DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Research focus areas of the Department (2026)

- The teaching and learning of language at primary, secondary or higher education level
- The methodologies, approaches and techniques of language teaching
- The use of textbooks in language teaching
- Teaching bilingual learners
- Teaching English (or any other language) as a home, first or second additional language
- Using an additional language as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT)
- Literacy teaching, reading, writing, speaking and/or listening
- Teaching literature in a home/additional language classroom
- African language literature and women
- Language education and women
- Teaching of indigenous languages
- The teaching and learning of indigenous knowledge systems
- The teaching of art and culture in the Intermediate Phase/Senior or FET Phase (which includes visual arts, music and drama)
- Using ICT and educational media in language teacher training
- Language policies in schools and at tertiary level
- Assessment in language education
- Teaching Creative Arts, Visual Arts, Design, Drama and Dance in SP in FET

Research projects that postgraduate students can participate in

Name of project	Brief description of the project	Project leader	No of available positions for MEd students for 2023	No of available positions for PhD students for 2023
English second language proficiency skills of secondary school learners in multicultural schools	Conduct research in selected schools on the English language proficiency of learners who are using English as their FAL, and as also the language of learning and teaching.	Prof TV Manyike	2	3

- **Focused M & D programmes**

Name of qualification	Qualification code	Curriculum
PhD in Education (Stream; Language Education – LED)	90019	Research proposal module plus full research thesis
M.Ed Language Education		

- **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**
- **Unisa does not currently offer an MEd qualification in Language Education but has applied for accreditation of such a qualification. If the MEd in Language Education has not been approved by the time you apply, you should enrol for one of the degrees listed below, if you**

would like to specialise in any aspect of language, arts and/or culture education when doing a **Master's of Education:**

- MEd in Curriculum Studies (the Language, Arts and/or Culture Curriculum, Teaching Languages)
- MEd in Inclusive Education (learners with special needs/barriers in language learning) – take note of admission requirements for an MEd with specialisation in Inclusive Education
- MEd in Adult Education – course work (literacy teaching in adult education)
- MEd in Psychology of Education (language acquisition)

Students should clearly explain in their research outline that they intend to focus on Language/Arts and/or Culture Education. It is therefore imperative that the first heading of their research outline should read: *MEd in Curriculum Studies, focusing on Language Teaching*; **OR** *MEd in Adult Education, focusing on the teaching of a first additional language to adults*, **etcetera.**

Details of individual supervisors and their research interests or fields of expertise

Name of supervisor	Research interest/field of expertise	No of positions for MEd students still available for 2026	No of positions for PhD students still available for 2026
Dr Phofele PD (Acting CoD)	• English language learning and teaching • Assessment in language education • Teaching and learning of indigenous knowledge systems • Literacy teaching	2	1
Prof TV Manyike	• Bilingual education • Multicultural education • Curriculum transformation in higher education • Language policies in higher education	1	3
Dr SJ Yende	• Music Education and Curriculum Studies • Indigenous Languages and Multilingualism • Music and Disabilities • Decoloniality and Critical Pedagogies • Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Arts Education • Postcolonial Cultural Studies • African Musicology and Vocal Practices (Opera, Sacred Music, Maskandi) • Bias and Higher Education Policy and Supervision • Arts-based Research and Narrative Inquiry	2	3
Dr F Gani	• Adult education • Open distance learning (ODL) and e- learning (ODeL) • Integrating online learning in the curriculum • The use of ICT in teaching and learning	1	1

Dr SS Mukhari	• The teaching of African languages with special reference to Xitsonga • The use of ICT in teaching and learning • Using ICT and educational media in language teacher training. • Blended Learning in Higher Education Teaching. • E-tutoring in Higher Education.	2	2
Dr KG Nkumane	• Teaching Home, First or Second additional language (My Specialisation is: IsiZulu) • Teaching literature in a home/additional language • Literacy teaching • African language literatures and women characterisation (PhD topic) • The teaching of Poetry (African Poetry: IsiZulu Poetry: Master's Degree). • Women academic researchers in Higher Education (MEd topic) • The teaching and learning of indigenous knowledge systems. • Assessment in language education	3	1
Dr M Burger (contract lecturer)	• Assessment for learning in education • Assessment in language education • Teaching writing skills (grade 4 to 12) • Teaching reading comprehension skills (grade 4 to 6) • Developing OERs for language teaching • and learning	2	2
Dr D Sanders (contract lecturer)	• Language and inclusive education • ICT in language education • Curriculum transformation • Tranlanguaging • E-tutoring students • Special needs education • Blended Learning in Higher Education.	1	1
Dr A van Deventer (contract lecturer)	• Design thinking and problem-solving (design process) • ODeL teaching of an Arts subject • Creative Arts IP & SP: Various focusses • Creativity Education: New Approaches • Assessments in the specialised Arts subjects • Cultural Heritage • Museology: Various Focus areas	1	0

