UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STUDIES

INFORMATION CONCERNING POST GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

HONOURS BACHELOR OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN PUBLIC HEALTH

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

MASTER OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES

AND

DOCTOR OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY IN HEALTH STUDIES
UNISA’S NEW APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION PHASES

APPLICATION PHASE

First-time students at UNISA must follow the pre-registration process to apply for admission for formal studies at UNISA. This process is relevant for both undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as all national and international students.

All new students may apply using the postal system, fax and the web. The applications office contact and address appear in the applications brochure entitled myChoice@UNISA. This brochure is available online: www.unisa.ac.za or can be collected at any Unisa regional office.

The application fees are R150.00 for postal and faxed applications or R100.00 for web-applications.

Once the data has been recorded the system will allocate a reference/student number which will be confirmed via e-mail, sms or mail depending on the contact details indicated on your application form. Students who already have a UNISA student number proceed directly to the registration phase.

REGISTRATION PHASE

Once a student number has been allocated to an individual, this student number will remain his/her student number at UNISA for all formal qualifications.

Students who apply for undergraduate programmes, the Honours degree and the Postgraduate Diploma may register on-line. For postgraduate programmes (Master's and Doctoral
degrees) a registration package containing the relevant information brochure(s) and registration form will be mailed to you and all students are advised to submit their applications directly to UNISA Muckleneuk Campus, P O Box 392, UNISA, 0003. Registrations for postgraduate programmes cannot be done at Regional offices. Documents submitted at Regional Offices will be forwarded to the Muckleneuk Campus.

Students are advised to study the brochures myRegistration @UNISA; myRules@UNISA and myModules@UNISA for detailed information about the registration process, the modules and general rules of importance. These brochures are available online (www.unisa.ac.za), in a CD format at regional offices, and in the registration hall of the main campus.

The registration form together with the minimum installment required for registration must be submitted before the relevant closing date. Students must please take note that certain degrees are subjected to selection and have earlier closing dates than the normal registration closing dates. All documents (eg academic records) required for registration must be submitted.

Kindly note that only certified copies of academic records issued by the Registrar of the University/Institution concerned are accepted for registration purposes. Degree certificates should not be submitted.

All applications for master’s and doctoral degrees will be referred to the Section: Postgraduate Qualifications, where they will be assessed before being referred to the relevant academic department where the Executive Committee will rule on admission. Students from outside of South Africa and who wish to apply for postgraduate studies should please note that their qualifications should be assessed by SAQA prior to submission to UNISA.
Students who have submitted their complete application (i.e. all required documents and minimum fees) will automatically be registered after admission has been approved. Other students will be informed of any remaining conditions to be complied with in order to finalise their registration. All other students will be informed of the outcome of their applications and, where applicable, the minimum study fees paid will be refunded.

The process outlined above may be time consuming in some cases, especially when we approach the various closing dates when most applications are invariably submitted. It is, therefore, essential that prospective students apply well in advance, especially where deadlines set by employers and sponsors have to be met.
1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Health Studies at the University of South Africa provides a wide range of academic programmes for professional development in the field of health sciences. These programmes introduce postgraduate candidates to qualitative and quantitative research to enable them to embark on pertinent health care strategies.

The state of the entire nation is determined by its overall health status. Health as such, is crucial and has become a significant concern for humankind. With the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS, malaria, and extreme forms of multiple drug resistant tuberculosis, health as a critical concern for sustainable development cannot be overemphasized. At UNISA’s Department of Health Studies we strive to produce and provide fundamental and up-to-date health related information.

The primary function of the Department of Health Studies is to determine novel research development goals for different categories of health practitioners as well as scientifically sound academic preparation for the betterment of society through research.

As a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre, the Department of Health Studies’ contribution is not limited to the Republic of South Africa, but caters for the needs of students from different parts of the world.
2. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Department of Health Studies offers through distance education:

- An Honours Bachelor of Arts in Health Studies
- A Post Graduate Diploma in Public Health
- Master of Public Health
- A Master of Arts in Health Studies (a research masters)
- A Doctor of Literature and Philosophy in Health Studies which provides the opportunity for students to undertake research in any health related field.

2.1 **Vision of the Department**

Within the vision of the University and that of the College of Human Sciences, the Department of Health Studies envisions optimising learner potential and social responsibility towards health and development.

