

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER HIGHER DEGREE REGULATIONS 2022 – 2023

Appendix 5: *Regulations for the Professional Doctorate (DProf)*

These regulations govern the award of the Professional Doctorate (DProf). Professional Doctorates will be awarded in recognition of the successful completion of an approved taught programme of study, together with successful completion of further study and research.

The regulations are intended to enable qualified professionals to study for a doctorate while remaining in employment and closely associated with their profession/workplace.

Such degrees will be awarded to 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 conceptualise, 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.

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 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.
- Doctoral degrees are awarded for the creation and interpretation, construction and/ or exposition of knowledge which extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research.
- Holders of doctoral degrees are able to conceptualise, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding. Holders of doctoral degrees have the qualities needed for employment that require both the ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields and an innovative approach to tackling and solving problems.
- Professional doctorates aim to develop an individual's professional practice and to support them in producing a contribution to (professional) knowledge.
- Achievement of outcomes consistent with the qualification descriptor for the doctoral degree normally requires study equivalent to three full-time calendar years.

In judging the merit of work submitted in candidature for Doctoral Degrees by Examination and Thesis or Portfolio (DProf), the examiners shall bear in mind the standard and scope of work which it

is reasonable to expect a capable and diligent student to present after the period of registered study.

On completion of a Doctoral degree, graduates will have attained Level 8, as defined by the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2014).

Doctoral Degrees by Examination and Thesis (Professional Doctorate) may not be conferred *honoris causa*.

In order to minimise additional administrative structures the level 7 provision will be covered within PGT processes (including PGT exam boards) and the level 8 provision will be covered within PGR regulations and code of practice. The regulations will be an appendix of the PGR regulations.

Specific regulations are as follows:

1. A candidate for a Doctoral Degree by Examination and Thesis or Portfolio, may study for the degree by pursuing the programme of study and research on a full-time or part-time basis in an internal or external place of employment.
2. Candidates may qualify following successful completion of an approved taught course and programme of research pursued either on a full-time basis or on a part-time basis.
3. A candidate for a Doctoral Degree by Examination and Thesis or Portfolio must hold one of the following qualifications prior to commencement of the course:
 - an initial degree from this or another University approved for this purpose;
 - a non-graduate qualification which the University has deemed to be equivalent to graduation (RPL, recognition of prior learning).

Irrespective of a candidate's qualifications, the University must satisfy itself that a candidate is of the required academic standard to complete the scheme of taught courses and research proposed.

4. A candidate must register at the University, pay the appropriate fee prescribed and pursue the scheme of research for the minimum period defined below:

Full-time candidates: minimum period three years;

Part-time candidates: minimum period five years.

By exception and agreement at the Research Degrees Group a student may complete earlier than the minimum periods as long as all the normal requirements for completion have been met.

5. Candidates will be required to present themselves for examination in two parts.
6. In Part One a candidate shall follow a taught programme of study worth 180 credits (Level 7), on research methods, the research proposal, and/or writing and defending a thesis, reflective practice (which may include periods of approved professional/industrial practice and training), together with a programme of research for the duration prescribed. Exemptions may be granted by the University (based on previous postgraduate or professionally accredited qualifications) from specified components of Part One of the scheme.

The 180 taught credits should normally be broken into three main segments should, however, be broadly designated as: a. Research training, b. Discipline-specific, and c. The detailed doctoral research proposal.

7. Part One examinations shall comprise assessments of an advanced character in fields of study prescribed by the Programme Regulations. These examinations shall include evaluation of the professional practice and training and may take the form of unseen written examination papers or set projects or other forms of course assessment. In order to progress to Part Two all components at Part One must be passed at a minimum mark of 50%. If a student chooses not to progress, an MProf may be awarded.

8. A candidate who fails to pass Part One may, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners for the taught components, re-present himself/herself for examination on one further occasion only, not more than fifteen months from the date of the original examination.

9. Part Two of the examination shall take the form of a thesis or portfolio of work, embodying the methods and results of a research project or projects, worth a total of 360 credits. In the latter form, the portfolio will comprise pieces of work that demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes, and how they have brought professional practice, research methodology and relevant academic theory to make a difference within their own work context. The report, at Doctoral level, will reflect on the work done, set it in the context of the state of the art of the profession and discuss and evaluate the contribution made to practice.

10. At Part Two the 40,000 word thesis or portfolio shall be examined via oral examination.

11. Both the taught and research components of the examination must be passed in order to qualify for the award of the degree.

12. A candidature shall lapse if a thesis is not submitted, in the form and manner prescribed, by the time-limit listed below:

Full-time

In the case of a three candidature, four years from the official beginning of the candidate's period of study.

Part-time

In the case of a five-year candidature, seven years from the official beginning of the candidate's period of study.

13. The University shall ensure that candidates are supervised, on a regular and continuing basis, in accordance with its general procedures for postgraduate research supervision.

14. For each candidature, the University shall approve a supervisory team including a minimum of one main supervisor and a second supervisor nominated by the candidate's Department. This supervisory team must be members of a suitable research environment approved for supervision of postgraduate research students as determined by the University.

15. The main supervisor will normally be a full-time member of the academic staff of the University. The second supervisor will normally be a full-time member academic staff of the University or collaborative institution or organization.

16. Every candidate's research shall be completed by the presentation of a thesis (normally not exceeding 40,000 words in length, excluding Appendices and genuine footnotes) which embodies the methods and results of the research or a portfolio of work (which will usually be between 20,000 and 30,000 words), together with a portfolio of supporting evidence. A properly constituted panel is required to conduct an oral examination of a candidate who submits either a thesis or portfolio for examination.

17. Candidates shall sign a declaration to certify that the work submitted has not been accepted in substance for any degree or award, and is not being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award. The signed declaration shall be included in all copies of the works submitted for examination.

18. The University shall ensure that the form of submission and examination of the thesis conform with the University's Regulations for candidates on the production, submission and examination of theses for postgraduate research degrees (Appendix 3: Regulations for the degrees of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy)

19. The Department should nominate an external examiner for the taught elements of the programme. All the Part One modules should be conducted in accordance with the University's regulations for taught programmes. Part two of the professional doctorate should be conducted in accordance with the University's regulations for its research programmes.

20. At least one member of the examining team must have appropriate experience of working in the relevant profession. Whilst it is preferable to identify an academic with such experience to join the examining team, it is acknowledged that this will not always be possible. In such cases the practitioner will be a third (external) examiner. Thus a team might comprise an internal academic, and external academic (for benchmarking of standards), and finally an external practitioner. At least one of the examiners must be familiar with professional doctorates. In the event that an appropriate internal examiner cannot be identified then another external examiner can be appointed, in such cases the appointment of an independent chair is compulsory rather than optional.

Approved at Academic Board June 2022