University of South Africa, College of Education
Research focus areas for 2026

	• Museums Education: Programs and Art Collections or other collections • Tourism: Programs		
Mr Chidi MP	• Literacy Teaching • Methodologies-approaches and techniques of language teaching, and • Using ICT and educational media in language teaching.	1	0
Ms Mashala JM	• Translanguaging pedagogies • Literacy development • Language education in multilingual context • Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education MTbBE	2	0
Dr Ngidi P	• English language learning and teaching • Classroom discourse • Critical discourse analysis in classroom	1	0
Dr Mort TKB	• English First Additional Language Education • Raising standards in English FAL teaching through assessment • Primary Teacher Improvement especially with regard to language education • Using African art in the curriculum • Visual arts education • The relationship between language acquisition and visual arts education • How poverty impacts art education • Student teacher narratives • Using teaching narratives in ITE	1	1
Ms Zwane DP	• Fostering Self-directed learning in TVET sector • Teaching and Learning of Visual Literacy in the TVET sector • The use of multimedia resources for improving language education	2	1

Models of supervision

The individual and co-supervision models are used. Co supervision is mostly done for mentoring purposes and Multi, Inter and Trans-disciplinary (MIT) research. Some supervisors in the College supervise across departments. Students are therefore advised to study the lecturer profiles of other departments in the College when trying to identify a suitable supervisor.

Opportunities regarding external supervision

External supervisors may be considered if a suitable supervisor is not available in the Department. However, this will depend on the financial viability of the Department.

Contact details of the department

Dr SJ Yende: Nkoana Simon Radipere Building, 6-111; tel: 067 401 0311; e-mail: yendesj@unisa.ac.za
(Chair: DHDC)
Dr PD Phofele: Nkoana Simon Radipere Building, 6-121; tel: 082 754 1957; e-mail:
phofepd@unisa.ac.za **(Acting CoD)**

Admission requirements, selection criteria and selection information relevant for prospective master's and doctoral students.

Minimum admission requirements for master's and doctoral studies in the College of Education

Master's of Education.

An appropriate Honours Degree in Education, or a postgraduate diploma, or a 480 credit Bachelor of Education Degree with a minimum of 96 credits at NQF level 8. The average mark obtained for the degree shall be 60%. All students should have completed a module in research methods and methodologies as part of their previous level 8 qualification. Students who do not meet these requirements may follow an alternative pathway (e.g. RPL, submitting a portfolio or working through a prescribed reading list – refer to **Possible alternative pathways**). The application should accord with the various research focus areas/areas of specialisation of the Department, the Department's capacity to provide expert supervision and the requisite qualifications listed above.
   requisite qualifications listed above.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education
An appropriate Master's of Education Degree is required. The average mark obtained for the degree shall be 60%. Students who do not meet this requirement may follow an alternative pathway (e.g. RPL or submit a portfolio – refer to **Possible alternative pathways**). The application should accord with the various research focus areas/areas of specialisation of the Department, the Department's capacity to provide expert supervision and the requisite qualification listed above.

Supporting documentation to be submitted with application

For a master's degree:
All relevant documentation as specified by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support.

Students should submit a short research outline of 500 to 750 words which sketches the intended research project, the research approach, problem statement, a short literature review and a working title. In addition, a list of five scholarly articles and two books that have been consulted to compile the research outline should be provided. These sources should be predominantly recent, with the exception of (classical) theories which can only be found in old sources. The Harvard referencing method should be used. Students should provide a declaration that they have consulted the relevant department's website prior to submitting their application and should propose the name of his/her preferred supervisor. Any form of plagiarism in the research outline is unacceptable.

Please note: Unisa does not offer an MEd in Language, Arts and/or Culture Education. Depending on their proposed topic students are advised to enrol for a MEd in one of the following areas of specialisation: Education Management, Curriculum Studies, Psychology of Education, Socio-Education, Comparative Education or Philosophy of Education.

Students should clearly explain in their research outline that they intend to focus on Language, Arts or Culture Education. It is therefore imperative that the first heading of their research outline should indicate: *MEd in Curriculum Studies, focusing on Language Teaching*; **OR** *MEd in Psychology of Education, focusing on the development of an additional language*, **etcetera. If the MEd in Language Education has been approved by the time of the application, it is not necessary to indicate the area of specialisation.**

For a doctorate degree:
All relevant documentation as specified by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support.

