

# PhD in Psychological Sciences Information Evening – FAQs

## 1. What are the entry requirements?

We have a minimum entry score requirement of 80% (University of Melbourne Equivalent). Please refer to our course handbook for further information regarding all our course entry requirements; [Entry and participation requirements: Doctor of Philosophy - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences — The University of Melbourne Handbook \(unimelb.edu.au\)](#)

## 2. How is the scholarship score calculated?

Unfortunately, the scholarship score and ranking is an internal process and we cannot provide this information to applicants. I can confirm that we typically look at the final two years of study - although all applications are assessed on a case by case basis. However, we do factor in research and professional experience as well as research outputs (i.e. publications) which might help boost your consideration, but this isn't the sole component, as it mainly dependent on academic merit.

If you have **completed** an undergraduate and honours degree or a Masters degree less than 1.5 years, the calculation is based on:

- 3 year undergraduate followed by an Honours year – level 3 subjects in final year of UG and Honours
- 4 year undergraduate degree – level 3 and level 4 subjects completed in the undergraduate degree
- Masters degree  $\leq$  1.5 years - level 3/4 subjects of the UG degree and the masters results
- Masters degree  $\geq$  1.5 years - masters results

With regards to your competitiveness for scholarship, it's mostly based on academic merit and may also depend on the pool of applicants at any given year or scholarship round. If you are unsuccessful in receiving a graduate research scholarship, we recommend that you also discuss funding and external scholarship opportunities with your supervisor.

Note that course and scholarship outcomes are separate processes. Course outcomes are issued on a rolling basis by MDHS Graduate Research, however scholarships outcomes are issued separately by MDHS Graduate **scholarships** representative, by the set outcome dates for each round (refer to link [here](#)). Considering this, you will receive your course outcome before you receive an outcome for your scholarship, so getting a course offer does not mean you were successful in receiving a scholarship (stipend).

## 3. How do I apply for a scholarship?

You will need to submit a course application by the relevant closing dates to be considered for [Graduate Research Scholarships](#) and Faculty based scholarships available to you. You do not need to submit a separate application to apply for a scholarship.

## 4. Does Graduate Access apply and/or do you expect it to in the future?

Unfortunately, graduate Access (equity program for domestic students who have experienced disadvantage) does not apply for the MDHS PhD program. For a list of degrees/programs for which Graduate access does apply see: <https://study.unimelb.edu.au/how-to-apply/special-entry-access-schemes/access-melbourne-graduate/course-options>

## 5. What is the procedure to apply for a PhD?

Please also refer to the presentation slides.

### *Course Overview*

<https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/doctor-of-philosophy-medicine-dentistry-and-health-sciences/>

### *Entry requirements*

You must meet the minimum [academic entry requirements](#) for your intended course

### *Which research topic?*

List of research strength in Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences

<https://psychologicalsciences.unimelb.edu.au/research/research-initiatives/msps-research-project-list>

or

You can search for academics within your intended research area by using our Find an Expert directory: <http://www.findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au>

Contact your preferred supervisor to discuss your experience and research interests. Once you have their agreement that you may nominate them in your application, you can proceed with submitting your application.

### *When should I apply?*

Graduate Research Applications may be lodged at any time throughout the calendar year.

You will automatically be considered for the [Graduate Research Scholarships](#) and Faculty based scholarships available to you. Only applications for admission that are complete and received by the closing dates will be considered for a Graduate Research Scholarship in that round.

Please note: Most scholarships are awarded in the first two rounds. The 2024 [scholarship application closing dates](#) including the Round 1 scholarship closing date of 31 October 2023.

### *Gather your documents*

Ensure you have following documentation ready before you submit your application:

- A current CV outlining education background, prior professional and research experience and publications relevant to your proposed research project.
- Scanned copy in colour of the original document of all higher education transcripts, completion statement (official translation, if applicable) and grading schemes.
- A copy of the email(s) showing your nominated supervisor has agreed to support your application
- Research summary (100 words)
- Contact details of two academic referees. If you have prior professional and/or research experience, please provide employer referee/s for each position held. Your referees will be required to provide information about your academic ability and judgement of your research potential.

