



Doctoral degree in Strategic Communication

Frequently Asked Questions

This document is aimed at answering questions you may have about enrolling for doctoral studies in Strategic Communication. For more information, please also visit the Postgraduate website: <https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/humanities/postgraduate-programmes-and-information/postgraduate-information-for-students-and-staff/>

Before you apply, please also read the processes and requirements for postgraduate students on the [UJ website here](#).

The doctorate in Strategic Communication is designed to develop highly specialised and in-depth theoretical, professional and research skills within the disciplines of Strategic Communication. The qualification is designed to facilitate professional role enactment in highly specialised and unpredictable communication contexts, and to acquire the ability to respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing strategic communication knowledge. It also facilitates a comprehensive command of advanced communication research methodology, which should result in a significant and original contribution to the discipline of strategic communication as well as the ability to engage in critical dialogue.

What do I need to qualify a Doctoral degree in Strategic Communication?

A master's degree (NQF 9) in Communication is required with specialisation within the discipline of Marketing, Strategic Communication, Public Relations, Corporate Communication with a research component. A minimum academic average of 65% in the preceding master's degree (NQF 9) is required.

The University reserves the right not to admit applicants to a particular doctoral programme in accordance with the programme-specific selection criteria and other relevant criteria or if the department lacks adequate supervision capacity. The University reserves the right

not to admit applicants to a particular PhD programme in accordance with programme-specific selection criteria and other relevant criteria such as:

- the limitations of enrolments per programme.
- capping of admissions in terms of the University's approved enrolment plan or professional regulatory requirements.
- the inability to identify an appropriate supervisor within the University.

For us to consider your application for the **Doctoral degree in Strategic Communication**, please prepare a two-page document to submit with your application, including the following:

1. Proposed title of the research study.
2. Justification for conducting the study (what is the real-life problem this study is addressing and who can benefit from it?). Cite relevant literature and studies conducted.
3. Proposed research question and sub-questions.
4. Proposed theoretical perspective/paradigm (with relevant sources cited);
5. Proposed research methodology (with relevant sources cited); and
6. Reference list.

Acceptance for the Doctorate in Strategic Communication degree is subject to approval of your proposal. As space is limited, we encourage you to submit your application, together with your proposal, at soon as possible instead of waiting for the application deadline.

Online applications for 2025 open on the first Monday in April 2024. Applications close **on 31 October 2024**. No late applications will be accepted. Please note you need to apply online on the website <http://www.uj.ac.za>. **Please note** only online applications via the website will be accepted. No email applications are accepted.

Note the description of the doctorate in strategic communication on page 300 of the [post-graduate yearbook for the faculty of Humanities](#).

What is required from international students and South African students with overseas qualifications?

We require that you submit an *evaluation from the South African Qualification Authority* (SAQA) of your degree to consider your application to the University of Johannesburg. Your application cannot be accepted without a SAQA certificate.

South African students with international qualification are also required to submit a SAQA certificate.

Support is provided for international students to help you with registration and other matters relating to your studies. Visit the website of the [International Office here](#).

Proposal Phase: Pre-Registration

Doctorate students have the option register for the Proposal Phase: Pre-Registration a semester prior to formally registering for the degree itself. This affords the prospective student **six months** to work on the proposal, with full library access, at a greatly reduced cost, prior to registration for the degree. Students receive full supervisor for their proposal for the second semester. Pre-registration is only available according to the published registration dates set for the programme. Students need to develop and submit a research proposal during this pre-registration year. Students that have an approved or almost ready proposal at the end of the year would be recommended for full registration for 2025 (failing to do so would mean that they do not qualify for formal registration as they would have failed to comply with all the conditions for acceptance for full registration. If the proposal is not submitted within six months during the pre-proposal phase the student is required to submit within the first three months of the next academic year.

How much time to I have to complete my degree?

Students register for a doctoral programme full time or part time. The minimum duration of a doctoral programme is two academic years (part time or full time). The maximum period of registration for a doctoral programme **is four years full time or five years part time**.

Scholarship development at doctoral level may consist of at least the following formative and integrated assessment opportunities:

- regular discourse engagement with the supervisor(s), as contained in the faculty-specific guidelines for doctoral programmes.
- two doctoral seminars during the programme: one to present and defend the research proposal and one to present the results of the research project and simultaneously to justify the originality of the thesis.

Keep in mind that students who are not registered will not be allowed to receive any supervision. Registration therefore must be renewed, every year in January. The renewal of students' registration for a doctoral programme is subject to their satisfactory progress. In the event of students' progress being unsatisfactory, the relevant Faculty Board recommends to the Senate Higher Degrees Committee that their registration for the doctoral programme be terminated. The decision of the Senate Higher Degrees Committee

is final.

A doctoral study is completed in the form of a doctoral thesis in the traditional format or in the form of a collection of articles and essays. Instead of a thesis, candidates may opt to formulate a dissertation or thesis by article or essay. **The minimum number of articles required may not be less than 4 for a Doctorate.**

The Faculty Rules and Regulations, approved by Senate require an oral defense or Viva Voce that forms part of the academic requirements for the qualification. The submission of two pieces of for publication to peer-reviewed journals, based on the thesis, is a prerequisite for the conferment of the degree.

The final submission of the thesis needs to take place in accordance with the final submission dates per semester as contained in the University's Year Programme to ensure timely completion of the assessment process. Late submission could imply the renewal of registration in the new academic year.

If I receive a letter of acceptance, will a place be reserved for me to register until the end of the registration period?

If you are accepted to the programme you need to register as soon as possible, once the UJ registration period begins. The university follows "first come, first serve" registration policy, which means that if the places in the programme are filled up before the end of the registration period, the registration for the programme is closed.

Therefore, once your application has been approved and you have been finally accepted, you are urged to register at your earliest convenience, pay the registration fee, and send us proof of registration to secure your place.

Once capacity has been reached and we are full, registration will be closed for our Doctorate qualification. Should you still want to study with us, we advise you to apply again the following year.

Do you have a mid-year intake? Can I register in June to apply for a doctorate?

Applications open in April each year and closes October – so this must be the window you apply for admission. Registration takes place after an applicant is admitted, and depending on whether we meet target or not, we can allow registration for research degrees for semester two.

How much does the qualification cost?

Please consult the Fee Book which can be found [here on the UJ website](#).

Are any bursaries available?

Several bursaries are available which can be found [here on the UJ website](#).

Please consult www.uj.ac.za for more information

For enquiries, email: stratcommadmin@uj.ac.za. Send us proof of your application to help us track your application.

You can only register in January 2025 for your full PhD year. This can only happen, once your application has been approved and you have been finally admitted, pending space availability. Once your application has been approved, we will issue you with the necessary approval letter to state that your application has been successful following the 31 October 2024 application deadline. Thereafter, pending space and capacity availability, you may receive a final admission letter that will allow you to register for the Proposal Phase: Pre-Registration. **Remember, you cannot register unless we have already approved your application.**