

Professional Doctorate in Health and Care Professions - 2023/24

Below you can read information about award Regulations for Professional Doctorates.

Scope of These Regulations

1.1 These Regulations govern the awards of degrees of Professional Doctorate (ProfD) and Professional Master's (ProfM).

1.2 The following degrees are covered by these Regulations:

- Professional Doctorate in Health and Social Care
- Professional Master's in Health and Social Care (exit award only)

1.3 Candidates may register for the degree of Professional Doctorate in Health and Social Care:

- in the School of Health Sciences

1.4 In these Regulations, unless explicitly stated otherwise, Head of School may also be taken to refer to their nominee. The Head of School's nominee shall normally be the Course Director.

General Preconditions to an Award

2.1 Candidates registered for the degree of Professional Doctorate must normally possess a relevant Master's degree from this University or another approved university or a similar qualification approved by this University, as well as a minimum of three years' experience of relevant professional practice.

2.2 Candidates must:

2.2.1 submit evidence of adequate training and ability to undertake the proposed course of advanced study to the satisfaction of the Head of School;

2.2.2 be approved by the Head of School as a candidate for the degree;

2.2.3 study in accordance with these Regulations.

2.3 Before being admitted to the degree of Professional Doctorate candidates must:

1. Undertake research in fields of study approved by the Head of School
2. Engage in advanced study under the direction of a teacher in the University appointed by the Head of School. For the thesis, candidates will study under the direction of teachers in the University appointed by the School as the candidate's supervisory team
3. Satisfactorily present the results of the research, study and training in research projects, essays and a research thesis, and pass such academic assessments as may be required by these Regulations.

Duration of Course

3.1 The Period of Study for the Professional Doctorate shall be five years and the Period of Study for the Professional Master's shall be two years. In each case this shall be by part-time study at 0.4FTE. Candidates will initially register on the Professional Doctorate programme.

3.2 The Head of School may grant permission to extend the normal Period of Study by a specified period not in excess of six months on the recommendation of the academic supervisor. In such a case, the Head of School may also extend the period within which the thesis is to be submitted, by not more than the extension to the Period of Study. The Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College may give special permission for further extensions to the Period of Study on the recommendation of the Head of School.

3.3 The Head of School may grant permission to interrupt the Period of Study if there are valid reasons for doing so. The Head of School shall specify the length of interruption which may not exceed twelve months. In such a case they may also extend the period within which the thesis is to be submitted by not more than the length of the interruption.

Attendance, Assessment and Progress

4.1 A candidate shall attend lectures, seminars, tutorials and supervisions as prescribed by the School.

4.2 A candidate shall be subject to assessment as follows:

4.2.1 *Professional Doctorate in Health and Social Care*

Year 1: 90 credits of FHEQ Level 8 modules (Modules 1 and 2)

Year 2: 90 credits of FHEQ Level 8 modules (Module 3)

Confirmation of progression to the thesis element of the Professional Doctorate is subject to successfully passing all 180 credits.

Years 3 to 5: Doctoral Thesis (up to 65,000 words), equivalent to 360 credits

4.2.2 *Professional Master's in Health and Social Care*

Year 1: 90 credits of FHEQ Level 8 modules (Modules 1 and 2)

Year 2: 90 credits of FHEQ Level 8 modules (Module 3)

Passing all modules within Years 1 and 2 shall be necessary and sufficient for the exit award of Professional Master's in Health and Social Care, providing that either that (a) the candidate is not planning to continue on the Professional Doctorate in Health and Social Care; or (b) this is offered as in 8.5 below when the award of Professional Doctorate is not being recommended.

4.3 There shall be an annual review of work leading to the thesis, undertaken by the candidate and supervisory team and monitored by or on behalf of the Head of School. The supervisory team shall also report to the Head of School at any time when the candidate appears not to be making satisfactory progress, is otherwise not fulfilling the conditions that have been laid down or appears unlikely to reach the standard of the degree.

4.4 In order to proceed to the thesis element of the Professional Doctorate programme a candidate must satisfy the Board of Examiners that there is a reasonable expectation that they will successfully complete the programme for the degree for which they are registered.

4.5 At the end of the first and second year the Board of Examiners shall review the candidate's progress to date. A candidate who has failed any module may be permitted by the Board of Examiners, on one occasion only, to be reassessed.

4.6 In circumstances where a reassessment, because of its nature or timing, cannot with reasonable practicability be completed within the year of study to which it relates, the Board of Examiners may permit a candidate to proceed to the next year of the course on condition that:

- (1) The reassessment shall be arranged and completed as soon as practicable in accordance with a timetable to be stipulated by the examiners; and
- (2) The examiners shall consider the outcome of the reassessment at the earliest feasible opportunity.

4.7 A candidate who fails to satisfy the Board of Examiners in any reassessment of work completed in the first or second year and conducted in accordance with the Regulations in this section shall normally be required to withdraw from the University.

Exceptional Circumstances

5.1 The Exceptional Circumstances Panel advising the Board of Examiners shall consider exceptional circumstances formally reported to it, and make recommendations to the Board, in accordance with the [University's Exceptional Circumstances Regulations](#) relating to Research Programme Assessment.

5.2 The Board of Examiners shall formally approve the compensation / remedy / assessment or other recommendation made by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel. Any alternative arrangement shall only be approved by the Board if it is in the candidate's best interest.

5.3 The Exceptional Circumstances Panel advising the Board shall treat all statements of exceptional circumstances as confidential, not to be disclosed outside the meeting of the Panel. Where a student believes that the relevant circumstances are of a highly confidential nature, they may report the circumstances to the Director of Student Services, who will act in accordance with the [University's Exceptional Circumstances Regulations relating to Research Programme Assessment](#).

