



A-Z Resource Guide for MPH Students

[Version 2024]

Welcome to the University of Cape Town and to the School of Public Health & Family Medicine.

We are very excited for you to be joining us as part of the MPH programme, and hope that you will enjoy your time at UCT. This guide is meant as a helpful resource to assist new students settle in and find the resources they need.

Jill Olivier, MPH Program Coordinator

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Accommodation

The UCT student housing office helps coordinate accommodation. The Office is mostly focused on undergrads, but supports postgrad housing also. See: <http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/student-life/housing>

Off campus accommodation in Observatory and Mowbray (close to FHS) is in high demand and there have been a number of scams. Please inform yourself. UCT has the **Off Campus Student Accommodation Service (OCSAS)** to help.

<https://uct.ac.za/dsa/ocsas/about-ocsas>

The OCSAS office provides an advocacy service to potential landlords and students in respect of the following:

- Affordability, Area/ Location, Lease agreements, Deposits, Rental, Feasibility, Adhoc requirements

Contact us on 0216504934 or eocsas@uct.ac.za

DO NOT send money to people from Gumtree or other online marketplaces. Make sure you or a trusted friend are able to have access and can view the accommodation.

Related: Residence; Landlords

Acronyms

Let us know if you come across other acronyms that we use and you are not familiar with

ACA	Academic forms https://www.forms.uct.ac.za/studentforms.htm
CDMC	Coursework and Dissertation Masters Committee (through which your dissertation and degree is processed)
CHED	Centre for Higher Education Development https://ched.uct.ac.za/
CIDER	Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Research https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health/research-research-centres-units/centre-infectious-disease-epidemiology-and-research-cider
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPS	Campus Protection Services https://uct.ac.za/staff/campus-protection-services
DEB	Division of Epi and Biostats https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health/divisions/epidemiology-and-biostatistics
DEH	Division of Environmental Health https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health/divisions/environmental-health
DOM	Division of Occupational Medicine https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health/divisions/occupational-medicine
DP	Duly performed (requirement)
DPHM	Division of Public Health Medicine https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health/divisions/public-health-medicine
DRC	Departmental Research Committee
DrPH	Doctorate in Public Health (professional degree)
FHS	Faculty of Health Sciences
HED	Health Economics Division
HEU	Health Economics Unit https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health/research-research-centres-units/health-economics-unit-heu
HHR	Health and human rights
HPP	Health Policy and Planning (course)
HPSD	Health Policy and Systems Division
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee (FHS ethics)
HRH	Human resources for health
HSRE	Health Systems Research and Evaluation (HSRE)
IAPO	International Academic Programmes Office
ICTS	Information Communication and Technology Services https://icts.uct.ac.za/
IHS	Introduction to Health Systems (course)
LMIC	Low and middle income country
LOA	Leave of absence
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPH	Masters in Public Health
NQF	National qualification framework (points systems for level of study you are undertaking)

OCSAS	Off Campus Student Accommodation Services
OIC	Office for Inclusivity and Change
ORI	Office of Research Integrity https://uct.ac.za/research-support-hub/integrity/office-research-integrity
PG Admin	Postgraduate Administration Office
PG Dip	Postgraduate Diploma
PGFO	Postgraduate Funding Office
PGHSSC	Postgraduate Health Sciences Student Council
PHASA	Public Health Association of South Africa https://phasa.org.za/
PHHR	Public Health and Human Rights (PHHR)
PPA	Planned Progress and Activity Report (extension of the MOU with your supervisor)
QRM	Quantitative/qualitative Research Methods (course, check which one)
SBSD	Social and Behavioural Sciences Division
SPH	School of Public Health https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health
SSS	Student Systems Support (desk for technical support)
SUN	Stellenbosch University
S1	First semester (February to June, indicated by F code on coursecodes)
S2	Second semester (July to November, indicated by S code on coursecodes)
UCT	University of Cap Town
UHC	universal health coverage
UWC	University of the Western Cape
VACFA	Vaccines for Africa Initiative https://health.uct.ac.za/vacfa

Alumni

We maintain a close relationship with many of our MPH alumni, and are always keen to hear from them. Opportunities for current MPH students to engage with alumni will be advertised on the MPH vula group. If you are about to graduate from the MPH program, please always ensure that we have your future email address so we can stay in touch!

