



## Doctor of Philosophy in Theology

### Admission criteria

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Students can enrol in the PhD programme at any time throughout the year. To register for a Doctoral programme, prospective students must have an appropriate Masters Degree (or equivalent) in a Theological field, from an accredited institution.

<i>Practioners Degrees</i>	<i>Academic Degrees</i> (min. 240 credits of theology)
MMin – coursework only	MTh
MDiv – coursework only	MDiv – thesis component
MPhil – non-research 1st theology degree (SA only)	MA Theology – or equivalent
<i>Qualifies for MTh 90 cr.</i>	<i>Qualifies for admission to PhD</i>

- In the case of applicants holding accredited South African master’s degrees in theology or related fields, we shall follow the articulation options built into their Master’s degree as on the SAQA website.
- In the case of foreign qualifications, the admissions committee needs to be allowed considerable freedom to make case-by-case judgements within some broad guidelines. We recommend distinguishing between academic and practical master’s degrees. The master’s in ministry and Master of Divinity would be considered as practical degrees; most Master of Arts and Master of Theology are usually academic degrees. The following guidelines pertain to US-style qualifications.
  - We shall accept candidates who hold accredited Doctor in Ministry degrees.
  - In the case of the Master of Theology, typically a 4-year academic degree (or 3-year Master of Divinity + 1-year Master of Theology), we shall accept the applicant.
  - In the case of a Master of Arts, typically a 1- or 2-year academic degree beyond a Bachelor, we should accept the applicant if he has a sufficient amount of theology in his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts. By “sufficient”, we suggest the yardstick be approximately 240 SA credits (= 64 US credits) of theology courses, with a research paper/thesis component.

- In the case of a Master of Divinity, typically a 3-year practitioner's degree that builds on a Bachelor's which may or may not be in theology, we recommend a distinction between those who did and those who did not write a thesis *and* between those with/without undergraduate degrees in theology. In the case of candidates who hold Bachelor of Theology and a Master of Divinity (7 years of theology), the committee should lean towards direct acceptance. For those with non-theological Bachelor's degrees (e.g., Bachelor of Science and a Master of Divinity = 3 years of theology), applicants without a thesis component will be asked to enter the Master of Theology programme and write a 90-credit thesis preferably within the context of the intended field of study. In the case of applicants who wrote a thesis in the Master of Divinity, the committee shall make a judgement based on the quality of research skills reflected in the thesis.
- In the case of a Master's in Ministry, purely a practitioner's degree and regarded as the least academic Master's, we recommend the candidate enter the Master of Theology programme first and write a 90-credit thesis.

In addition, candidates must have achieved at least a **60 percent** aggregate for their Master's degree to qualify for the PhD.

- Applicants with an accredited four-year Bachelor's degree and a non-accredited Master's degree will **NOT** be accepted directly into the Doctoral programme. They will be asked to apply at the Master's level.
- For applicants who have a Bachelor of Theology (or equivalent) and an academic Master's in a non-theological field (e.g., Master of Sciences), such candidates will **NOT** be accepted into the Doctoral programme. They will be asked to apply at the Masters level.

Certified (notarized) proof of the above academic qualifications should accompany the application form, together with a certified (notarized) copy of the photo Identification Document or valid Passport.

Further reading or theological subjects may be assigned to a candidate who does not meet the minimum requirements in a specific discipline (see Biblical Studies: Old Testament and New Testament language requirements).

Selected Doctoral candidates will be granted access to the programme. Those who are unable to complete a proposal and have it approved within the time frame for the first 2 phases of study will not be able to continue in the PhD programme unless extenuating circumstances are explained in writing by the candidate and agreed upon by the supervisor.

## **Research Dissertation**

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The Doctoral programme is a research-based programme consisting of a dissertation. Apart from the orientation courses, there is NO coursework in the PhD programme. The Admissions Committee holds the right to assign further reading or theological subjects should a candidate not meet the necessary requirements. The doctoral programme offers a choice of three fields of study, Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology or Practical Theology. Research is conducted under the supervision of

one or two experts in the chosen field of study. The doctoral supervisors have been carefully selected to provide students with the highest academic standards and levels of service excellence.

The supervisor will assist the student in developing and finalising a Research Proposal for submission to the Research Committee for approval. If and when the title is accepted candidates will be required to write approximately 250-350 page dissertation, (approximately 80,000-100,000 words, 12 point font, one-and-a-half spacing). All work is submitted and returned via email. Two independent External Examiners, as well as an Internal Examiner and the supervisor, will assess the final dissertation and if it is successful, the student will be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy degree at the next Graduation Ceremony. The maximum duration of this programme, which is at level 10 on the National Qualifications Framework, is six years.

