



DEPARTMENT OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Application for the 2021 MSc Clinical Psychology Programme

Application Guide

Dear Applicant

Thank you for showing an interest in applying for the Master of Science (MSc) in Clinical Psychology training programme, at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU), Department of Clinical Psychology in the School of Medicine.

The MSc (Clinical Psychology) programme is a 2-year, full-time and comprehensive programme that integrates academic, clinical and professional training to equip students to function as well-balanced and grounded Clinical Psychologists in the future. After completion, the candidate can apply to the Professional Board for Psychology of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) for registration as a Clinical Psychologist. Such registration is, however, subject to the conditions stipulated by the Professional Board for Psychology, at the time of registration (including that you pass and successfully complete the MSc degree, successfully complete a 12-month internship at an accredited institution, pass the HPCSA board exam and complete a 12-month community service placement).

Following, is an outline of the MSc Clinical Psychology programme, admission requirements, application procedure, and selection process.

The Department of Clinical Psychology wishes you the best of luck in your application to our programme.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mirriam Kganya
Programme Coordinator: MSc Clinical Psychology

1. CURRICULUM

The curriculum covers theoretical, practical and research training, and extends over two full-time academic years, excluding the internship. The three areas carry equal weight and, therefore, all three should be successfully completed. All modules (theoretical, practical and research) must be passed with a minimum of 50%. Students may be excluded from the programme at any time on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress, unethical behaviour, and/or behaviour considered to be inappropriate for professional psychology practice. Overall, the programme is not committed to any one theoretical perspective, and the development of an integrative approach is encouraged. Contributors to the programme will articulate the philosophical perspectives which inform their teaching.

1.1. Coursework

The coursework component of the MSc in Clinical Psychology degree provides the candidate with advanced, applied, and contextual training in the core fields that are needed to professionally orientate the candidate towards becoming a Clinical Psychologist. These fields include Psychodiagnostics and Assessment, Psychotherapy Theory and Practice, including Psychodynamic Therapy, Client-Centered Therapy, Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy, Group Therapy, Couple/Family/Systems/Ecosystems Therapy, Community Psychology, Postmodern Therapies, African Epistemology, Child/Adolescent/Adult Psychopathology, Psychopharmacology, Health Psychology, Neurophysiology, Neuropsychology Assessments, Forensic Psychology, Research Methods, and Ethics.

1.2. Practical work

Students have the opportunity to develop the necessary competencies and practical skills through experiential training in the coursework component, as well as through working in a practical placement. First-level students (M1's) are involved in various practicums, including psychological assessments of children/youth and community projects, which are conducted under the supervision of experienced clinicians. Community projects and group interventions are done in teams in the community and on campus under the supervision of lecturers.

Second level students (M2's) have the opportunity to practice and develop specific clinical skills under supervision. The practicum sites are: Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU), Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital (DGMAH), and Weskoppies Hospital. The practicum programme covers exposure to problem areas within various clinical settings, and these include the following blocks:

- a) **Child and Adolescent block at the SMU Clinic and in the community:** This block focuses on the community around SMU, under the supervision of lecturers.
- b) **Acute Psychiatry block in Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital (DGMAH):** This block provides students with experience in conducting assessments and psychotherapy with adult patients in acute Psychiatry, both with admitted patients and outpatients. Students also gain further experience by attending ward rounds, participating in multi-disciplinary team presentations and report writing.
- c) **Chronic Psychiatry block at Weskoppies Psychiatric Hospital:** This block exposes students to multi-disciplinary ward rounds, medico-legal conferences, and the treatment of psychiatric and forensic patients within the context of a psychiatric complex.

- d) **Adult and child assessments and psychotherapy at the Clinical Psychology Unit (DGMAH).** Patients include in and out-patients that are well enough to visit the Unit. This block is combined with the Acute psychiatry block at the Psychiatry Outpatient Unit.
- e) **Group and individual supportive interventions with patients in the Medical wards of DGMAH.** The majority of patients are based in the neurology, spinal and renal wards. Other areas of training include casualty (Emergency Unit), paediatrics, internal medicine, general surgery, plastic surgery, orthopaedics, oncology as well as obstetrics and gynaecology. Practical work is crucial to enable students to integrate and apply what they have learnt. Detailed schedules will be provided during training.

1.3. Research

The research component of the MSc in Clinical Psychology degree allows the candidate the opportunity to complete a mini-dissertation on an appropriate and relevant topic as approved by the Department of Clinical Psychology and the SMU Research Ethics Committee (SMUREC). Students are expected to complete their research projects by the end of their second year of the MSc study.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the general admission and selection requirements of the university, the following requirements apply for admission to the MSc in Clinical Psychology programme:

- 1) The minimum academic requirements to submit an application for the MSc in Clinical Psychology programme are:
 - a. A completed, accredited Honours degree in Psychology or the equivalent thereof;
 - b. An average of **at least 65%** for abovenamed Honours degree.
 - c. The Honours degree must have been completed less than ten years before or proof of relevant training and academic contact with Psychology as a subject must be tendered.
 - d. According to the HPCSA, candidates with a criminal record, or criminal charges against them, are not eligible to apply, and, therefore, cannot be admitted to the programme.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Firstly, the applicants must ensure that they meet the minimum academic requirements (as stipulated above) to submit an application for the MSc in Clinical Psychology at SMU.