### *Submit an Application*

To submit an application please go [here](#).

To avoid delays in the assessment of your application, please ensure you follow the online application instructions carefully and upload all the required documents. Assessment of your application will only commence once you have provided all required documents.

Please allow 4-12 weeks for your application to be processed. You will be notified of the outcome via email.

### *Graduate Research Scholarships*

Scholarships may be awarded to highly ranked applicants. For further details check <https://scholarships.unimelb.edu.au/awards/graduate-research-scholarships>

## **6. How can I do a combined MPsych/PhD? Is there direct entry into the MPsych/PhD?**

Masters is generally 2 years and PhD is 4 years maximum.

The combined course is a total of 5 years, as you study the 2nd year of Masters concurrently with starting the PhD.

Only students who are currently enrolled in an MPsych degree can transfer to the Mpsych/PhD. Direct entry into the MPsych/PhD is not available. Prospective students must be enrolled in the first year of Master of Psychology at the University of Melbourne to be considered. Currently enrolled students can apply to transfer to the combined Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology)/PhD program for the following year. For further details, please email [postgrad-psych@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:postgrad-psych@unimelb.edu.au)

## **7. Is it common for people to do RA and gain experience before applying for PHD?**

Yes, that is common and can help you to home in on an area of interest, but it is not required.

## **8. If get accepted to a PhD project that already has funding, can you still get the government scholarship?**

Unfortunately, you cannot receive both.

## **9. What is considered competitive in terms of WAM for scholarships?**

Unfortunately, we cannot provide this information. However, Applicants must meet the 80% WAM requirement for course entry in order to be considered for the Graduate Research Scholarship. Please be advised that as the Graduate Research Scholarships are very competitive and the number of scholarships available each selection round varies, we do not have a set benchmark. The scholarships are awarded during each selection round to the highest achievers going down the selection pool until the cohort is reached. While the entry requirement for the PhD program is a minimum Weighted Average Mark (WAM) of 80% (H1), a higher score is generally favourable to increase chances of being considered for a scholarship.

## **10. Do you still get scholarships in the second and third rounds?**

We do have 3 offer rounds but please note that most scholarships are awarded in the first two rounds

## **11. What are the logistics of doing a PhD with a co-supervisor outside of the psych faculty?**

Your Primary Supervisor must be in the Psychology Department. Co-Supervisor can be outside psychology Department

## **12. Should the co-supervisor be identified at the time of application?**

No, you only need to indicate your Principal Supervisor's agreement when you first submit your application. Details on your co-supervisor can be added later.

**13. If you miss out on one year due to your WAM, can you apply another year?**

Yes, you can reapply for the following year. You would need to discuss with your supervisor whether they are happy to support your application again as you would need to submit another application for the following year.

**14. For PhD application, just wondering if we can apply for multiple projects (multiple proposals) at the same time?**

You can only apply and submit an application once you have the supervisors agreement that you may nominate them in your application.

**15. Is there a double degree, combined clinical psychology masters and PhD, available?**

Masters is generally 2 years and PhD is 4 years maximum.

The combined course is a total of 5 years, as you study the 2nd year of Masters concurrently with starting the PhD. Only students who are currently enrolled in an MPsych degree can transfer to the Mpsych/PhD. Direct entry into the MPsych/PhD is not available. Prospective students must be enrolled in the first year of Master of Psychology at the University of Melbourne to be considered. Currently enrolled students can apply to transfer to the combined Master of Psychology/PhD program for the following year. For further details, please email [postgrad-psych@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:postgrad-psych@unimelb.edu.au)

**16. How can I improve my chances of obtaining a scholarship?**

Scholarship scoring is an internal process and therefore I am unable to give you any further information regarding this. However, we do also take into consideration research/professional experience and research outputs (publications).

**17. Are you expected to draw from funding from the scholarship in terms of research expenses?**

No, you are not. Graduate Research Scholarships provide a stipend as well as fee offset which are awarded to domestic and international students based on academic merit.