## **Graduate profile**

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On achieving this qualification, students will be able to:

1. Identify, understand, interpret, integrate, apply and communicate a body of new knowledge (original research) in interaction with existing knowledge (current state of research in the field of study).
2. Apply logical, theoretical, analytic, creative and systematic thinking, effectively to solve a range of problems within a focused research context.
3. Exhibit the ability to identify and address issues of ethical action and social responsibility in the field of research.
4. Apply principles of sound research practice in collecting, organizing and evaluating information in terms of a critical understanding of relevant research methodologies, techniques and technologies.
5. Be aware of, and be able to interact constructively with, multicultural and multi -faith communities, from a theological perspective.
6. Apply the insights of one or more disciplines to identify and critique issues of church and society.

## **Programme structure**

### **The Five-Phase System for Full Research Programmes**

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SATS manages full-research masters and doctoral candidates according to a five-phase system. The five phases are:

- Phase 1: Orientation (9 months)
- Phase 2: Research proposal (6 – 9 months)
- Phase 3: Research and Writing 1 (12 – 18 months)
- Phase 4: Research and Writing 2 (12 – 18 months)
- Phase 5: Examination (3 – 6 months)

### **Phase 1: from enquiry to research concept**

Phase 1 takes the candidate from the point of enquiry to the formulation of a suitable research concept. This phase includes:

- assessing whether the applicant meets the admission requirements,
- appraising the applicant's aptitude and preparedness for independent research,
- introducing the candidate to the Seminary and the PG School,
- helping the candidate to select a programme and a research topic,
- completion of the courses Theological Orientation (GEN4121) and Research Concept Development (MRS5240), and
- production of a Draft 0 research proposal.

### **Phase 2: from Research concept to research proposal**

Phase 2 begins with Research Proposal Draft 0 and culminates when the candidate's research proposal is approved by the Research Committee. This phase includes:

- introduction to the supervisor(s),
- refinement of the research proposal under the guidance of the supervisor,
- submission of the proposal to the Research Committee, which is usually done twice and
- correction of the proposal to the satisfaction of the Research Committee.

### **Phases 3-4: Research and Writing**

Phase 3 and 4 commence after the research proposal is approved by the Research Committee. This is the research and writing part of the thesis process. We have divided it into two phases because it constitutes the largest part of the research process. The two phases are separated by a mid-point review in the thesis writing process.

### **Phase 5: from draft thesis to graduation**

Phase 5 begins when the supervisor signs off all the chapters of the thesis. In this phase, the candidate must:

- Submit the corrected version of the thesis for the formal Internal Review,
- edit the approved thesis in preparation for external examination,
- submit the final thesis for examination,
- make changes and corrections as required by the external examiners.
- Submit a summary of the completed thesis which is to be published in *Conspectus*, and
- Do an oral presentation of the summary of the thesis to a panel of SATS academics

## GEN4121 Theological Orientation

All new postgraduate students to SATS will take the compulsory postgraduate introduction course, GEN4121 Theological Orientation before starting with the PhD programme. This is a 12 Credit, 3-month course that will introduce you to online studies, MySATS, theology as research and research academic writing.

### Research Concept Development course

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All Students are required to complete the MRS5240 Research Concept Development as part of the Phase 1 of the Doctoral programme. Students will have up to 6 months to work through the course online (MySats). The final outcome is a 3 – 5 page draft research proposal. If a student is successful he/she will be able to continue into the PhD programme and be assigned a supervisor.

The course outcomes are as follows:

- Demonstrate understanding of what is expected of PhD level researchers.
- Implement measures to maximise your chances of completing your degree.
- Develop a clear understanding of the supervisor-student relationship.
- Prepare a research proposal for a PhD dissertation which complies with all the requirements of the South African Theological Seminary.
- Survey all the key works on a topic and organise a scholarly literature review.
- Demonstrate understanding of the fundamentals of field research.

The following required resources are provided by the seminary:

- Smith KG 2008. Academic writing and theological research. Johannesburg: SATS Press.

The following are strongly recommended supplementary books, which are not provided by the seminary.

- Mouton J 2001. How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies. Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik.
- Vyhmeister NJ 2008. Writing quality research papers: for students of religion and theology (2nd ed.). Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

### Pricing for the Doctoral Programme 2019

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Phase	South Africa	Majority World	Elsewhere
1 (orientation)	R17 516	\$1 515	\$2 948
2 (research proposal)	R17 516	\$1 515	\$2 948
3 (first half of thesis writing)	R17 516	\$1 515	\$2 948
4 (second half of thesis writing)	R17 516	\$1 515	\$2 948
5 (examination and finalisation of thesis)	R17 516	\$1 515	\$2 948
<b>Total</b>	<b>R87 580</b>	<b>\$7 575</b>	<b>\$14 740</b>