B

Babies (on campus)

Congratulations. If you end up having a baby while you are a student here, it will be useful to know about the following:

- Breastfeeding/pumping room: Falmouth 3rd Floor (or ask the Departmental Administrator)
- Creche: The UCT Educare centre provides care for children of students and staff, however, there is typically a very long waiting list. The creche is located on upper campus and details can be found here: <https://uct.ac.za/staff/support-educare-centre/about-centre>

Bike gate

If you ride a bicycle to campus and wish to access the bike gate on Falmouth Road, you need to contact Access Control, details here: <https://uct.ac.za/students/services-access-control/access-control-overview>

Bursaries

Information regarding scholarships and bursaries is available on request from the Postgraduate Centre and Funding Office: <https://uct.ac.za/students/fees-funding-postgraduate-degree-funding/postgraduate-degree-funding-overview>

There are a number of University-administered Masters level scholarships for which both entering candidates and those already in the programme may apply. Deadlines are typically six months to one year in advance. Applications for the programme must be submitted by new applicants in parallel with any scholarship applications.

There is a funding noticeboard which advertises bursaries handled through the UCT PG Funding office:
<https://uct.ac.za/students/current-students-funding-postgraduate-degree-funding/postgraduate-degree-funding-noticeboard>

International students can apply for scholarships via the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO). Forms will be available on the IAPO website (<https://uct.ac.za/international>)

Postgraduate Centre and Funding Office
Upper Level, Otto Beit Building
University Avenue North, Upper Campus

Tel: +27 21 650 3629 Fax: +27 21 650 4352 Email: pgfunding@uct.ac.za

Related: Fees; Money

C

Calendar

The FHS semester schedule, including exams, is often different than the upper campus calendar. All schedules will be emailed to you via the MPH Vula site, or you can request from the MPH programme administrator.

There is however a university calendar which advertises things such as specific graduation dates:

<https://uct.ac.za/academic-calendar>

Culture

Cape Town is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world. The UCT community is comprised of people of different races, religious beliefs and sexual orientation. To ensure peaceful relations with everyone you must be culturally sensitive and respectful in your interactions with staff, students and other members of the community.

Career Services

The UCT Careers Service supports all students with free information, advice and access to personal and professional development opportunities. Whatever your degree choice, year of study or career ambitions, they are there to assist you in realising your goals and aspirations.

The centre provides the following services:

- Career consultations
- Careers educational presentations and workshops
- Career Resource Centre
- Employer networking events: career expos, employer presentations and showcases
- Other professional development opportunities

To log in: <https://mycareer.uct.ac.za/students/login>

Computers

Much of your work will require the use of computers. If you do not have your own computer available there are computer labs on campus that you can use. Only certain computer labs will have statistical software installed, please do not leave to the last minute an exploration of campus computer and printing facilities.

Anatomy Building Computer lab: Basement/Level 1

Library: Wolfson lab level 7

Postgraduate room: Upper level Barnard Fuller (only a few stations)

<https://icts.uct.ac.za/services-student-computing-icts-managed-student-computing-labs/health-sciences-student-computing-labs>

CBD (Central Business District)

Stands for Central Business District and means the Cape Town city centre. You can reach the CBD by public transport, and it is generally safe to walk around during the day. As with all big cities you should be aware of your surroundings. Pickpockets have been known to work in Cape Town, usually in busy or crowded areas.

CPD (Continuing Professional Development)

Upon graduation from the MPH you can apply to receive 30 CPD points (via the new online logging system, or speak to the Program Administrator).

CPS (Campus Protection Services)

Campus Protection Services (CPS) is committed to protecting the safety of the university community and its property, as well as maintaining order in accordance with university policy.

CPS staff are highly trained and, in the unfortunate circumstances of a crime being committed against anyone in the UCT community, they are competent in dealing with the practical and legal aspects, such as first-aid and what to do in a case of sexual assault.

In case of any emergency, call the CPS 24-hour hotline on 021 650 2222/3 (use the last four digits only if calling from a UCT extension).

You can find details about services and locations here: <https://uct.ac.za/staff/campus-protection-services>

Related: Safety

D

Directions around campus

Yes, the campus maps are bad, and so are the signposts on campus. It is worth taking a walk around before you need to be somewhere early in the morning...

