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| Standards and Criteria for Research Degrees | |
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| Standards and Criteria for Research Degrees |

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| Standards and Criteria for Research Degrees |

# Introduction

* 1. The University of Hull is responsible for the standards and criteria of the research degrees awarded in its name. These standards and criteria are set out in definitions below, based on the QAA’s UK Quality Code for Higher Education, The Frameworks for Higher Education qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, 2014).

# PhD *(Doctor of Philosophy)*

* 1. Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1. 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,
2. 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,
3. 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,
4. detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.
   1. Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:
5. 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,
6. 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.
   1. And holders will have:
7. 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.

(QAA, UK quality Code for Higher Education, 2018, The Frameworks for Higher Education qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, 2014, p.30).

* 1. 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.
  2. 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.
  3. Doctoral programmes that may have a substantial taught element in addition to the research component (for example, professional doctorates), lead usually to awards which include the name of the discipline in their title (for example, EdD for Doctor of Education or ClinPsyD for Doctor of Clinical Psychology). Professional doctorates aim to develop an individual's professional practice and to support them in producing a contribution to (professional) knowledge.
  4. Achievement of outcomes consistent with the qualification descriptor for the doctoral degree normally requires study equivalent to three full-time calendar years.
  5. Higher doctorates may be awarded in recognition of a substantial body of original research undertaken over the course of many years. Typically a portfolio of work that has been previously published in a peer-refereed context is submitted for assessment.
  6. Most degree awarding bodies restrict candidacy to graduates or their own academic staff of several years' standing.

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| Doctor of Philosophy **PhD**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the Doctoral level Descriptor | The PhD is the most common qualification and offered in most academic subjects in the UK. The normal maximum period of study is four years full-time, eight years part-time. Most PhD programmes include research methods and other skills training. Candidates funded by UK research councils or other sponsors are required to meet their funder's criteria as well as the institutional regulations for their programme. The title may have additional information attached, for example, 'in Musical Composition'.  The candidate shall present the results of the research in a submission, embodying a thesis of not more than 100,000 words, presented in a viva voce and defended in a clear and scholarly manner to the satisfaction of the examiners.  The candidate also has to complete the required number of credits in the Postgraduate Training Scheme. |
| **PhD** (Doctor of Philosophy) **by Publication**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the Doctoral level Descriptor. | The PhD by Publication shall be awarded to a candidate whose published work represents a contribution to knowledge showing evidence of originality and clarity of thought, independent critical power, application of research methods appropriate to the particular field of study and an appreciation of the general field of knowledge to which the subject relates. The treatment of the topic or topics in the field of study should be substantial and should normally relate in a coherent way. The candidate must be able to demonstrate the creation and interpretation of new knowledge.  The candidate is required to provide an introductory commentary demonstrating the coherence of the subject matter of the published work submitted.  The published work shall be defended in a viva voce to the satisfaction of the examiners. |
| Doctor of Clinical Psychology **ClinPsyD**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the Doctoral level Descriptor | This is a practice-based professional doctorate. The ClinPsyD is different from most other professional doctorates because it provides a license to practice for UK clinical psychologists. The Health Professions Council (HPC) is the body to which individuals apply for registration as a licensed clinical psychologist. All clinical psychology training is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) and also has to be approved by the HPC which is responsible for the Standards of Proficiency clinical psychologists have to demonstrate. These cover: conduct, performance and ethics, continuing professional development, and proficiency.  The degree shall be awarded to a candidate who has undertaken a substantial programme of independent research, leading to an original contribution to the advancement of knowledge and professional practice, and involving a critical appreciation of the field of study and the background relevant to the work. The candidate must be able to demonstrate the creation and interpretation of new knowledge.  The assessment for the programme comprises a short answer examination at the end of the first year of study, a written examination consisting of two papers in the second year, and:  A report of a small scale clinical research study carried out on placement of not more than 3,500 words and one clinical literature review.  Two clinical case studies and one psychometric assessment from clinical placements, and a portfolio consisting of:   * One paper in publishable format comprising a review of an area of clinical psychology relating to the candidate’s Research Project * One paper based on the candidate’s Research Project in a format ready for submission to one of the major journals of clinical or health psychology * An oral examination. * An annual clinical practice assessment * End of placement assessments.   The candidate will thereby have investigated and evaluated critically a compendium of approved topics and their associated literature resulting in an independent and original contribution to the profession of Clinical Psychology and an understanding of its merits within a wider context.  Irrespective of academic and research performance, the candidate must perform sufficiently well in their clinical work on each placement to pass the placement, as evaluated by the clinical supervisor and Course staff. |
| Doctor of Education **EdD**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the Doctoral level Descriptor | The EdD was the first of the professional doctorates to be developed in the UK, beginning at the University of Bristol in the early 1990s and based on similar programmes in North America. It is predominately undertaken by practising educators.  The degree shall be awarded to a candidate who has undertaken a substantial programme of independent research, leading to an original contribution to the advancement of knowledge and professional practice, and involving a critical appreciation of the field of study and the background relevant to the work. The candidate must be able to demonstrate the creation and interpretation of new knowledge.  The programme comprises a thesis of not more than 50,000 words and a viva voce examination, as well as coursework assignments for each of the taught modules. |
| Doctor in Psychology **PsyD**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the Doctoral level Descriptor | The degree shall be awarded to a candidate who has undertaken a substantial programme of independent research, leading to an original contribution to the advancement of knowledge and professional practice, and involving a comprehensive knowledge and critical appreciation of the field of study and related literature. The candidate must be able to demonstrate the creation and interpretation of new knowledge.  The programme comprises a thesis of not more than 50,000 words, presented in a clear manner and containing material worthy of publication, and a viva voce examination, as well as an assessment of any additional studies prescribed by the candidate’s Faculty. |
| **Higher Doctorates by Research** | The Higher Doctorate by Research shall be awarded to a candidate who has produced work of distinction which constitutes a substantial, sustained and original contribution to the advancement of knowledge and which has established the candidate’s authoritative standing in the chosen field of study. It is expected that the major part of the work shall have been published. |