**18. Is it common for people to apply, get in, and then either reject the offer, or defer?**

Yes, people do reject or defer their offer for many reasons. This usually occurs if they have not been successful in receiving a scholarship or even due to Visa issues.

**19. Has the application review started yet?**

Applications for 2025 need to be submitted by 31 October, 2024. Applications are usually assessed after the closing date for Round 1.

Please Note: that course and scholarship outcomes are separate processes. Course outcomes are issued on a rolling basis by MDHS Graduate Research, however scholarships outcomes are issued separately by MDHS Graduate **scholarships** representative, by the set outcome dates for each round (refer to link [here](#)). Considering this, you will receive your course outcome before you receive an outcome for your scholarship, so getting a course offer does not mean you were successful in receiving a scholarship (stipend).

**20. For government scholarship, is the final allocation decision made by Faculty (MDHS) or School-level Committee? In addition, is the government scholar allocation process “first come first serve” or all student submitted before 31 Oct would be evaluated and notified at the same time?**

It is not first come, first serve. With regards to your competitiveness for scholarship, it's mostly based on academic merit and may also depend on the pool of applicants at any given year or scholarship round. If you are unsuccessful in receiving a graduate research scholarship, we recommend that you also discuss funding and external scholarship opportunities with your supervisor.

**21. Just wondering if the elective subjects in the second or third year (not related to psych) would be taken into consideration for the scholarship application?**

All of your subjects from your undergraduate degree in your second and third year would be used to obtain a score.

**22. Is it common for people to work whilst completing a PhD full time?**

Full time PhD students must commit to work 40hours a week on their PhD and 20 hours for part time. If a full-time student obtains a full-time job, then they must change their study rate to part time.

**23. How does the workload in PhD differ compared to Honours? Is the PhD equivalent to a masters course in terms of workload?**

In terms of workload, an honours degree generally combines a research component and coursework over one year, while a PhD is usually pure research undertaken over three or four years. Our PhD is for 4 years, and our MPhil is 2 years. Then workload difference is:

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), which marks your admission to the community of scholars in your discipline and requires the completion of a thesis of 80,000-100,000 words on a specialised topic;
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil), an internationally recognised masters degree by research that requires the completion of a thesis of 30,000-40,000 words; or
- Masters by research, which may have a coursework component, along with a shorter thesis of about 30,000 words.

**24. I have already submitted my application and just now reviewed my forms. The application only asked to name the primary supervisor and not the co-supervisor. Should I contact and find a co-supervisor at this stage?**

You will need to have a discussion with your potential supervisor about your co supervisor/s. When they receive your assessment form, they can add the details of your co supervisor/s.

**25. Does rejecting an offer impact your chance of being accepted in the following years?**

No, it does not.

**26. What are the English Requirements?**

Here is the link to our English Language Requirements [Graduate English language requirements \(unimelb.edu.au\)](https://unimelb.edu.au) Any documentation you provide will be assessed to determine whether to meet these requirements.