UCT campus maps and a campus-wide guide are available at: <https://uct.ac.za/contacts-maps/campus-maps>

Disability services

Disability services at UCT provides a range of assistance for students with different abilities. If you need any form of assistance in this regard you should contact Disability Services as soon as possible after registration. They can help with gaining the accommodation needed for your studies and exams. Please see the website for more detailed information.

Disability Service Reception
Room 4.03, Level 4
Steve Biko Students Union Building, Upper Campus
Tel: 021 650 2427

<https://uct.ac.za/staff/support/disability-service>

Discrimination and Harassment

The Office for Inclusivity and Change (OIC) at UCT assists the campus community in matters of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, domestic violence and rape. OIC comprises a group of supportive people, student support officers and advisors who are able to help you. See: <https://uct.ac.za/staff/support/discrimination-and-harassment>

DP (duly performed) requirements

DP stands for "Duly Performed", and most courses have a DP requirement. Usually this means that you carried out the required assessment tasks (assignments etc). If you fail to meet the DP requirements you will not be permitted to write the final examination.

DRC (Departmental Research Committee)

DRC stands for the "Department Research Committee", and is the School of Public Health Research Committee. One of the roles the DRC has, is to ensure that all research projects, including student projects, undergo review. This process is usually managed by the Principal Investigator (PI) or your supervisor. As students, your supervisor will act as the PI on your MPH mini-dissertation projects. More details here: <https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health/research/departmental-research-committee>

E

Eduroam (see Internet)

Email

UCT generates a uct email address for each student once registration is complete. Usually this is of the form studentID@myuct.ac.za

It is of **CRITICAL IMPORTANCE** that you log into this email address at least once to set up auto-forwarding or that you check the email address regularly. **ALL OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION** from UCT will go to that address, including information about fees, grades and housing.

You can log on to email here: <https://outlook.com/myuct.ac.za>

And get more information here: <https://icts.uct.ac.za/services/email-uct>

Ethics

Most research, and your MPH mini-dissertation, requires ethical approval to be carried out. There are two committees on the Faculty of Health Sciences that you should be aware of, the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and the Animal Ethics Committee (AEC). Other faculties have their own committees. If you plan on carrying out any animal research, you will need to participate in a training course and have approvals, and this can be a time consuming process. Your supervisor, or study PI should be available to help you understand these processes.

HREC: <https://health.uct.ac.za/home/human-research-ethics>

Exams

Exam schedules are posted ahead of time and will be communicated via emails through the MPH vula site.

Emergency contacts

You will have your own personal emergency contacts. However if you experience any kind of emergency after hours and require assistance, please contact Jill (jill.olivier@uct.ac.za) who can also assist.

F

Fees

For all information regarding fees visit <https://uct.ac.za/students/fees-funding-fees/fees-office-contacts>

All the rules and regulations about fee calculations and payments are available in a Fees Handbook <https://uct.ac.za/students/fees-funding-fees/fees-handbook>

Fees office

Level 3, Kramer Building, Middle Campus

Telephone: 021 650 1704

Email: fnd-feeeng@uct.ac.za

You can access your fees statement through PeopleSoft.

There is a postgraduate funding portal with information on scholarships, awards, and PG-related fee matters: <https://www.uct.ac.za/postgraduate-hub>

Fitness centres

The UCT gym is located on Lower Campus close to Graça Machel Hall women's residence. For more info: <https://uct.ac.za/dsa/student-development-fitness-centres/uct-gym>

Students can also join the gym at the Sports Science Institute of South Africa in Newlands, which offers (slightly) special rates to UCT students. For more info: <https://www.ssis.com/>

Food

There are 2 cafeterias on campus. One is located in the IDM building and the other in Barnard Fuller. There are also a variety of cafes located at Groote Schuur Hospital, and many restaurants in Observatory. There is a Pick 'n Pay grocery store and other restaurants located in the square (St Peters) across Falmouth Road.

Fun

It is important to have fun as well as work hard during your studies. Get involved in student based sport or other student societies/organisations. Student societies/organisations: <https://uct.ac.za/dsa/student-development-student-societies-organisations/overview>

Sports clubs: <https://uct.ac.za/dsa/student-development-sport-clubs/overview>

Funding (see bursaries)

FHSPG TT (Faculty of Health Science Postgraduate Student Oversight and Advocacy Task Team)

The UCT Faculty of Health Science Postgraduate Student Oversight and Advocacy Task Team (FHSPG TT) is a group of UCT staff, postdoctoral fellows, and the PGHSSC, who provide an oversight and reporting structure to ensure transparency and accountability. You should feel free to contact any of the members of this group, or contact the PGHSSC (see PGHSSC) if you are having issues related to your studies.

