



Guide to the PhD Programme at Wits Business School

Introduction

This document outlines the key steps to be taken by students on the Wits Business School PhD Programme. After outlining the necessary criteria for admission, the steps for enrolling and completing your PhD are detailed.

While every effort has been made to ensure that this information is correct you should work closely with Faculty Office, to confirm the application procedure. Fees, in particular, are subject to change and you should confirm these with the Fees Office.

The WBS PhD Programme operates on a once yearly intake at the beginning of each year. Successful applicants will register for the PhD programme and attend the research methodology and proposal writing seminar series. Once you have successfully completed the requirements for the methodology seminars you will work with your assigned supervisor to finalize your proposal for presentation to a panel of academics drawn from across the Faculty. Approval of the research proposal by this panel is required for you to continue your degree.

Criteria for Admission onto the WBS PhD Programme

Admission onto the WBS PhD Programme requires the following as a minimum:

- A good Bachelors degree (First or Upper-Second Class) with Honours
- A Masters degree (65% or more for Masters Research Report and 70% or more for MBA research report)
- An outline of your proposed research
- Availability of a suitable supervisor

We will assess your academic record and the suitability of your proposed research in deciding whether to admit you to the programme.

Step 1:

Put together your application. This should include:

- Fully completed 'Application for Post Graduate Admission/Further Study' (Parts 1, 2 and 4 form one (University) document.
- Part 3 is a separate Faculty document and should be duly completed.
- All documentation requested in these application forms.
- Motivation letter
- A two to three thousand-word outline of your proposed research (see required format, Appendix 1).
- A signed copy of the anti-plagiarism declaration (Appendix 1) and if possible a Turn-It-In Report.
- An administration fee. Please quote the application number on the reference section of the deposit slip.
- Academic transcripts (academic record of both your undergraduate and postgraduate degrees) and degree certificates.
- Any research that you have conducted and/or any publications (journal articles, conference papers, books/books chapters, etc.) you have achieved.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your application is complete. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Step 2:

When your *complete* application has been received it will be reviewed under these conditions.

- If you satisfy all the requirements and we have a suitable supervisor available you will be accepted onto the School's PhD programme. **Please note our supervision capacity is limited and we cannot accept or guarantee all applicants a place on the program even when they meet our minimum requirements for entry.**
- If we feel that your outline shows promise, but is not developed to an adequate level, we will provide feedback and you will be requested to resubmit a revised version for consideration.
- If your application is not acceptable and/or we do not have a suitable supervisor you will be informed.
- Your proposal will be put through the Turnitin antiplagiarism software; a high level of plagiarism may result in disqualification.

Step 3:

On acceptance onto the PhD programme by the School, you will be required to register as a student at the Parktown office of the Commerce, Law and Management Faculty and pay the relevant fees. The fee structures are outlined in the table below (which should be confirmed by both the Fees and Faculty Office).

Students who are not South African citizens/residents pay additional fees as outlined below. You need to contact the Fees and International Office (FeesOffice.Finance@wits.ac.za and/or tel: +27 11 717-1546 or studysa.international@wits.ac.za and/or tel: +27 11 717-1054, respectively) to obtain a fee quotation for this Unit Code.

2024 Tuition Fees

Full-time or Part-time	Course/Field of Study	Plan Code	Programme Code	Unit Code	Annual fee
F/T	Doctor of Philosophy (Faculty of Management, Business School)	BFADHI80	BDA00	BUSA9001A	R53,550.00
P/T	Doctor of Philosophy (Faculty of Management, Business School)	BFADHI80	BDA00	BUSA9001A	R35,920.00
F/T and P/T	University copyright fee (Annual)	All	All	All	R126

* Tuition, notes & computer facilities

International Students (Commencing 2024)	Annual non-refundable International Registration Fee (in addition to the local tuition fees as listed above)
SADC & Rwanda	R6,970.00
Outside of SADC & Rwanda	R53,550.00

Step 4:

The Methodology and Proposal Writing Seminar Series consists of three seminars in the first two quarters of the year. The first two sessions entail *Conceptualizing and Developing your Research Proposal* and *Locating the Conceptual Foundations of your Research*. The third seminar is split into two consecutive components, *qualitative and quantitative methodology*. You may attend one or both of these seminars depending on the methodology you intend using. There is no additional fee charged for the seminar series.