Secondly, and only after the admission criteria above are successfully met, applicants can complete and submit the following documents, which form a complete application portfolio:

1. Please complete all sections of the **Student Application Form** electronically. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.
2. Attach your typed **Personal Motivation** to this **Student Application Form**
3. Attach a certified copy of your **Identity Document/Passport**
4. Attach a certified copy of your **Grade 12 certificate/school leaving results**
5. Attach a certified copy of your **Honours Psychology degree certificate**

6. Attach certified copies of your **additional academic records and certificates** from previous academic institutions
7. Attach certified copies **of SAQA certificates for qualifications obtained at non-South-African institutions** (where applicable)
8. Provide the confidential **Referee Report Form** to your choice of two appropriate referees. Both **Referee Reports** should be completed electronically and e-mailed directly to Ms. Brenda Ledwaba (Brenda.Ledwaba@smu.ac.za or clipsych.applications@gmail.com) **on or before 31 August 2020 (before 13h00)**.
9. Print and hand deliver/courier this **Student Application Form** with the compulsory **documents attached** to Ms. Brenda Ledwaba (Departmental Secretary), Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU), Department of Clinical Psychology, 5th Floor, Room N547, Clinical Pathology Building, Molotlegi Street, Ga-Rankuwa, 0204) **on or before 31 August 2020 (before 13h00)**. **Alternatively, application forms can be emailed to clipsych.applications@gmail.com**. No late and/or incomplete applications will be accepted. It remains the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the department receives the application before the closing date, and that the application is complete.

The application process for the MSc in Clinical Psychology is administratively coordinated by Ms Brenda Ledwaba. Queries regarding this process can be directed to her (Tel: (012) 521 4632, E-mail: Brenda.Ledwaba@smu.ac.za or clipsych.applications@gmail.com).

Please Note:

1. The office hours for deliveries are from 08h00 to 15h00 (Monday to Friday).
2. **Referee Report Forms** will only be accepted via e-mail (**directly from the chosen Referees**).
3. The Department of Clinical Psychology does not accept liability for applications mislaid or undelivered through selected courier service or postal system.
4. Applications which are not fully completed are considered incomplete and do not undergo further processing or consideration.
5. Late applications are not processed.
6. It remains the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the department receives the application before the closing date, and that the application is complete.
7. Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements for admission into the MSc in Clinical Psychology will not be considered for selection.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process is conducted by a panel of staff members from the Department of Clinical Psychology at SMU and supervising psychologists from HPCSA-accredited internship sites, who are involved in the training of candidates. The panel understands that the selection process can be gruelling and, therefore, endeavours to make the experience as constructive as possible.

The policies and criteria governing the application process and selection procedures for the MSc in Clinical Psychology programme are derived from the strategic mission and goals of the Department of Clinical Psychology and SMU. Selection procedures are aligned with institutional policy and are also informed by, on one hand, historical, educational and social contexts within which the programme is based and, on the other hand,

professional benchmarks and developments which allow the Department of Clinical Psychology to select the most competitive, adaptive, and suitable candidates for further training in Clinical Psychology. In this regard, the academic and institutional policy framework of SMU is also brought to bear in an effort to meet the requirements of transformation and diversity throughout the selection process.

This selection process can be summarised as follows:

1. Initial Screening, Evaluation and Shortlisting of Applicants

The first round of selections entails a thorough review of application forms by the selection panel. Given the large number of applications to the programme, the initial round of selections is based purely on scrutiny of the documentation supplied. The minimum requirements listed above are used as criteria to screen the applicants.

Potential candidates who meet the requirements are shortlisted and invited to the selection process. Being shortlisted at this stage does not imply, or guarantee a successful application. The Department of Clinical Psychology will contact the shortlisted applicants via e-mail with the invitation to participate in the selection process. If applicants do not receive any correspondence from the Department of Clinical Psychology with regard to the results of the paper selection, it is their own responsibility to contact the Department's secretary, Ms Brenda Ledwaba (Tel: (012) 521 4632, E-mail: Brenda.Ledwaba@smu.ac.za), on **15 September 2020, between 08h00-15h00**, to confirm whether their application for the shortlisting process was successful or not.

2. Selection week

Applicants who have been shortlisted are invited to participate in the selection process. During the selection week, applicants will be involved in various tasks and activities that may include individual interviews, group activities, writing activity, role plays and panel interviews. Candidates are again rated against a number of criteria. Ratings for applicants are collated and the results are discussed by the selection panel. At the end of the selection week, a joint meeting of the selection panel determines the successful candidates. The most suitable candidates are identified by means of consensus. The decision of the selection panel regarding successful candidates is final and binding. Between **10 and 12** candidates can be selected and a short-list of further potential candidates is identified. After the completion of the formal selection process, the final successful candidates are announced. Successful candidates will be informed in writing of the outcome of their applications. An opportunity is given to the applicants to indicate whether they accept the selection or not.

Due to the large number of applications, we cannot provide any feedback to applicants who have been unsuccessful. In response to this limitation, we recommend that applicants make use of resources such as *Cognition & Co* (<https://cognitionandco.co.za>) for guidance and preparation for Masters Psychology selections.

Please Note:

1. Should you wish to withdraw from the selection process, please notify the Department of Clinical Psychology by contacting Ms Brenda Ledwaba (Tel: (012) 521 4632, E-mail: Brenda.Ledwaba@smu.ac.za) by no later than **15 September 2020**.
2. Applicants who accept the invitation to participate in the selection process at SMU are expected to personally absorb the costs of any accommodation and/or travel expenses which may be incurred as a result of participation in the selection process.

Selected applicants are advised that it is their personal responsibility to obtain details on fee structure and accommodation, as these important issues are not managed by the Department of Clinical Psychology.