<https://health.uct.ac.za/postgraduate-current-students-student-services/fhs-postgraduate-student-oversight-advocacy-task-team>

G

Grades

Grades are released on a system called *PeopleSoft*. Final course grades take a long time to come through, because all courses at UCT are reviewed by an external examiner, and then go through a process called “exam board” before they can be released to students. You will usually get a notification (on your official email address) to indicate that you can log on to view your final grades. If you notice an error (for example a missing grade when you should have one) you should get in contact with the program administrator immediately.

H

Handbooks

The Postgraduate handbook, of which you will get a copy during orientation or you can download online contains the CRITICAL information about faculty regulations, pass/fail of courses, rules, etc. You must be familiar with this book and have it on hand to reference academic and programme questions.

The rules and regulations for the University’s academic operations, courses and degree programmes, and related matters, are all described in a series of publicly available handbooks.

These Handbooks are official university documents, and describe policies, rules and procedures. These are different from Programme Brochures which are produced by specific departments or academic programmes (such as the MPH Programme Brochure).

These are available at: <https://uct.ac.za/students/study-uct-handbooks/handbooks>

There are a few handbooks that MPH and other PG students in SPH should be familiar with:

- General Rules and Policies Handbook
- Health Sciences Postgraduate Handbook (or “Red Book”)
- Student Fees Handbook
- Financial Assistance of Postgraduate Study Handbook

Help

If you need emergency assistance:

- On campus: Call the CPS 24 hour hotline: 021 650 2222 / 3
- Off campus: SAPS 10111

- Rape Crisis: 021 447 9762
- LifeLine 24 hours telephone counselling: 021 461 111
- Help with coping or emotional distress: SADAG UCT Student Careline: 0800 24 25 26

This number can be accessed for free from a Telkom line. You can also SMS 31393 for a call-me-back. This line offers 24/7 telephonic counseling, advice, referral facilities and general support to students facing any mental health challenges or contemplating suicide.

Student wellness also offers counseling services to students.

Address: 28 Rhodes Avenue, Mowbray, Middle Campus

Tel: 021 650 1017

Email: lerushda.cheddie@uct.ac.za

Health Services

UCT does not have specific student health services available on FHS. Emergency services (see Medical Help) should be contacted directly. Student Wellness services (see Wellness) offer some health services. Consultations are by appointment only.

ICTS (Information Communication and Technology Services)

ICTS is the UCT IT services. They are located on lower campus (Mowbray, Main Rd), but carry out most of the UCT wide IT services. They also maintain a helpdesk that you can access for assistance with IT problems.

For information about all their services visit <https://icts.uct.ac.za/>

ICTS provides students with several useful services included free software licenses to certain programs (such as Reference Managers) as well as data storage cloud services.

The FHS also has IT support, you can log a call for support by email: hsfit-helpdesk@uct.ac.za or by phone: 021 406 6652

Health Sciences IT Offices *Room N1.13 Wernher & Beit North Building

UCT Faculty of Health Sciences, Anzio Road, Observatory, Cape Town

*Entrance via Falmouth Lane

<https://health.uct.ac.za/about-fhs/information-technology-hsf-it>

Related: Computers; Internet

ID Card

Your student ID card is used to identify students on campus and to provide access to buildings. You should apply for and obtain your ID card during registration, but if you have problems, or lose your ID card you will need to contact Access Services: <https://uct.ac.za/students/services-access-control/access-control-overview>

International students

International students should be aware that there are additional forms, procedures and processes. All international students at UCT must report to the *International Academic Programmes Office* (IAPO) during their first week on campus who will assist with completing immigration procedures. IAPO provides the following services:

- Introduction to the services and facilities at UCT
- Pre-registration checks of study permits, fees and health insurance
- The opportunity to make friends with fellow students just before starting your course
- Tours of the campus and the city.
- Advice on getting health insurance and opening a bank account
- The availability of students who can offer help and advice on all questions concerning your studies.

