

Proposed policy on selection and administration of PhD/DCom and Masters by Research Cluster Coordinator – Nicholas Ngepah

1. Introduction

This document stipulates the internal process and criteria for selection of candidates for PhD/DCom in Economics and Econometrics within the School of Economics. It is to be read in complementarity with the general processes in the yearbook. Applications for PhD/DCom in Economics and Econometrics will happen once a year. The window of applications opens on 1st April and closes on 31st August for international applicants and 31st October for South African applicants every year.

2. Application and decision processes

Assessment of the applications will be undertaken as follows:

1. Once applications have been received, overall marks in the Master's (NQF level 9) academic transcripts will be used as the first screening criteria. Any application with **marks less than 65%** will not be considered further.
2. Once the overall mark threshold has been considered, the next screening criteria will be on the content of economic theory and quantitative techniques in the applicant's transcripts.
 - 2.1 Economics criteria: at least microeconomics, macroeconomics and/or Development economics at postgraduate, preferably master's level (NQF level 9)
 - 2.2 Quantitative techniques: at least econometrics, statistics and/or mathematics for economist at the postgraduate, preferably master's, NQF level 9 (more weight will be given to this, in case of econometrics applicants)
3. Any applicants from a different background wishing to undertake an interdisciplinary PhD/DCom in Econometrics lodged within the School of Economics must have sufficient Quantitative Techniques foundation with some knowledge of economic theory (as in 2.2 and 2.1 above), otherwise, the candidate's PhD/DCom will only be suitable in the department in which the field of his fundamental studies lies. Hence, such a candidate will be deemed not suitable for PhD/DCom in Economics or Econometrics.
4. Candidates for interdisciplinary PhDs, after meeting conditions 1-4 above, will only be accepted further, if any qualified staff member is found for the purpose of supervision in the area of interdisciplinary research. Onus in this case is on the applicant to approach staff for supervision and proposal of co-supervisors (if required) whether in, or out of the department/university
5. Once criteria 1-4 is applied:
 - 5.1 Then the pre-proposal of the applicant will be circulated to the School's Higher Degrees Committee for consideration and deliberation.
 - 5.2 Pre-proposals are to be used as a yardstick to assess the applicants' understanding of research and research roadmap in terms of choosing a proper title, motivating

their research, appropriate participation of prior theoretical and empirical literature, consequently establishing the research gaps the study would close and bringing out key contributions.

5.3 Candidates will be accepted or rejected based on the quality of their pre-proposals.

5.4 At Supervisors will also be allocated to selected applicants at the DHDC meeting to guide the applicants further in full proposal development.

5.5 A candidate may also be rejected if their work is good but there is no staff member interested to supervise them

6. Due to high demand for our economics PhD programs, and available capacity, the University caps the number of PhD intakes every year. In the event that the number of candidates who meet the minimum criteria are more than the planned maximum intake, the bar will be raised to select only the best.

7. Once criteria 6 has been complied with, letters will be issued to the selected applicants indicating the acceptance of their applications, the latest date at which full proposal will be submitted and the supervisor allocated to each candidate.

8. At the date of the end stipulated date, candidates who have not complied with the deadline will be automatically rejected from further participation and hence excluded from the PhD/DCom process

9. The submission of a full proposal by a candidate must be accompanied by an endorsement by the supervisor, by way of him/her signing on the first page of the proposal. This will be to ensure that the supervisor is happy with the quality of the proposal being submitted.

10. Upon submission of the proposals, candidates will be invited to present their proposal at a proposal defense meeting, where DHDC members and other qualified staff members will be present to assess the quality of the proposals.

11. After the presentation, following the decision of the DHDC panel, a candidate's proposal is:

11.1 Approved for continuity, with an approval letter stipulating the month and the year the candidate will be expected to complete the PhD/DCom.

11.2 Approved on condition that he/she addresses the concerns raised. The conditional approval will be given in the form of a letter, stipulating the concerns to be addressed and a three months maximum period with specific date on or before which a revised proposal will be submitted.

- Failure to meet the three months deadline will lead to outright rejection
- Submissions within the deadline will be considered and depending on the views of the majority of the SEHDC members, the candidate's proposal is either approved (with a letter as per 11.1 above) or rejected with a letter as per 11.3 below).

11.3 Rejected, with a letter of rejection