The Methodology and Proposal Writing Seminar Series is for PhD and MM by Research students. It provides methodological training and an opportunity for research students to network and develop support structures. All students are expected to attend the seminars and complete the assignments.

Students are responsible for their own travel and accommodation arrangements when attending these seminars.

Step 5

In conjunction with your supervisor, you will prepare your PhD proposal. This should be a substantive piece of work that demonstrates knowledge of your research topic and sufficient understanding of your chosen methodology and provides a clear plan of the research that you will undertake.

You will present your proposal to a panel of academics representing WBS and the Faculty's Graduate Studies Committee. If there is no expert to your field of study and external to the School present at the panel, such a person will be asked to provide written review of your proposal. The report of the panel and the external reviewer (if applicable) are tabled at the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee meeting for approval. Once this is obtained you may proceed with your research.

PhD students are encouraged to attend the panel presentations of other students so as to understand the panel process and standard of work required.

You must present your PhD proposal within one year of starting (end 2025 for 2025 intake).

Step 6:

Under the guidance of your supervisor, you should now work towards the completion of your PhD.

You will be required to provide the Research Office with a written report on your progress every six months. This will require you and your supervisor to jointly set targets and report on the completion of previous targets.

Minimum periods for completion

Full-time: Two years

Part-time: Four years

WBS holds an annual research workshop which all PhD students are expected to attend. This workshop consists of students presenting work in progress and inputs from academics. The workshop provides an opportunity for students, at different stages of their PhDs, to network and benchmark their work.

You must re-register with the Faculty Office (and pay the appropriate fees) each year, until you have been informed that you have qualified.

Step 7:

When you and your supervisor believe the work to be complete, you should contact the Faculty Office for the necessary documents and administrative fees that you will need to submit, and inform the Research Office that you have submitted.

Step 8:

Your thesis will be examined by three examiners. Examiners must be approved the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee. To prevent unnecessary delays, your supervisor should put forward the names of your examiners three months before you plan to submit your final thesis. You may put forward suggestions of appropriate examiners to your supervisor, however you will not know who your examiners are (until the examination process is complete).

- An internal examiner (who will not be your supervisor)
- Two external examiners (one from outside South Africa)

You will be informed by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee of the outcome of your examination.

Appendix 1

Required format for a WBS PhD Outline to be submitted with your Application

Maximum length: 2,500 words. (Suggested number of pages is for guidance in drawing up a balanced Research outline that addresses the key areas we will assess)

1. Title page (1 page)
 - a. Full name
 - b. Contact details
 - c. Proposed title
 - d. Proposed supervisor(s)
2. Context and Motivation (4-5 pages)
 - a. Provides a background of the proposed research, and the context in which the topic to be addressed, as well as an explanation why the proposed research is scientifically interesting.
 - b. Explains why this topic should be researched, states the research problem(s) that you have identified, and briefly highlights the knowledge gap.
3. Literature review (4-5 pages)
 - a. Draws on the existing theoretical and empirical literature to explain the key features of the topic you will be researching, areas of debate, and gaps in knowledge and your study's contribution to knowledge.
4. Methodology (2-3 pages)
 - a. Describe the type of methodology that you propose using and justify this in relation to the problem being investigated.
 - b. Clearly outline the type of data that you intend to collect, again justifying this in relation to the problem being investigated.
 - c. Describe the proposed method of analysis, in detail, using the literature to justify the choice of the method, estimation techniques (if quantitative) and variables or constructs to be included in the analysis.
 - d. In tabular form, draw up a proposed timetable for your PhD.
5. Conclusion (1 page or less)
 - a. Briefly summarise what you will be looking at, how you will do this, and how this contributes to knowledge.
6. References