2.2 **Mission of the Department**

The mission of the Department of Health Studies is to offer a wide range of quality programs to meet the diverse needs of communities, within and beyond the borders of South Africa. Furthermore, the Department of Health Studies empowers and equips postgraduate candidates with competencies and skills to address major challenges related to health.
3. **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

3.1 **Institutional Guidelines**

Guidelines regarding the aspects listed below appear in the brochure *myRules@UNISA*. These may include General rules for postgraduate programmes

- Documents to be submitted for admission to the relevant programmes
- Re-registration
- Deferment of study
- Concurrent registration in a postgraduate programme and a course/paper/module(s) for non-degree purposes
- General rules regarding duration of study, re-registration, requirements for a dissertation of limited scope and a thesis.

3.2 **Language of offering**

*Please note that this information is relevant in all instances.*

Programmes at postgraduate level are offered in English only. However candidates who wish to do so may correspond with the Department, answer examination papers and assignments and submit theses and dissertations in Afrikaans.
4 DEGREE FOR THE HONOURS BACHELOR OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES (Degree code: 04790)

4.1 Purpose of the Honours degree

The purpose of the Honours degree is to prepare students for research based postgraduate study and to consolidate the students’ expertise in the fields of health services management and health sciences education.

4.2.1 Outcomes

The outcomes include the following skills:

- Demonstrate basic understanding of the research process
- Identify and provide scientifically based solutions to client care and health service delivery problems
- Design health education and health promotion strategies to improve the health status of the inhabitants of the country
- Critically evaluate health care services based on situational analyses
- Design a managed health care plan for clients
- Design and implement educational strategies to teach both clients and students in health professions
- Organise and manage health care units and health services at the different levels of health care provision
- Demonstrate an understanding of comprehensive health service delivery and the organisation thereof
4.3 Admission requirements

BA Honours degree:

This degree focuses on the fields of Health Services Management and/or Health Sciences Education

- Prospective students must hold a Bachelor’s degree in nursing or equivalent health related qualification at NQF level 7.
- Students must have obtained an average of at least 60% in the final year of the entry qualification pegged at NQF level 7 less than 6 years prior to the application.
- Prerequisites for MNUB2BJ and MNUB2AH registration are completion of Health services management and/or Health sciences education on 3rd year level. If students have not completed one of the noted majors up to third year level, they may with permission of the HOD, register for the 3rd year level modules for the mentioned subjects for non-degree purposes simultaneously with their registration for the Honours degree.
- Provide proof of registration with a regulatory body such as the SANC or Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).
- Students who apply from foreign countries should have their qualifications accredited by SAQA prior to registration.

4.4 Duration

The duration for study for the honours degree shall be a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 2 years. The modules are offered over a year.
4.5 **Assessment and grading**

Examinations are written during January/February of the year following the year of registration.

To pass, the candidate must obtain 50% in each module. To pass with distinction, the candidate must obtain 75%.

4.6 **Curriculum Details**

The curriculum for the BA Honours degree in Health Studies comprises of five modules.

The module *Principles and methods of health research* is compulsory. There is an option for choosing four other modules from the five that are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compulsory</th>
<th>Principles and methods of health research (MNURS1E)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electives (any four)</td>
<td>Concepts and application of health services management (MNUB2AH)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Advanced aspects of health sciences education (MNUB2BJ)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Theory development and utilisation in health care and health sciences (MNURB5D)</td>
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<td>Leadership development in health care (MNURB3B)</td>
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<td>Transcultural health care (MNURB4C)</td>
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<td>General practice and applied ethics (MNURB7F)</td>
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5. **MASTER OF ARTS IN HEALTH STUDIES (MA) (Degree code: 98421)**

5. **Purpose of the master’s degrees**

The primary purpose of the master’s degree is to enhance academic preparation for the betterment of society through research and to build nurse leadership capacity for improvement of health care service delivery.

5.2 **Admission requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Health Studies**

A student must hold a four year professional degree, a degree of Honours Bachelor of Arts in Nursing Science or an equivalent health related qualification at NQF level 8, approved by the Academic Chairperson of the Department of Health Studies. The admission criteria include the achievement of an average mark of 60% obtained in the qualifying honours degree/ equivalent health related qualification.