Submission of the Thesis

6.1 The degree shall be awarded on the recommendation of the examiners at the assessment or reassessment undertaken:

6.1.1 In the case of candidates registered for the degree of Professional Doctorate in Health and Social Care, in respect of the thesis produced in the final year of study,

provided that the examiners are satisfied in all respects as to performance in the final assessment or permitted reassessment:

(1) In the thesis and examination the candidate is required to show distinct ability to conduct original investigations, to test ideas (whether the candidate's own or those of others) and to understand the relationship of the theme of the investigations to a wider field of knowledge.

(2) The thesis should show evidence of adequate industry and application. The candidate is also expected to show understanding of the relationships of the special theme to a wider field of knowledge. The thesis should represent a significant contribution to the development of understanding, for example, through the discovery of new knowledge, the connection of previously unrelated facts, and/or the development of a new theory or the revision of older views. The thesis shall not exceed 65,000 words in length.

6.2 A candidate who wishes to submit a thesis must apply to the Associate Director (Postgraduate Research) (or nominee). A thesis may be presented for examination at any time after the beginning of the last six months of the candidate's prescribed Period of Study provided that not more than six years shall have elapsed since the date of registration as a candidate for the degree:

Professional Doctorate in Health and Social Care

6.3 The Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College may give special permission for extensions to the period within which the thesis must be presented on the recommendation of the Head of School concerned.

6.4 A candidate for the degree shall, not later than three months before the submission of the thesis and in any case no later than three months before the end of the period of advanced study and research, submit for approval to the appropriate Head of School the precise title of the thesis to be examined.

Appointment of Examiners

7.1 The Head of School shall recommend for approval by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research the names of two or more examiners for the thesis, at least one of whom shall be an external examiner. This recommendation shall normally be made not later than three months before the expected date of the submission of the thesis.

Examination

8.1 A candidate shall be examined orally on the thesis and on subjects relevant to it. The examination shall normally be held within three months of the date of the submission of the thesis. Exceptions to this shall require approval by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College.

8.2 Prior to the oral examination of the thesis the examiners shall each prepare independent preliminary reports regarding the candidate's performance.

8.3 In exceptional circumstances the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College may, on sufficient grounds submitted by the candidate and/or their supervisory team, with the agreement of the examiners and on the recommendation of the Head of School, waive the requirement for the oral examination or agree to its replacement by an alternative form of assessment.

8.4 The examiners having examined the candidate shall send their joint final report and recommendation to the Head of School concerned. If the examiners do not agree in their recommendations or if for any other reason the Head of School needs a further opinion, the Head of School shall recommend to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College the appointment of an additional external examiner who shall conduct a further examination of the candidate.

8.5 The Head of School having considered the final report and recommendation of all the examiners shall then proceed in one of the following ways:

Candidates for the degree of Professional Doctorate

1. If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Professional Doctorate.
2. If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit, but that minor corrections are required, they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Professional Doctorate, subject to completion of minor corrections within six months.
3. If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Professional Doctorate but there is reasonable expectation that the thesis, if revised, could reach the standard required for the degree, the Head of School shall recommend either that the candidate be asked to

submit a revised thesis, or that the candidate be given the option either of submitting a revised thesis or of being approved for the award of Professional Master's providing that the required taught elements have been passed to allow an award of that degree. A candidate who is given this option shall be allowed a period of not more than fourteen days from receipt of formal notification of the outcome of the examination to decide which of these alternatives to accept. A candidate who submits a revised thesis shall do so within one year, may be required to undergo further oral examination and shall be required to pay a reassessment fee. A candidate shall not be allowed to submit a revised thesis on more than one occasion.

4. If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Professional Doctorate and the Head of School is not of the opinion that the candidate should be permitted to submit a revised thesis, they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Professional Master's provided that the required taught elements have been passed to allow an award of that degree.

8.6 In all cases the recommendations of the Head of School shall be laid before the Associate Director (Postgraduate Research) (or nominee) who shall ensure that appropriate action is taken on behalf of the Senate.

Final Submission of Thesis

9.1 A candidate shall submit an electronic copy of the final version of the research thesis in accordance with rules approved by the Senate.

9.2 If a candidate is approved for the award of the degree, the Associate Director (Postgraduate Research) (or nominee) shall deposit one copy of the research thesis in the University Library, where it shall be available for consultation. The Head of the School, at the request of the candidate, may determine that a particular thesis shall, for a period of up to three years specified by the Head of School, be available only to those who have written permission to consult it.

Modifications for Category A Candidates, Including Staff Candidates

10.1 Candidates for the degree of Professional Doctorate or Professional Master's will be designated as Category A (including faculty of Schools and such other candidates as the Senate shall determine) or Category B. Candidates in Category B shall study the degree of Professional Doctorate or Professional Master's in

accordance with Regulations 1 to 9 above. Category A candidates shall be permitted to proceed to the degree of Professional Doctorate or Professional Master's in accordance with Regulations 1 to 9, subject to the following modifications.

10.2 In the case of Category A candidates, references to the Head of School in Regulations 2 (General Preconditions to an Award), 3 (Duration of Course) and 8 (Examination) shall be interpreted as references to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College, or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest. Thus the examination of any Category A candidate for the degree of Professional Doctorate shall be conducted exclusively by external examiners appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College.

10.3 In the case of Category A candidates, references to the Head of School in Regulation 4 (Attendance, Assessment and Progress) shall be interpreted as references to the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research, or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest.

10.4 In the case of Category A candidates, references to the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research in Regulation 7 (Appointment of Examiners) shall be interpreted as references to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest.

10.5 The Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College shall be advised of any application from any Category A candidate to continue the Period of Study as a candidate for the degree after ceasing to be a member of staff.