For more information visit <https://www.uct.ac.za/international>

Tel: 021 650 2822/3740 Email: lapo@uct.ac.za

Internet

Eduroam is the wireless service available across all UCT campuses (and your UCT access will also give you Eduroam access in multiple other campuses and airports across the world).

For information on how to connect your laptop/mobile device visit <https://icts.uct.ac.za/services-internet-and-networking/wireless>

Generally, your login for eduroam will be by your ICTS student ID and password, with a tiny change: studentID@wf.uct.ac.za, and your ICTS password.

J

Jammie shuttles

The Jammie shuttles are the blue buses that run a free shuttle service between campuses at UCT. You can use the Jammie to safely get between upper, middle, lower and FHS campus. You should be sure to carry your staff or student ID card, as this can be requested. The shuttle to upper campus leaves from Anzio Road, in front of main reception.

You can get the route map and timetables online here: <https://uct.ac.za/students/services-transport-parking-uct-shuttle/route-maps-timetables>

Related: Transportation

L

Landlords

Students attending university in the Western Cape can be a target of online housing scams. Please do not send money to anyone if you have not seen or had access to the room.

See also: Accommodation

Libraries

The UCT libraries offer a number of services. There is a library situated on the Health Sciences Campus. For details about opening hours and other services visit <https://lib.uct.ac.za/>

The UCT library website can also be used to gain access to articles/books etc. electronically. If you are not on campus, use the off-campus login which can be reached here: <https://login.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/menu>. You will need a valid student or staff login to access some of these resources.

Books can be renewed online and the libraries offer a number of short courses and other useful bits of information. They have a search portal (called Primo) which should be an easy way to find resources.

LGBTIAQ+

RainbowUCT is a society for all people who appreciate diversity. We aim to support and create a community for LGBTIAQ+ students and their allies at UCT. See facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/RainbowSocietyUCT/>, you can also find them on Twitter @rainbowuct.

- *Gay and Lesbian Network Helpline* : This helpline is managed by a team of trained lay counselors who are able to assist callers grappling with issues around their sexuality or discrimination by providing information, advice, and referrals. The helpline operates from Monday to Friday, 4pm to 10pm, and on Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 10pm. The helpline number is 0860 33 3331, or SMS HELP to 079 891 3036.

M

Map (see also Directions)

Yes, the campus maps are bad, but you can find them here: <https://uct.ac.za/contacts-maps/campus-maps>

You may find it useful to print out a copy of the FHS map and write the names of the buildings on it. Classes for the MPH program happen in Falmouth Building (this is also home to the School of Public Health), at Groote Schuur Hospital (usually in Old Main Building), sometimes in the Anatomy building, and other buildings on Health Sciences Campus.

Some venues you probably need to 'find' before classes commence are: Francis Ames, Wolfson, Seminar Room 1, Seminar Room 2, PG Room 1, PG Room 2, HEU Boardroom (but there are others!)

Medical help (see also Health Services):

Ambulances: State: 10177 Private: ER24 084124

24 Hour Emergency units:

State

Groote Schuur Hospital
Main Road, Observatory
Tel: 021 404-4112/4473

Private

Claremont Hospital Emergency Unit
Medical Centre, Main Rd, Claremont
Tel: 021 670 4333

Vincent Pallotti Hospital
Alexandra Rd, Pinelands
Tel: 021 506 4000

Rondebosch Medical Centre (opposite Red Cross Childrens Hospital)
Emergency Unit
Tel: 021 685 8706

Money

Banking and ATM machines: there are some ATM machines at St Peter's square (upstairs- Nedbank, downstairs - Standard Bank, ABSA, FNB)

O

Observatory

Observatory is the name of the suburb directly below FHS campus, there are a number of shops, restaurants and bars, especially on Lower Main Rd from where it joins Main Rd until it crosses Station Rd. As with all urban centres, you should avoid carrying valuables and should never leave any valuables visible in a parked car.

