

Different Types of Doctoral Programmes

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University of Southampton offers three types of doctoral degree at Level 8 of [The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) (October 2014):
- The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), where assessment is solely by final thesis or published work (e.g. submission of a research paper PhD thesis), or by artefact or performance that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it in its academic context;
 - The Professional Doctorate which contains a substantial taught component combined with the development of professional skills, placements and training, and normally includes the name of the discipline in the award title (e.g. Doctor of Clinical Psychology);
 - The Integrated Doctor of Philosophy (iPhD), which normally combines a number of taught modules with professional and transferrable skills, research, and thesis preparation.
- 1.2 The University also offers a limited number of higher doctorates such as the DSc (Doctor of Science), obtainable usually by the submission of published work.

2. Importance of the research environment

- 2.1 Before recruiting research students, a School or research group should be capable of demonstrating that it can provide an appropriate research environment for their supervision.
- 2.2 The characteristics of an environment suitable for research supervision are set out in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#) (*Introduction to the Research Environment*).

3. General aims of doctoral programmes

- 3.1 Doctoral degrees are higher degrees involving a programme of research training and supervision, leading to production of a thesis, which is the outcome of original research. Research Degrees with a Taught Component and Integrated PhDs also include some combination of compulsory and elective taught modules and/or group projects that focus on specialist aspects of the discipline named in the title of the doctorate.
- 3.2 The general aims of doctoral programmes are to:
- provide the research student with an opportunity to acquire expert knowledge in a specialist field of an academic discipline;
 - furnish training in research methods, such as the use of technical literature and published materials, and the techniques of empirical research (e.g. experimental and/or fieldwork methods and the use of records and documents);
 - enable the research student to design, implement and report upon an independent research project;
 - foster development of a capacity for analysis, constructive criticism, originality and independence of thought;
 - provide experience of participation in the research culture of an academic department, including opportunities where appropriate to teach undergraduate students;
 - enable the research student to develop the professional, practical, and personal skills and attributes for career progression in their chosen field;
 - facilitate the research student to undertake autonomous research and make a contribution at the forefront of knowledge in their field.

4. Entry qualifications

4.1 Only appropriately qualified and prepared applicants will be admitted to research degree programmes. Applicants must demonstrate that they have the motivation and potential to complete a sustained piece of research and to produce a thesis. For research at doctoral or MPhil level, applicants will normally be expected to have one or more of the following:

- a degree, normally with at least class 2(i) or equivalent, in a relevant subject;
- a relevant master's qualification or equivalent;
- evidence of prior professional practice or learning that meets the University's criteria and good practice guidelines for accreditation of prior experiential and/or certificated learning.

5. Outcomes of doctoral degrees

5.1 Doctorates are awarded to research students who have demonstrated:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research or other advanced scholarship of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge, which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
- the general ability to conceptualize, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

6. Abilities of holders of the qualification

6.1 Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches.

and holders of the qualification will have:

- The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

7. Programme structure

PhD programme

- 7.1 The PhD programme is increasingly structured around research training and generic/transferable skills training requirements, in addition to involving a period of supervised research and thesis preparation.
- 7.2 The programme shall be pursued in the University except where the regulations for the specific award provide for research to be carried out with proper supervision in an appropriate setting elsewhere.
- 7.3 A standard-route PhD programme shall normally be undertaken over a period of not less than 24 months of full-time study. For part-time study, the programme is normally undertaken over a period of not less than 36 months. In practice, the period of candidature will usually be longer than the minimum period; the maximum period for full-time study on a standard-route PhD programme is 48 months and 84 months for part-time study. The period of candidature ends when the thesis is submitted.

Research degrees with a taught component

- 7.4 Known as a Professional Doctorate, each programme shall additionally contain a combination of taught compulsory and/or elective modules, individual and/or group projects, and a written thesis. The programme shall be pursued in the University except where the regulations for the specific award provide for research to be carried out with proper supervision in an appropriate setting elsewhere.
- 7.5 The scheme of study for such programmes shall normally be undertaken over a period of not less than 36 months of full-time study. Where part-time study is permitted, the maximum period for part-time study is 84 months.

Integrated PhD Programme

- 7.6 Each programme shall contain a combination of taught, research and professional skills training elements, including a substantial period of supervised research and thesis preparation. More details can be found in the [Integrated PhD Programmes Guidance](#).
- 7.7 The scheme of study for the Integrated PhD programme shall normally be undertaken over a period of not less than 36 months full-time study (48 months for part-time study), with submission of the thesis by not later than the end of the maximum length of candidature as defined in the [Regulations for Research Degrees](#).

8. Teaching and Learning

- 8.1 For degrees with a taught element, a variety of teaching styles and learning methods should be used which are appropriate to the nature of the discipline being taught and are designed to deliver the programme aims. The pattern of contact hours will vary according to the type of discipline and the delivery of the programme must be appropriate to this.
- 8.2 Details of the expected learning outcomes of the programme should be included in a Programme Specification and published to students.

9. Supervision

- 9.1 All research students will be assigned a team of at least two supervisors to supervise their progress in the research phase and while writing up their thesis. Research students on programmes with a taught element will normally be assigned a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) during the taught phase of their programme.

10. Assessment and Award

- 10.1 Research students who enrolled on their doctoral studies after 1 August 2016 are required to undertake Progression Reviews as outlined in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#).
- 10.2 For programmes with a taught element, the nature of assessment of coursework or project work should be stated in the Programme Specification. An external examiner must be involved in the moderation of modules, which are formally assessed as part of the programme.
- 10.3 The maximum length of a thesis is usually 75,000 words for a PhD or 50,000 words for an MPhil. Further details are specified in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#).
- 10.4 A *viva voce* examination for the thesis is required, necessitating the appointment of an internal and external examiner for each research student. It is the responsibility of the student's co-ordinating supervisor to nominate internal and external examiners and each nomination requires approval by the Faculty Director of the Graduate School (or single, named, deputy). Candidates for research degrees which contain a significant taught element (e.g.: professional doctorates or iPhDs) will require separate examiners for the taught and research components. An external examiner should be appointed for the taught element in accordance with the University's [policies and procedures regarding the appointment, role and responsibilities of external](#)

[examiners for taught programmes](#). The examiner may serve as an external examiner for a cohort of students for the taught component. An individual student should not be examined in their taught and research component by the same examiner.

- 10.5 The award of the degree will be made in accordance with the requirements of the [Regulations for Research Degrees](#) (*Outcomes of the Examination*).

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