

6.6.4 African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS)

6.6.4.1 MSc in Mathematical Sciences

Programme Code

58637 – 889 (180)

Programme Description

This a one-year postgraduate programme leads to a structured MSc degree in Mathematical Sciences, which is formally accredited by the Universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch, and the Western Cape. The programme is taught at the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) in association with the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford and Paris Sud XI. For more information, visit our website at www.aims.ac.za.

Specific Admission Requirements

In order to register for this programme, one of the following qualifications are required:

- A four-year bachelor's degree (NQF level 8) in Mathematics, or any science or engineering subject with a significant Mathematics component;
- An Honours degree (NQF level 8) in Mathematics, or any science or engineering subject with a significant Mathematics component; or
- Any degree considered to be equivalent to the abovementioned degrees.

Your record should demonstrate a strong aptitude in Mathematics. A wide range of qualifications, equivalent to the above requirements, will be considered.

Applications and Selection

AIMS calls for online applications in October and December each year. The call is advertised via the AIMS mailing lists and through the partner universities. Applications that meet the admission requirements are assessed and students are selected by the AIMS Executive Team. Selected students are split equally between the Universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Western Cape for purposes of registration.

Programme Structure

The programme consists of two components that are grouped into two modules, namely Advanced Topics in the Mathematical Sciences and a research project in the Mathematical Sciences. The module Advanced Topics entails coursework that is divided into submodules. These submodules are generally three weeks long. They are self-contained and very demanding. Each submodule consists of 30 hours' contact time (10 hours per week). Additional tutorials and special lectures are often held in the evenings while students are completing their assignments.

Duration of Programme

The curriculum runs over three semesters and there are two intakes each year – in January and in August.

Programme Content

Advanced Topics in the Mathematical Sciences (28 weeks) (120 credits)

Skills submodules (10 weeks):

Seven submodules of 30 hours each. The skills submodules have a broad focus that ranges from mathematical thinking and numeric computer programming to scientific writing.

Review submodules (6 three-week blocks):

Eleven submodules of 30 hours each.

Review submodules are fundamentally different from one another, and a wide range of topics are offered, which are more flexibly designed. You are required to complete 11 submodules selected from the 18 review submodules offered, with a maximum of two chosen from any three-week block. Choices offered are balanced as far as possible with regard to focus on Mathematics and its applications to Artificial Intelligence, Computer Science, Machine Learning, Physics, Statistics and other interdisciplinary topics, such as Biomathematics. You choose from the list of submodules in consultation with the Academic Director, who

ensures that your chosen modules complement each other. The review submodules provide an overview and in-depth study of topics from a major field of modern scientific work in the Mathematical Sciences and its applications.

Research Project in Mathematical Sciences (8 weeks) (60 credits):

During the research project phase, you work on a research topic with a supervisor, usually from a South African university. It is not expected of you to do original work to achieve a passing grade, but the criterion for an outstanding research project is that it must constitute an original approach to the topic and may lead to publication or form an outstanding introduction to the field that is useful to other students entering the field. During this time, communication skills and computer classes may continue, at the supervisor's discretion.

Compulsory Modules

Subject Number	Module Code	Credits	Module Name	Semester
11471	871	120	Advanced Topics in the Mathematical Sciences	Both
11472	871	60	Research Project in the Mathematical Sciences	Both

Assessment and Examination

- This programme is assessed continuously through written assignments, tutorials, short tests and presentations as set by the lecturers.
- You do an oral presentation on your written research project to a panel of examiners. This panel consists of the AIMS Director, the AIMS Academic Director, the supervisor, teaching assistant and external examiners.

2. General information on the postgraduate programmes

2.1 BScHons degree

- 2.1.1 The degree BScHons can be awarded to you if you –
- 2.1.1.1 have obtained a bachelor's degree approved by Senate for this purpose and upon written application, were admitted to the BScHons programme; and
 - 2.1.1.2 have been registered as a student at the University for at least one year (after obtaining the bachelor's degree), have passed the prescribed written examination and successfully completed an oral examination.
- 2.1.2 The BScHons programme is taken in one of the majors of the BSc according to the provisions of the BSc programme. Students, who followed a BSc programme that does not lead to a BScHons programme, may be accepted to a BScHons programme provided that the BScHons programme can only begin after an examination in the required subject or subjects was successfully completed.
- 2.1.3 An average final mark of at least 60% in the major or prescribed modules in the final year of study is required for admission to a BScHons programme in the major in question. If you do not comply with this requirement, you may only be accepted to a BScHons programme if a recommendation has been made by the department concerned and with the special approval of the Faculty Committee of the Faculty of Science.
- 2.1.4 Specific provisions concerning BScHons programmes in specific subjects are given under the module content of the applicable subjects.
- 2.1.5 BScHons students are not allowed to take any additional third-year subject that includes practical work in the first year of the BScHons. However, if the BScHons programme concerned does not require practical work, you can, depending on the approval of the Faculty Board, be allowed to take an additional third-year subject.