Students should submit a short research outline of 800 to 900 words which sketches the intended research project, problem statement, the research approach, a short literature review and a working title for the project. In addition, a list of ten scholarly articles and four books that have been consulted to compile the research outline should be provided. These sources should be predominantly recent, with the exception of (classical) theories which can only be found in old sources. The Harvard referencing method should be used. Students should provide a declaration that they have consulted the relevant department's website prior to submitting their application and should propose the name of his/her preferred supervisor. Please note that any form of plagiarism in the research outline is unacceptable.

PLEASE NOTE: Students planning to focus on Language Teaching or Arts and Culture Education in their PhD studies should clearly indicate this in their research outline. It is therefore imperative that the first heading of the research outline should read: *PhD in Education, focusing on Language, Arts and Culture Education.*

Selection procedures followed in the selection of candidates for postgraduate studies
All applications will be considered simultaneously by the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee, the chair of the Department, the director of the School and the head of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for purposes of fairness and transparency. Only candidates who meet the minimum eligibility criteria will be considered.

The Department's supervision capacity and availability of external supervisors will be the first and most important selection criterion. No applicant will be admitted without a supervisor being allocated to the student. If a student requests to be supervised by a particular supervisor, but the supervisor is not available because of his/her existing supervision load, it is the Department's prerogative to allocate an alternative supervisor (internal or external). Further selection will be done based on the following selection criteria (the weight attached to each criteria is indicated between brackets as a percentage of the overall evaluation): the student's academic record and experience in research (30%); understanding of research methods as displayed in the research outline (30%); academic writing skills (30%); and addressing of past inequalities by taking race, gender and disability status into consideration (10%).

The Department will keep record of all the applications and reasons will be provided for unsuccessful applications.

Possible alternative pathways
The following alternative pathways exist for applicants who do not meet the admission requirements:

- Applicants with degrees that have different structures from normal South African honours or master's degrees, applicants whose degrees do not clearly correspond to the Department's admission requirements (e.g. no mark awarded for previous dissertations, no clear evidence of having completed a research-related module as part of the previous qualification, etc) or applicants who do not meet the admission requirements but who possess applicable experience in research or working experience relevant to the field of interest, that may qualify them for admission to a master's or doctoral degree will be required to apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL). Prior academic and research activities by the applicant will be evaluated in accordance with formal Unisa RPL procedures and the outcome of the RPL process will be submitted to and approved by the chair of

the Department. If the approved outcome of the RPL process is positive, the applicant will be allowed to proceed with an application for admission, subject to all terms and conditions governing the admission process.

- Applicants who apply for a master's degree on the strength of a postgraduate diploma or a 480 credit bachelor's degree with a minimum of 96 credits at level 8 and who have not completed a module in research methodology, will be required to obtain knowledge about research methods and methodology by working through a prescribed reading list which will be forwarded to them by the chair of the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee upon request from the student. The student will have to complete and pass a number of assignments related to research methodology. The student may reapply in subsequent years.
- Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirement of 60%, may apply for an alternative pathway by submitting a portfolio containing a motivation letter indicating reasons for wanting to do the qualification and for selecting the specific area he/she is applying for, a CV highlighting experience relevant to the field of interest and evidence of engagement with research which could include one or more of the following: a written report of a scholarly nature, a literature survey, a paper presented at a conference, a published article.

The following alternative pathways exist for applicants whose applications were unsuccessful:

- Students who have been refused admission because of limited capacity within the Department or because their topic was not viable may reapply in subsequent years. It should be clearly indicated that it is a reapplication. The normal selection process will apply in case of reapplications.
- Students who were unsuccessful because of an inadequate research outline may revise their research outline and may reapply in subsequent years.
- A student whose application was unsuccessful because of inadequate academic writing skills may reapply in subsequent years provided that he/she can provide proof of measures put in place to improve his/her academic writing skills (e.g. enrolled for and passed a course in academic writing skills).

Application procedures and when to apply

The Department of Language Education, Arts and Culture will not make use of differentiated registration dates. Applications for admission and registration will take place in accordance with the dates set by the Department for Master's and Doctoral Administration Support for bulk applications and registrations.

Students should

- apply for a student number, following the steps outlined in http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Master%27s-&-doctoral-degrees/Apply-for-a-student-number-and-apply-for-admission
- apply for a space in one of the focus areas using the online application process

Once acceptance in the research focus area and the allocation of a supervisor have been confirmed, they may register for the research proposal module.