# Masters Degree

* 1. **Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ and SCQ level 11 on the FQHEIS: master's degree** (QAA, UK quality Code for Higher Education, 2018, The Frameworks for Higher Education qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, 2014).
  2. The descriptor provided for this level of the frameworks is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other qualifications at level 7/ SCQF level 11 on the FQHEIS, including postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.
  3. Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1. a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice,
2. a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship,
3. originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
4. conceptual understanding that enables the student:
5. to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline,
6. to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.
   1. Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:
7. deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences,
8. demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level,
9. continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.
   1. And holders will have:
10. the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
11. the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility,
12. decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations,
13. the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.
    1. Much of the study undertaken for master's degrees is at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Successful students show originality in the application of knowledge, and they understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They are able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they show originality in tackling and solving problems. They have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments.
    2. Master's degrees are awarded after completion of taught courses, programmes of research or a mixture of both. Longer, research-based programmes may lead to the degree of MPhil. The learning outcomes of most master's degree courses are achieved on the basis of study equivalent to at least one full-time calendar year and are taken by graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours (or equivalent achievement).
    3. Master's degrees are often distinguished from other qualifications at this framework level (for example, advanced short courses, which often form parts of continuing professional development programmes and lead to postgraduate certificates and/or postgraduate diplomas) by an increased intensity, complexity and density of study. Master's degrees, in comparison to postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas, typically include planned intellectual progression that often includes a synoptic/research or scholarly activity.

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| **Masters Degrees by Thesis (MPhil, MTheol, MSc, MEd)**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the Masters level Descriptor | The degree of Masters by Thesis shall be awarded to a candidate who has undertaken a programme of independent research, involving a critical appreciation of the field of study and the background relevant to the work. The candidate must be able to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge.  The research will be presented in a thesis of not more than 70,000 words for the MPhil and not more than 50,000 words for the MSc, MA and MEd theses and, at the discretion of the examiners, defended in a viva voce to their satisfaction. The candidate also has to complete successfully the required number of credits in the Postgraduate Training Scheme. |
| **Research Masters (including a Taught**  **Component) (MA, MSc)**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the  Masters level Descriptor | The Research Masters which includes a taught component shall be awarded to a candidate who has undertaken a combined programme of independent research presented in a thesis of not more than 30,000 words and a number of research-related taught components as specified in the programme-level regulations.  The candidate must be able to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge. |
| **MRes Degrees by Research**  At the University of Hull, in addition to the  Masters level Descriptor | The Master of Research shall be awarded to a candidate who has undertaken a combined programme of independent research presented in a thesis of not more than 30,000 words, and a number of research training modules as specified in the programme-level regulations.  The candidate must be able to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge. |

**Version Control**

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