2.2 MSc degree

- 2.2.1 The MSc degree can be awarded to you if you –
- 2.2.1.1 have obtained an honours degree approved by Senate for this purpose and upon written application, have been admitted to the proposed MSc programme; and
 - 2.2.1.2 have followed an approved programme of research or advanced study of at least one year (after obtaining the BScHons degree) at this University or at any other place approved by Senate; and
 - 2.2.1.3 have submitted a satisfactory thesis or assignment, depending on the requirements of the department concerned, and have completed an oral examination.
- 2.2.2 Specific provisions concerning MSc programmes in specific subjects are given in the module content of the subjects concerned.
- 2.2.3 MSc students are not allowed to take any additional third-year subject that includes practical work in the first year of the MSc. However, if the MSc programme concerned does not require practical work, you can, depending on the approval of the Faculty Board, be allowed to take an additional third-year subject.
- 2.2.4 After three years of full-time MSc studies, you must reapply for continuation of studies.

Please note: For the regulations regarding attendance, examiners, thesis requirements, submission and binding of theses, etcetera, consult the Section "Postgraduate Qualifications" in Part 1 (General Rules) of the University's Yearbook.

2.3 PhD degree

- 2.3.1 The PhD degree can be awarded to you if you –
- 2.3.1.1 have obtained a Master's degree approved by Senate for this purpose, or have achieved a level of competence in a particular field of study that Senate considers suitable for the purpose, and upon written application been accepted by Senate to the PhD programme; and
 - 2.3.1.2 have followed an approved programme of research and possible supplementary study, which may include a period of research at another place approved by Senate, for at least two years

after obtaining the above-mentioned Master's degree or after gaining the above-mentioned level of competence; and

2.3.1.3 have submitted a satisfactory dissertation; and

2.3.1.4 have completed an oral examination.

2.3.2 After four years of full-time PhD studies, you must reapply for continuation of studies.

Please note: For the regulations regarding attendance, examiners, dissertation requirements, submission and binding of dissertations, etcetera, consult the Section "Postgraduate Qualifications" in Part 1 (General Rules) of the University's Yearbook.

2.4 DSc degree

2.4.1 As a candidate for the DSc degree you must –

2.4.1.1 have conducted advanced, original research or creative work, to the satisfaction of the University, in the field of the natural sciences;

2.4.1.2 have submitted original work(s) of a high standard that has already been published, on a central theme, making a substantial contribution of high quality, in the view of Senate, to the enrichment of knowledge in the field of the natural sciences; and

2.4.1.3 have completed an oral examination to the satisfaction of the University.

2.4.2 If you already hold a PhD degree from the Faculty of Science or any other qualification that Senate considers an equivalent, you must –

2.4.2.1 have been registered at this University for the DSc degree for at least one academic year before the degree can be awarded to you and at least five years must have passed after obtaining the PhD degree, or another degree or qualification that is considered to be equally acceptable, before being awarded the DSc degree; and

2.4.2.2 have notified the Registrar in writing of the intention to be a candidate for the degree at least one year before presenting yourself for the degree and provided the title(s) and scope of the proposed work(s). Once Senate accepts the application, a supervisor and examiners will be appointed.

2.4.3 If you hold an MSc degree from the Faculty of Science or any other qualification that the Senate considers an equivalent, you must –

2.4.3.1 have been registered at this University for the DSc degree for at least three academic years before the degree can be awarded to you and at least seven years must have passed after obtaining the MSc degree, or another degree that is considered an equivalent, before being awarded the DSc degree; and

2.4.3.2 have notified the Registrar in writing of the intention to be a candidate for the degree at least three years before presenting yourself as a candidate and provided the title(s) and scope of the proposed work(s). Once Senate accepts the application, a supervisor and examiners will be appointed.

2.4.4 You must submit one copy of the work(s) that you want to present per examiner before 1 September (if you want to graduate in December), or before 1 December of the previous year (if you want to graduate in March) at the University office. The copies must be accompanied by a written statement that it is your original work and that the work has not been submitted to this or any other university for the purpose of obtaining any degree. If a substantial part of the submitted work was published under your name and that of another author, you must submit satisfactory testimony detailing which part of the work was done by you. Furthermore, you must mention who started the work, under whose supervision the work was done, who did the work, processed and submitted it to paper, and, if applicable, what part of the work was submitted to any university for the purposes of obtaining a degree.

Disclaimer:

The content above comes from the 2024 Science Yearbook. Make sure to consult the full *Science* to see this extract in context and to check if there have been any changes. Take special note of additional information in the yearbook under section *2. General provisions for postgraduate programmes.*