

PHD APPLICATION PROCESS

Basic application requirements

- Application through the [SUNStudent platform](#) to review all existing qualifications and additional documents.
- Minimum of 65% average in research master's degree programme (in a Journalism, Media and Communications related field).

Please note: If an applicant working on the required "Statement of Research Interest" does not have regular access to full-text academic sources, they may apply for special access as a preparatory (doctoral studies) student at Stellenbosch University. This application needs to be sent directly to the PhD course convener no later than 1 March of the year of application.

Step 1

Online application via the university administration portal

More information about the postgraduate application process can be found [HERE](#). Applicants need to have full academic records for their previous degrees available before starting an application.

- **Dates:** Applications open on 3 April for the following year. Applications close on **1 June** for the following year.
- **Next steps:** Applicant needs to keep an eye on the application portal to ensure that their application status is changed to REVIEWED.

Step 2

Submit additional documents during the application phase

All applicants will be required to submit the following additional documents on the application portal before the deadline date of 1 June:

1. Comprehensive Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A document that outlines your educational level, employment history, description of work experience, especially that is relevant to your application to study and contact details of three referees.

2. Evidence of academic work

A sample of your best written work (e.g., abstract of a research component completed during your under- or postgraduate studies/published journal article).

3. Letter of motivation

One-page document explaining what factors are motivating you to apply for the specific programme(s) and describing what makes you a suitable candidate.

4. Statement of research interest

This is a brief summary of the doctoral research proposal (1-3 pages in length) which outlines your area of research, aims of the research project and the research methodology you plan to use.

5. Summary of Master's research

A structured, formal document summarising the research question that was stated, hypotheses that were tested, research methodology and results/recommendations presented (3-5 pages in length).

Step 3

Departmental review of application

All applications will be reviewed by an internal departmental committee after the deadline date of 1 June. Applicants will thereafter be informed whether their application has been provisionally accepted and who their supervisor will be. It is important to note that this will be provisional acceptance. Final acceptance into the programme will be dependent on a full research proposal.

Please note: The department reserves the right to decline to supervise a study.

Step 4

Finalisation of proposal for departmental and faculty admissions committees

The applicant, under the guidance of the relevant supervisor, will finalise the proposal for submission to a doctoral admissions committee. After the departmental level doctoral admissions committee has approved the proposal, it is sent to the Higher Degrees and Research Committee of the faculty for further comment and confirmation.

The agenda for the final meeting of the Higher Degrees and Research Committee closes towards the end of September (precise date available on [the website of the HDRC](#)). This means that the final proposal (as accepted by the departmental admissions committee) must be submitted, with the relevant documents, to the faculty secretary (fasscomm@sun.ac.za) by this date to ensure that the candidate can register for the next year.