A candidate, who has not passed advanced research methodology on a postgraduate level, must complete the module, *Principles and methods of health research (MNURSIE)* for non-degree purposes.

**Students who register for the Master's degree should first register for a research proposal module (MPCHS94).** The proposal has to be completed within 1 year, after which students can then register for the research.
5.3 Outcomes of the master’s degrees offered in the Department of Health Studies

The outcomes of the master’s degree are aimed at enabling students to:

- Independently appraise, use and conduct research in nursing or any health field;
- synthesise theories from natural, behavioural and social sciences to support advanced developments in health and health care;
- evaluate the use of theories as a foundation for advanced health practice;
- function effectively in a leadership role in the health care arena;
- collaborate with other disciplines to improve health care and to meet the needs of a multicultural society;
- demonstrate commitment to continued professional development;
- establish a foundation for doctoral study.

5.4. Duration of MA in Health Studies

A minimum period of 1 academic year and a maximum of 3 academic years.

5.5 Curriculum

The curriculum comprises the completion of the research proposal (MPCHS94) and a dissertation (DFHLS95) on an approved research title in a health related field.
5.6 Submission and Grading

The dissertation may be submitted for examination with the permission of the supervisor. The dissertation should be submitted in June for graduation in September and in November for graduation in March – May.

To pass, the candidate must obtain 50%. To pass with distinction, the candidate must obtain 75%.

5.7 Article for Publication

At least one article based on the dissertation presented should be submitted together with the completed dissertation for possible publication in an accredited journal.

6. MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH) (Degree code: 98556)

and

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN PUBLIC HEALTH (PGD PH) (Diploma code: 98574)

6.1 Introductory Remarks

Due to legislative changes in Higher Education and other factors it was decided to replace the MPH with a Postgraduate in Public Health. The last intake for the MPH will be in 2011 and students will have until 2017 to complete the degree. The PGDPH will commence in 2011. Students will therefore only in 2011 have an option of which programme to follow.
6.2 The academic programme

The purpose of both the MPH and PGDPH is to enable candidates through the synthesis and application of public health theories, to assess, promote and preserve the health of populations.

6.3 Admission criteria

6.3.1 Master of Public Health

Admission criteria are applied very rigidly because of the high demand for the degree with limited human resources.

A student must

- hold an honours degree which is relevant in a health related field. Candidates will be expected to have achieved an average of 60% weighting in that specific degree.

    OR

- hold an appropriate four year bachelors degree with a weighted average mark of at least 60%

    OR

- hold a postgraduate diploma in public health or a recognised equivalent with a weighted average mark of at least 60%

- students must have regular access to Internet facilities. Online discussion forums form an important interactive part of the degree
- candidates should preferably be active in the field of public health or be able to motivate why they need the MPH degree for furthering their careers.

6.3.2 Postgraduate Diploma in Public health

Students must have a health related Bachelor's degree

6.4 Selection

6.4.1 Master of Public Health

Enrolment is limited. Applicants shall be subjected to a selection process and may be required to comply with further conditions for admission, such as the presentation of a portfolio on professional experience in a relevant field. Consideration will also be given to academic merit, work experience, future career plans, employer support, and commitment to public health and equity targets.

Please note that there is only one intake per year.

Your application should therefore be submitted no later than 30 September prior to the year of your study.

Documents to be submitted to the Registrar's Office for consideration by the selection committee are:

- registration form that bears the student number
- certified copies of qualifications
- original academic transcripts/records
- comprehensive Curriculum vitae
- a letter justifying the choice of Public Health as a career and MPH as a degree to study.
• a letter of support from the employer if relevant

6.4.2 Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health
There is no specific selection for this programme. If students comply with the admission criteria, they may register for the PGDPH.

6.5 Assessment of student performance (MPH and PGDPH)
All modules are year modules with formal examinations written in January/February of the following year. The dissertation of limited scope will be guided by a supervisor and a co-supervisor.

Please note that students should at least pass two modules per year to be able to continue to the following academic year.

6.6 Grading (MPH and PGDPH)
To pass, the student must obtain 50% per written module, and 50% in the dissertation of limited scope. To pass with a distinction the student must obtain an average of 75%.

