’ responses to questions on a numerical scale, and independently formulate an impression of candidates’ suitability for counselling training and community work.

Individual role-play: Applicants’ potential for engaging with people in a facilitative-therapeutic way is then assessed through a role-play exercise involving a simulated initial consultation with a “client”. The role-play is only about 10 minutes long. This exercise takes place in front of the selection members, who independently assess candidates’ performance.

Group exercise: Much of the counselling training takes place in groups and students have to conduct group and family therapy. For these reasons, candidates’ participation in a small group context will give some indication of how they respond to the demands of this type of engagement. They are allocated to a small group and given a task involving the free discussion of a particular topic, observed by Selection Panel members.

Final panel interview: Candidates may also be required to be interviewed by the entire Selection Panel in one final interview.
4. **Ratification by the Selection Committee of the School:** Overall results are discussed by the *Selection Panel*, and twelve candidates are provisionally selected, while a number of applicants are wait-listed for inclusion should any of the first twelve not be able to take up their places on the programme. The names of those candidates chosen and wait-listed are referred to a special meeting of the *Selection Committee* of the School of Community and Human Development’s *Selection Committee* for scrutiny and ratification. Once this has occurred, applicants are notified as to whether their applications have been successful or not.

Acceptance of candidates is provisional. In the case of applicants who do not yet have their Honours results at the time of selection but are provisionally accepted for the course, the confirmation of their acceptance will depend, in the first instance, on their Honours results. Additionally, final confirmation of each candidate is dependent upon submission of a suitable research proposal by April of the first year of training.

**PROGRAMME OVERVIEW**

**FIRST YEAR: M1**
The MACC first year of training will comprise 5 core modules. These are:

1. **Counselling and Psychotherapy**
2. **Assessment**
3. **Research**
4. **Psychopathology in Context**
5. **Community Psychology**

The broad objective of the first year is to provide training in psychological assessment, therapeutic skills, diagnostic capabilities and community psychology, necessary to understand, diagnose and provide interventions (under supervision) for the personal, interpersonal and social problems in living that many people struggle with.

The activities you will be involved in during the M1 year include the following:

- Attending formal didactic seminars/workshops.
- Attending case conferences and presenting case work.
- Reading and learning prescribed and recommended literature, and discussing this in the relevant forums.
- Gaining familiarity with various assessment instruments, their scoring and interpretation.
- Assessing clients and communities and making management decisions based on your assessments.
- Providing a therapeutic service to appropriate clients.
- Writing and filing case notes of therapy sessions.
- Writing essays, assignments and reports.
- Writing up and formally presenting a psychotherapy case study.
- Sitting written/oral examinations.
- Attending individual and group supervision of assessment/therapy cases.
- Receiving and responding to performance appraisal feedback.
- Attending your own personal psychotherapy.
- Finding an appropriate research topic and submitting a research proposal.
- Consulting your research supervisor on a regular basis.
- Interacting formally/informally with other class members.
- Discharging limited administrative responsibilities assigned to you.

**SEMINARS IN PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**
Seminars in Professional Psychology (SPP) is a co-ordinated programme which combines the resources of Clinical Psychology, Community-Based Counselling Psychology and Educational Psychology. Trainee-psychologists from each of these programmes come together for a variety of seminars and workshops in the areas of psychotherapy, psychological assessment and research. The incorporation of a joint seminar programme within each specific training programme has many advantages. For example:

- Trainee-psychologists have the opportunity to interact with, and learn from, students in other sub-disciplines.
Trainee-psychologists are exposed to a variety of staff members with different specializations, different training backgrounds and different ways of working.

Trainee-psychologists are able to gain competence in some of the general issues of psychotherapy, assessment and research while still maintaining their programme-specific areas of speciality.

SPP facilitates communication and enrichment between the different sub-disciplines.

SPP encourages professionalism within and between trainee-psychologists in each of the sub-disciplines.

SPP offers a structure able to provide some of the core skills necessary for any practising psychologist, while at the same time reflecting the specializations of each Masters training programme.

SPP provides a forum for three different purposes:
- to offer high quality seminars to Masters students in professional training
- to offer a forum for staff to come together around shared professional activities and concerns
- to share information and resources from the Emthonjeni Clinic. This clinic manages client referrals and cases seen, and has been incorporated into the Emthonjeni Centre since 2007.