P

Parking

Parking spaces on campus are very limited, require a permit, and often fill up anyway. If possible, alternate modes of transportation (public or ride-sharing) should be considered. If you do drive to campus and wish to park on campus you will need a parking disc, and you will need to arrive early. <https://uct.ac.za/students/services-transport-parking/campus-parking>

People often park on Falmouth Rd. and the side streets around campus. If you choose to do so, do not leave any valuables (or anything) visible in your car, and do not walk to your car late at night or on your own. If you're parked off campus and end up leaving late, you can ask campus security (see CPS) to walk with you to your car. Also be aware that traffic services are common, and will give you expensive tickets for parking on yellow lines or facing the wrong way. If you are remaining on campus after 16:30, you can park on campus without a parking disc and you should avail yourself of that option.

PeopleSoft

PeopleSoft is UCT's student administration self-service. It is worse than Vula, and very confusing, BUT has some critically important functions. You can use PeopleSoft to:

- Check application status
- Check current enrolments
- Access student results
- Request proof of registration document
- Check and maintain address details

- Check and maintain bank account details
- Check fee account
- Get unofficial academic transcript

To log into PeopleSoft: <http://studentsonline.uct.ac.za/>

You should keep your contact details updated on PeopleSoft so that the University can contact you (also make sure to read your student email).

PGHSSC (Postgraduate Health Sciences Student Council)

The Postgraduate Health Sciences Student Council (PG HSSC) represents postgraduate students at the faculty level in the form of postgraduate councils and at the university level as an executive committee. These structures participate actively in various faculty and university decision-making bodies. stands for the postgraduate health sciences student association. <https://health.uct.ac.za/home/postgraduate-health-sciences-student-council-pg-hssc>

Prayer

The FHS has a multi-faith room available.

Printing

The campus copy & print service is available to students in all computer labs on campus. Before you can print, you need to upload printing credits onto your student card. You can also use the cash boxes at the Healthlab in the Anatomy building to add printing credit, as well as via an online Electronic Web Deposit by following the guide below:

- Visit <https://icts.uct.ac.za/mps/services/student-printing>
- Select Electronic Deposit (Located under the Quick link tab)
- Specify the Username (i.e. your UCT/visitor number)
- Select continue
- Specify the payment amount you would like to the account.
- Select your preferred payment method
- Select continue
- Enter the required information
- Select proceed

Money would be deducted from your account and printing credit loaded.

There are (paid) printing and binding services available at the Copy Centre in St. Peter's square.

Program Administrator

The MPH program administrator is Tshamani Netshifhefhe (tshamani.netshifhefhe@uct.ac.za). She maintains drop-in office hours for consultations with MPH students, but should be a point of contact for any administrative issues.

Room 1.41, Falmouth Building Level 1

Postgrad Hub

The UCT Postgrad hub is a very useful website where links to PG resources can be found. See

<https://www.uct.ac.za/postgraduate-hub>

Postoffice

If you are on the Health Sciences Campus there is a postoffice upstairs at St. Peter's square. On upper campus there is a post office next to the students' union.

Q

Questions

If your questions are about....

Issue or topic	Then first ask
Specific class issue (assignment, reading, exam or other issue)	Lecturer or course convenor
Track issue (course selections, course requirements, mini-dissertations)	Track convenor or programme convenor
Degree issue (exemptions and credits; duration; academic focus; changing tracks; anything you are unsure about; other issues)	Programme convenor
Fees issues	Fees office, PG Office, Programme administration
International student issues (visas, permissions)	IAPO

R

Research Integrity

The field of research integrity is defined by responsibility and care for the relationships on which the discovery and dissemination of knowledge depends, and the impacts of the conduct of research on the people, places and things for whom, and on which, the research has effect. Research ethics is a component of research integrity.

The UCT Office of Research Integrity provides guidance, conducts training, and shares resources relating to research integrity. <https://uct.ac.za/research-support-hub/integrity/office-research-integrity>

Red book

The Faculty of Health Sciences Handbooks (or “Red Book” ... because of the colour of the Health Sciences Faculty) have undergraduate and postgraduate versions. These can be downloaded on: <https://uct.ac.za/students/study-uct-handbooks/handbooks>

See Handbooks for more information.

Reference managers

We strongly encourage students to utilise (and learn how to use) one of the reference managers provided to students for free by UCT (<https://icts.uct.ac.za/services-hardware-and-software/software>). Refworks and Endnote are the most common. Training is regularly provided by UCT Libraries. We suggest you familiarize yourself well before you get to the dissertation phase.

