**Admission Procedures for Prospective MA and PhD Students**

We would require from you a clear indication of the topic on which you wish to write your thesis, a preliminary proposal (of 500 words, in the case of an MA, and 800 words, in the case of a PhD), a sample of your academic writing, and a transcript of your undergraduate and postgraduate academic record.

While the material referred to above should be uploaded at the University’s online facility (<https://ross.ru.ac.za/>) as part of your online application, you should also send it directly to Mike Marais (m.marais@ru.ac.za).

The preliminary proposal needs to evince a degree of familiarity with the field of research, and therefore some awareness of existing research in the proposed area of study. To this end, it should be accompanied by a working bibliography (which does not form part of the word count stipulated above). The bibliography should also list those authors, critics and theorists referred to in the body of the proposal.

Apart from indicating some familiarity with the field of research, your preliminary proposal should briefly set out the parameters of the problem or issue you intend to explore.

In sum, then, your preliminary proposal should include the following information:

1. Working title

2. Statement of argument

3. Academic context (knowledge of existing scholarship pertinent to your topic)

4. Theoretical framework (abstracting the key concepts you will employ in your thesis)

5. Working bibliography

Once received, members of the Department will evaluate your proposal, using the following criteria (couched in the form of questions):

Does the preliminary proposal evince a degree of familiarity with the field within which the proposed project falls?

Does the applicant have an adequate grasp of the concepts and theories that he or she has used? In other words, are concepts properly introduced and used to advance an argument, or do they degenerate into jargon that obscures?

Does the working bibliography provide evidence of adequate preliminary preparation?

Is the applicant able to locate his or her proposed thesis in relation to other positions in the field?

Is the thesis statement clearly formulated?

If so, is this a feasible project in terms of scope and breadth?

In the case of a PhD, will the project form an original contribution to existing knowledge in the field? (At this level, this is an essential requirement.)

Do the preliminary proposal and sample of academic writing suggest that the applicant is able to develop a coherent argument over a hundred or more pages? (In other words, how much intervention will be required by the supervisor?)

Does the applicant possess the critical and theoretical skills requisite to the project that he or she wishes to undertake?

Is the applicant’s grasp of the English language sufficient to enable him or her to write a thesis independently? (Again, how much intervention will be required by the supervisor?)

Does the Department have the capacity to supervise a project of this nature? If so, who would you suggest as a possible supervisor?