The module structure is designed to reflect the links between and integrations of specific programmes while at the same time emphasizing each programme’s specific areas of specialization. The Psychotherapy and Assessment modules have both SPP and programme-specific input. This means that trainee-psychologists will attend seminars within their own area of specialization as well as with students from other sub-disciplines. The Research component will be SPP-based.

THE RESEARCH REPORT
A central requirement for the degree is a research report which presents research in an area related to community and counselling psychology. Students will begin in early February with seminars on research methodology and be given several weeks in which to begin planning appropriate research. Each student will be assigned a supervisor, who will help the student to prepare a research proposal for approval by the Department and by the Faculty of Humanities. The student will then conduct the research. The final research report should be approximately 30 000 words in length. Students will be informed of the procedures and processes they will be expected to adhere to.

INTERNSHIP: M2
Intern Psychologists will be supervised by staff at approved internship centres that have been registered for at least three years in the “Counselling” category. The internship programme will encompass supervised training in the following areas: individual, group and family counselling including play therapy, trauma counselling and marital/couples counselling; psychological assessments for career guidance, educational, psychotherapeutic, diagnostic and community intervention purposes; psycho-education training and life-skills facilitation; ethical issues and professional responsibilities; implementation and evaluation of community-based intervention projects. The current internship sites include: Trauma Clinic of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), Epworth Children’s Home, Counselling & Career Development Unit (CCDU)/Wits University, Khanya Family Centre (Tembisa), Adult and Child Guidance Clinic (UJ) Rahima Moosa Hospital Complex, Ububele and several others placement opportunities.

Quarterly evaluation reports will be compiled for each intern by supervising psychologists, and may be submitted to the Professional Board for Psychology.

CORE PROGRAMME COMPETENCIES
In order to successfully complete the programme, students should demonstrate the following core competencies:

1. The ability to explain and apply theoretical material pertinent to the programme aims.
2. The capacity for professional, ethical, and constructive engagement with patients, fellow students, and members of staff in relation to the programme activities.
3. The ability to facilitate an adequately therapeutic interpersonal process.
4. The ability to apply theoretical knowledge and practical skills in order to intervene with patients appropriately and to take account of the needs of the communities in which they work.

5. The ability to plan and execute a research report under supervisory guidance.

PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Outcome 1: The qualifying student is able to apply theoretical knowledge and interventions to clients. Students complete psychotherapy and psychopathology modules in which they learn about the theory of psychotherapy and psychopathology.

Outcome 2: The qualifying student is competent to choose, administer, score and interpret a variety of psychometric assessment instruments, and to use this data to aid in diagnosis and treatment planning. This is accomplished through exposure to assessment instruments, application of said instruments in formal practical assessment of patients, and assessment of students’ applied and theoretical knowledge by means of written reports.

Outcome 3: The qualifying student acquires professional presentation and communication skills. Students conduct case conference presentations, facilitate seminar discussions, and submit written assignments and psychotherapy/assessment reports.

Outcome 5: The qualifying student displays awareness of the ethical dimensions of his/her work, and is able to conduct himself/herself according to a professional code of ethical conduct. Students are taught and assessed on their knowledge of the ethical code of conduct of the Professional Board for Psychology, as well as having to apply their minds to ethical issues arising in their practical work, as well as in ethically problematic case studies.

Outcome 6: The qualifying student displays an understanding of the theory and practical skills required for community-based counselling, and is able to effectively make community interventions. Students are provided with a module of community psychology training that involves both a theoretical understanding and practical assignments.

Outcome 7: The qualifying student shows research competence. Students are required to plan and implement a research project, using acceptable scientific methodologies, and to dialogue the results of their research with professional literature in the field.

GENERAL PROGRAMME RULES

1. The Master of Arts in Community-Based Counselling Psychology extends over a period of two years. The M2 (internship) is viewed as a continuation of the M1 year and the appropriate degree is conferred only after completion of the internship, together with the other formal requirements of the course.

2. The degree must be completed within a THREE YEAR period as specified by the HPCSA.

3. Successful completion of the M1 and M2 years leads to full registration with the HPCSA as a Counselling Psychologist, providing the student writes and passes the Professional Board examination.