Residence (see also accomodation)

UCT has residences situated nearby various campuses for student accommodation including near Health Sciences Campus. There are limited places in residence for postgraduate students and these are awarded to applicants based on specific criteria. For more information regarding student housing visit <https://uct.ac.za/dsa/ocsas/about-ocsas> and for queries email res@uct.ac.za or call 021 650 2977.

Registration (see also PeopleSoft)

Registration is done online, and involves several levels of approval (e.g. from course convenors or program convenors). Changes to registration (e.g. dropping or adding a course) is also done online through service request.

Every year, there are published registration deadlines at the start of each semester. If you add or drop a course after those deadlines there are fee penalties.

There is support for registration from Student Support Services sss-helpdesk@uct.ac.za, see also <https://uct.ac.za/postgraduate-hub/current-postgrads>

You are able to download a letter providing confirmation of registration directly from PeopleSoft, and do not need to request it from the MPH administrator or from Faculty office.

S

Safety (see also CPS)

The University of Cape Town's campus is set on the slopes of Table Mountain in close proximity to the southern suburbs of Observatory, Mowbray, Rondebosch and Newlands. The M3 highway cuts through the university, dividing the upper campus from the middle and lower campuses. As an open campus with many access points to both cars and pedestrians, we are constantly exposed to the risk of criminal activities, both on and off campus.

Safety in and around campus is important. Please always be aware of your surroundings, walk in groups if possible (especially at night) and do not carry valuables with you. If it is very late at night you can call CPS for an escort to your car (if you are parked on Falmouth Rd, or the back of the parking lot, for example). You should not walk alone at night or after dark in the city, including in the residential areas near to campus. If you are a victim of crime you should not resist handing over belongings.

Students staying off campus should ensure that the premises have the minimum security requirements provided by their landlords.

Safety Tips

Make sure there are at least 2 other passengers (excluding driver and conductor) in a taxi before you get on board. If you are staying off campus make sure you get home as early as possible after you are done with campus business.

If you are ever in a situation where you are concerned about your safety, or experience a crime, please contact Campus Security Services as soon as possible (021 650 2222 or 2223) and let the programme administrators and programme convenor know as soon as possible.

Scams

The most common scams or crime experienced by MPH students are: accommodation-related fraud (fake places asking for deposits); ATM scams (watch your card and your PIN!); and....

Support (see Wellness and Help)

The Department of Student Affairs is an overarching structure for most student-related matters, and they have a comprehensive website: <http://www.dsa.uct.ac.za/>

There is also a great virtual "postgraduate hub" that has information on different aspects of being a PG student at UCT, and organizes access to workshops, seminars and a funding portal: <http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/current-students/online-resources/postgraduate>

The Office of the Ombud is independent, impartial, confidential and works outside of formal structures. It is an important resource, especially if dealing with issues such as discrimination, harassment and whistle-blowing. <http://www.ombud.uct.ac.za/>

Student cards (see ID card)

Student Systems Support Helpdesk

Student Systems Support (sometimes also called Student Support Services, SSS) is a hub which can provide support on technical issues such as problems with registration or Peoplesoft sss-helpdesk@uct.ac.za.

Societies

UCT has a huge number of student groups and societies catering to the great diversity of the student body. You can find out about them here: <http://www.dsa.uct.ac.za/student-development/student-societies-organisations/overview>

The societies allow students to enjoy activities on the University that are not normally part of the academic curricula. Societies allow students to enjoy being part of a community on campus that is stimulating and opens up new challenges and opportunities for them.

Supervisors

You will need a supervisor for your MPH mini-dissertation. Generally, it is a good idea to have your primary supervisor based in the same Division as your track, so for example, if you are in the Epidemiology and Biostatistics track, you would look for a supervisor based in the Division of Epidemiology & Biostatistics. You will meet many of the potential supervisors in your first year of courses, and you can speak to your track convenor, or the MPH coordinator if you have questions. You should have identified and spoken to a potential supervisor during the start of your second year if you intend to finish in the two year time period. It can be difficult to approach lecturers that you don't know well, but a short email requesting an appointment is fine.

For example: Dear Dr (or Prof) so and so, I am a second year MPH student in (track) and am seeking an MPH mini-dissertation topic. I have a clinical background (or whatever) and am interested in X. Do you have time for a brief meeting to discuss? etc

It is always a good idea to have done some very initial research on your topic ideas before speaking to a potential supervisor (e.g. a quick Google Scholar search on some of your ideas).