## Q&A from webinar

Question	Answer
1. How do fees work for domestic combined masters/PhD students? Will just the PhD portion be waived?	If you are successful, and once you are enrolled in the combined course, the remaining subjects are subsumed into the PhD course and therefore no fees are charged.
2. If your WAM is just under 80 but you have more than one year of full time equivalent RA work, does this impact eligibility to apply? Or is below 80 strictly ineligible?	<p>In selecting applicants, the selection committee will consider applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prior academic performance and, if relevant, professional qualifications;</li> <li>• understanding of the research question to be explored;</li> <li>• performance at an interview;</li> <li>• motivation and capacity to complete the course in a timely manner;</li> <li>• relevant prior research and/or professional experience; and</li> <li>• the referee reports.</li> </ul> <p>The entry requirements can be found <a href="#">here</a>. We typically look at the final two years of study - although all applications are assessed on a case by case basis. However, we do factor in research and professional experience as well as research outputs (i.e. publications) which might help boost your consideration, but this isn't the sole component, as it mainly dependent on academic merit.</p>
3. is it correct that meeting the basic eligibility does not guarantee you getting the course offer?	<p>In selecting applicants, the selection committee will consider applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prior academic performance and, if relevant, professional qualifications;</li> <li>• understanding of the research question to be explored;</li> <li>• performance at an interview;</li> <li>• motivation and capacity to complete the course in a timely manner;</li> <li>• relevant prior research and/or professional experience; and</li> <li>• the referee reports.</li> </ul> <p>To be considered for a place in a PhD programme, you must meet all the criteria outlined <a href="#">here</a>. You must also have a supervisor's support and a completed supervisor's agreement</p>
4. How is the WAM calculated when you have completed multiple degrees? (Honours + 2 different psych masters)	<p>Your most recent qualification/s will be assessed. If you have completed an undergraduate and honours degree and/or a Masters degree, the calculation is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 year undergraduate followed by an Honours year – level 3 subjects in final year of UG and Honours</li> <li>• 4 year undergraduate degree – level 3 and level 4 subjects completed in the undergraduate degree</li> <li>• Masters degree ≤ 1.5 years - level 3/4 (depending on which was your final year) subjects of the UG degree and the masters results</li> <li>• Masters degree ≥ 1.5 years - masters results only.</li> </ul>
5. Can you guide us on where we can information on converting GPA in universities outside Australia to WAM?	Unfortunately, the scholarship score and ranking is an internal process and we cannot provide this information to applicants.
6. Abby, do you have any other examples of upwards management? Love the QR code clock in.	Speaking to other supervisors to prune ideas, when there's too many ideas on the table, i.e. getting help from the right people for the right task. Setting somewhat real

	consequences to make them more accountable for submitting drafts on time.
7. Is the financial support provided by the MSPS studentship the same amount as the scholarship?	The MSPS studentship will be the same amount as the standard stipend.
8. Am I right in understanding the School of Psychological Sciences is part of the faculty of Medicine, Dentistry, and Health Sciences?	Hi there, yes your understanding is correct :)
9. Abby, was your RA experience considered in your PhD application requirements?	If your research experience was at least 1-year full-time then it will be taken into consideration in your application.
10. where can I find information regarding fees for international students?	You can find more information about fees and scholarships for international students here: <a href="https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/doctor-of-philosophy-medicine-dentistry-and-health-sciences/fees/#nav">https://study.unimelb.edu.au/find/courses/graduate/doctor-of-philosophy-medicine-dentistry-and-health-sciences/fees/#nav</a>
11. What is the standard minimum WAM needed for someone to be considered for scholarship?	Unfortunately, the scholarship score and ranking is an internal process and we cannot provide this information to applicants.  Please note: You will need to submit a course application by the relevant closing dates to be considered for Graduate Research Scholarships and Faculty based scholarships available to you.  With regards to your competitiveness for scholarship, it's mostly based on academic merit and may also depend on the pool of applicants at any given year or scholarship round. Entry requirements can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
12. Is it possible to be considered for a "studentship" as an international student? or is it a hard no	International students will also be considered for the MSPS studentship.
13. Is there an advantage if someone has studied Honours before doing a PhD or is it ok to do a PhD later on after completing the Master of Professional Psychology program?	There is no advantage to doing Honours, compared to doing a Masters, provided you are eligible to enter the PhD Program.  Entry requirements can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
14. Does the MSPS studentship also open for international students?	Yes it is also open to international students.
15. Is doing a PhD free for Au citizens?	domestic students do not need to pay fees if they get a successful offer to study a PhD at UniMelb.
16. Are there any scholarships that aren't based on academic/research merit? I.e. personal factors?	the MDHS scholarship is mostly based on scores from the degree.
17. is partial results acceptable for application? because my results from honours will not be finalized until mid november, which already pass the application deadline	If you meet eligibility, and you receive an offer, this will be a conditional offer only.  Entry requirements can be found <a href="#">here</a> .