4. These rules must be read in conjunction with the rules as published in the current Wits University Calendar.

5. All students must register with the HPCSA as student psychologists in the M1 year. A student who is not registered as a student psychologist may be denied permission to visit hospitals/agencies in the M1 year. In the M2 year, the student will register with the HPCSA as an intern psychologist. A student who fails to register as an intern psychologist before the commencement of his/her internship will not be allowed to commence with the internship until such time as registration has been effected.

   Application forms for registration as student and intern psychologist are available on the MACC Website.

6. Students are required to complete all the compulsory coursework before embarking on the internship.
7. The final mark for the qualification is calculated as the weighted average of the individual.

8. Students must obtain a passing mark for each of the core modules. Failure to do so will preclude the student from completing the training.

9. Acceptance for the internship (the second year of study) will be refused if a student has not shown satisfactory progress in the respective modules, the dissertation or fails the oral exam.

10. The internship will only take place in an institution registered to train counselling psychologists.

11. The programme is a full-time programme and students are expected to be available every weekday (excluding university/religious holidays) for the entire working day.

12. Students may be excluded from the programme at any time on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress, ethical misconduct, and/or behaviour considered to be inappropriate for professional psychology practice.

13. Students are expected to be in their own personal individual psychotherapy for the duration of their MACC training, regardless of whether they have been in psychotherapy before. Such therapy should be with a senior therapist whose orientation is consistent with the exploratory insight-oriented approach of the Wits training. For those students who cannot afford professional psychotherapy rates, a number of therapists have agreed to see trainees at reduced rates. Please speak to the programme co-ordinator in this regard.

PROGRESS EVALUATION

Students’ performance is monitored and assessed continuously throughout the year. Staff members involved in training meet regularly to discuss students’ progress, and standardized evaluative criteria (both qualitative and quantitative) pertaining to the various aspects of the programme are employed in assessing their response to the programme learning outcomes. You will be given feedback in this regard, which will be helpful, balanced and constructive, addressing both your strengths and areas where improvement is required. You are invited to respond to this feedback, and open discussion in this regard is expected and welcomed.

UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Selection onto the MACC programme does not automatically guarantee successful completion of the programme. If any student’s progress should fall short of the professional and academic standards deemed appropriate for the first year of training this will be pointed out to him/her. Every reasonable effort will be made to assist the student in meeting the identified criterion/criteria. Should the student continue to fail to meet expected progress expectations, either (or both) of the following courses of action will be taken:

The first year training period of the student will be extended indefinitely until the MACC team is satisfied with his/her performance. In the case of such an extension the department is not able to guarantee an internship placement in the second year of training. In certain cases the student may be precluded from further training. Such exclusion may occur during either the first or second year of training and will prevent registration as a counselling psychologist.

MENTORING

The MACC training makes considerable academic, practical, and emotional demands on students, who are differentially equipped to cope with these demands. Consequently, some students tend to struggle with certain aspects of the programme more than others. Some students are encouraged to take advantage of formal mentoring. Should you feel that you need mentoring or if you have any other concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the programme co-ordinator. All students who obtained less than 65% in their Honours degree will be required to participate in the Graduate School Mentoring Initiative.
GENERAL INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY ADDRESS
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3
Wits 2050

FEES
The Fees Office
South African students: 011 717-1530
Foreign students: 011 717-1531
Additional information is obtainable from the Faculty of Humanities: 011 717-0006/7/8

BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS
The University offers Senior Bursaries to some postgraduate students. In return for a Senior Bursary, each student is required to work in the University department for a specified number of hours per week. Should you wish to apply for a Senior Bursary, it is necessary to make enquiries and applications soon after you are accepted onto the Masters Programme.

Applications can be obtained from:
Financial Aid and Scholarships Office
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3
Wits
2050
717-1075/6

REMUNERATION
Intern psychologists may be paid a salary during their internship year, but this is not guaranteed. Please be advised that many internships are unpaid and allocation is at the discretion of the internship sites.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS
During the course of the year students need to make provision for a number of expenses, for example an audio cassette player, a number of video cassettes, various books and photocopy material, printing of assignments and personal psychotherapy fees.

ACCOMMODATION
Please make enquiries regarding application as soon as you have received an offer of a place.
The Residence Life Office
717-9170/1/3

FOREIGN STUDENTS
International Office
717-1050/3