Study space

MPH and other Masters students do not generally receive allocated study space on campus. You will find study carrels in the libraries. If you are really struggling to find space to study, please speak with your track convenor.

T

Transportation (see also Jammie)

There are a few forms of public transportation in and around Cape Town. For (free) transportation between UCT campus', see the Jammie shuttle information (pg. XREF). There is a Jammie shuttle to Hiddingh campus which is walking distance to the CBD.

Inexpensive taxi's (mini-bus) run along Main Rd and can be quick and convenient, make sure you know where you are going, have some small change/bills and **never get into an empty taxi or if you feel uncomfortable at all**. There is often an additional night charge if you use them at night.

Large, green and white buses also go along Main Rd. to the CBD, are inexpensive but can often be quite full.

Uber and Taxify both work in Cape Town reasonably well if you have a smart phone with the app installed.

There are a number of train lines in Cape Town, and the southern line (which stops at Observatory station on Station Rd) is probably of most interest. It goes into the CBD in the one direction, and to Simonstown on False Bay in the other direction. The train can be a nice and inexpensive way to go to Muizenberg beach for the day. You can buy single and return tickets, as well as a monthly pass. There are both first class and second class carriages, first class tends to be less crowded, especially if travelling at rush hour. You should always be aware of (and ideally not take) valuables on the train.

Tutoring

There is no formal tutoring structure in the School of Public Health. If you need additional assistance with your academic studies, useful strategies include: speaking to your course lecturer or convenor (attending office hours!) or organising a peer study group.

Turnitin

Turnitin is a very useful tool to support your academic writing, and to check your referencing for plagiarism. See <https://vula.uct.ac.za/access/content/public/gateway/student-support.html> for information on how to utilise the UCT Turnitin services.

V

Vula: <https://vula.uct.ac.za/portal>

Vula is UCT's online learning platform. The majority of classes at UCT will use at least some part of Vula, often to deliver course material, video or for online forum discussion. It is critical that you are able to access Vula from the start of your studies. Most mobile providers have reached agreements with UCT to allow certain UCT addresses (including www.uct.ac.za and www.lib.uct.ac.za) to be accessed for free (zero rated content). You can also download the Vula app onto your smart phone, available from app stores.

The Vula guide for new students can be reached here: https://xerte.uct.ac.za/play.php?template_id=74

In addition to course websites, Vula also contains a number of administrative groups, including the important **Health Sciences Postgraduate Vula site** which you should be automatically added to. This site contains all of the many, many ethics, dissertation, admin forms.

W

Wellness

FHS Student Wellness services include sessional counselling, social work, and clinical psychologist access. Please contact the FHS Student Development and Support (SDS) Admin Office, Room N2.17 Wernher & Beit North Building at 021 406 6749 to request an appointment request form, in order to book an appointment. Available to all UG Health Sciences students. Confidential and private.

The venue is Room 1.43, on the side of Entrance 5, Ground Floor, Falmouth Building, Faculty of Health Sciences. This room can be accessed through the entrance in the lane between Falmouth Building and the Health Economics Building. On your left hand as you go towards the turnstile / access for the bicycles in Falmouth area. Please use your student card or knock.

Where possible (depending on availability) students will also be seen at Student Wellness Service – 28 Rhodes Avenue, Mowbray. See <https://www.uct.ac.za/students/support-health-counselling/student-wellness-service>

Student Development & Support Office (FHS SDSO) <https://health.uct.ac.za/fhs-student-development-wellness-services>

Whitepages

The UCT Directory is called the 'WhitePages'. If you are logged on to the UCT system, you will see more detail such as room numbers. UCT Directory: <https://whitepages.uct.ac.za/Name>

Writing Centre

The UCT writing centre located within the language development group (upper campus) is a student-oriented space which provides mediation in the process of academic writing. Since writing is one of the primary means of assessment in the academic realms, making use of services of the writing centre can contribute to improved performance.

Visit: <https://ched.uct.ac.za/writing-centre>

We now have dedicated Writing Support linked to FHS: <https://ched.uct.ac.za/writing-centre/health-sciences/about-fhs-writing-lab>

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We welcome contributions, corrections and additions - please contact mpadmin@uct.ac.za with any feedback.