<p>18. I read that the scholarship WAM calculation is based on level 3 and level 4 subjects. Can I make sure if non-psych related subjects are included? (like breadth subject). If so, how is the weight calculated? is level 4 subjects double weighted?</p>	<p>I can confirm that we typically look at the final two years of study - although all applications are assessed on a case by case basis. However, we do factor in research and professional experience as well as research outputs (i.e. publications) which might help boost your consideration, but this isn't the sole component, as it mainly dependent on academic merit.</p> <p>If you have completed an undergraduate and honours degree or a Masters degree less than 1.5 years, the calculation is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 year undergraduate followed by an Honours year – level 3 subjects in final year of UG and Honours</li> <li>• 4 year undergraduate degree – level 3 and level 4 subjects completed in the undergraduate degree</li> <li>• Masters degree ≤ 1.5 years - level 3/4 subjects of the UG degree and the masters results</li> <li>• Masters degree ≥ 1.5 years - masters results only.</li> </ul>
<p>19. Is the course offer related to the scholarship offer? Can I still do my PhD if I'm unsuccessful for scholarship application?</p>	<p>You need to be offered a position in the PhD course, to be granted a scholarship. Domestic students who don't have to pay fees, in rare cases people do work during the PhD, or do it PT to support themselves. It is much more financially viable to get a scholarship.</p>
<p>20. Are there different entry requirements for those looking to transfer from masters to the combined PhD and masters program?</p>	<p>Masters is generally 2 years, and PhD is 4 years maximum, so the combined course is a total of 5 years, as you do the 2nd year of Masters concurrently with starting the PhD. Anyone who is currently enrolled in the MPsych degree can apply to transfer into the combined MPsych/PhD degree. The overall entrance requirement for a PhD is a H1. Entry requirement can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p>21. Is the FEEL lab another name for the Social and Personality Psychology lab?</p>	<p>The FEEL Lab is a small research group, it forms part of the overall Ethics and Wellbeing Hub. Labs are more local and usually run by one or a few members of staff, compared to a Hub which is a collection of a range of researchers all working on similar topics.</p>
<p>22. What is the difference between a PhD and a combined PhD and Clinical program?</p>	<p>Masters is generally 2 years, and PhD is 4 years maximum, so the combined course is a total of 5 years, as you do the 2nd year of Masters concurrently with starting the PhD. Anyone who is currently enrolled in the MPsych degree can apply to transfer into the combined MPsych/PhD degree. The overall entrance requirement for a PhD is a H1. Entry requirement can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p>23. Hello, I'm currently a fourth year honours student. My supervisor has agreed and being supportive to supervise me. I know that the course and scholarship offer are separated. May I know the requirement for the course entry given my current condition?</p>	<p>Eligibility for submitting an application to be considered for a PhD is to have a WAM over 80%. You'll be offered a place given your application is competitive taking into account a series of considerations: WAM, prior research experience and/or publications etc... You will need to submit a course application by the relevant closing dates to be considered for Graduate Research Scholarships and Faculty based scholarships available to you.</p>
<p>24. In order to study at PhD level, how essential is it to have worked on an honours research project that relates to my intended PhD research area.</p>	<p>It is not at all required. It doesn't matter what your Honours topic was, you will still be considered for a place in a PhD. Its your WAM that matters- and the Honour's thesis may have an effect on the WAM, but the topic itself is unimportant.</p>



<p>25. How difficult is it to find academic work after a PhD? Do most people get further work at the University of Melbourne, or Universities within Victoria, or is travel usually required?</p>	<p>Depends on what the next step will be for you. If you mean academic work in terms of being a lecturer or research position within an institution, it's not unheard of- but the academic job market is definitely competitive. It is less common for people to be hired directly out of their PhD at the place they did their PhD at the lecturer level. It is more likely that they take on a post-doc role.</p>
<p>26. How to make doing a PhD more financially viable compared to full time work.</p>	<p>If you receive a scholarship, you'll have a living allowance of about 37,000 AUD/year (the amount is for standard stipend in 2024, this is indexed annually). And it's very common for PhD students to supplement that with additional work- such as tutoring or RA work. For local/domestic students, you would definitely need to do that if you didn't receive a scholarship.</p>
<p>27. What level of detail goes into a PhD Proposal?</p>	<p>A short description of the topic you're interested in and a rough idea of the kinds of studies you might do on that topic.</p>