6.7 Duration
The duration of the programme is a maximum of five (5) years for the MPH and three (3) years for the PGDPH.

6.8 Curriculum Outline
The curriculum for each of the MPH and the PGDPH appears below. For more detail about the content of the modules, you can consult the brochure: myModules@UNISA. This brochure is available online.
6.8.1 MPH
The MPH programme consists of 5 modules and a dissertation of limited scope.

Curriculum details
The modules are

MPHDHM9  Descriptive Health Measurement: 24 credits
MPHAHMV  Analytic Health Measurement 24 credits
MNURS1E Principles and Theory of Health Research: 24 credits
MPHEPDK Epidemiology of infectious diseases including HIV: 24 credits
MPHIPSH Introduction to population studies and reproductive health: 24 credits

The student as indicated earlier must complete and pass a dissertation of limited scope (DLMPH95) as well.

NB: The dissertation of limited scope can be commenced only after all the theoretical modules as well as the research proposal module (MPHCHS94) have been completed.

6.8.2 Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health
The PGDPH programme consists of 5 modules but without having to complete a dissertation of limited scope.
Curriculum details

The modules are

- **PPH4801** Descriptive Health Measurement: 24 credits
- **PPH4802** Analytic Health Measurement: 24 credits
- **PPH4803** Epidemiology of infectious diseases including HIV: 24 credits
- **PPH4802** Introduction to population studies and reproductive health: 24 credits
- **PPH4805** Principles and Theory of Health Research: 24 credits

7. **DOCTOR OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY IN HEALTH STUDIES (DLitt et Phil) (Degree code 98422)**

7.1 **Purpose of the doctor's degree**

The purpose of the doctoral degree is to enable candidates to undertake research which contributes to an evidence-based scientific body of knowledge.

7.2 **Admission Criteria**

To be admitted, all candidates must be in possession of a health-related master's degree or its equivalent (on NQF level 9) with an average of 60%.

7.3 **Curriculum**

The curriculum comprises of a thesis (TFHLS05) on an approved research title after successful completion of a research proposal module (DPCHS04).
7.4 **Duration**
The duration of the degree is at least two years with a maximum of four years.

7.5 **Article for Publication**
At least one article based on the thesis presented should be submitted together with the thesis for possible publication in an accredited journal.

8 **RESEARCH THEMES**

Students registering for a masters or doctoral degree within the Department of Health Studies are advised to select a topic from one of the following 9 research themes. The sub categories serve as examples of possible topics under a specific theme, but does not exclude other related topics. Approval of a topic and registration will be subject to the available expertise in the Department at that point in time.

(1) **Health services management:**
- Labour relations
- Human resource management
- Health systems
- Institutional management
- Leadership development

(2) **Health sciences education**
- Structure of curricular content
- Clinical teaching
- Operationalising theory in educational practice
- Technology and clinical teaching and learning
- Mindfulness

(3) Community health nursing/ Public health:
- Health systems
- Primary health care
- Home-based care
- Occupational health
- Environmental health
- Epidemiology/ health measurement
- Disease surveillance and management
- Health policy

(4) Gender issues:
- Women’s and reproductive health
- Mother and child care
- Men’s health

(5) Ethics and professional issues:
- caring
- Spiritual nursing care
- Cultural aspects
- Health ethics

(6) Critical care nursing

(7) HIV/AIDS

(8) Mental health
(9) **Clinical research**

- *Infection control*
- *Pharmacology*
- *Palliative care*

9. **REGISTRATION FOR ALL POSTGRADUATE STUDIES**

Registration forms can be obtained on request in writing from:

The Registrar  
Directorate: Student Admissions and Registrations  
Section: Postgraduate Qualifications  
PO Box 392  
UNISA  
0003

For administrative and financial enquiries:

**POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA AND HONOURS DEGREE:**

Telephone: 0861 670 411  
International: +27 11 670 9000  
Fax: 012 429 4150  
E-mail: artes@unisa.ac.za
10. PREPARATORY RESEARCH SEMINAR

The Department offers annual research seminars, mainly in Pretoria, but depending on the number of students and the feasibility, the seminars may also be conducted at UNISA regional offices. Potential and registered students are urged to consider participating in these seminars to familiarize themselves with the methodological aspects of research.