

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
Professional Doctorate Course Credit Framework
With effect from Academic Year 2020-2021

1. WHAT COURSES ARE COVERED BY THE PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE COURSE CREDIT FRAMEWORK?

The Professional Doctorate Course Credit Framework covers all Professional Doctorate Courses at the University of Essex and its partner institutions.

2. PRINCIPLES OF THE CREDIT FRAMEWORK

The Rules of Assessment operate from a framework of higher education qualifications, which work on fundamental underlying principles. These principles can be explained as follows:

2.1 Learning Outcomes and Assessment

These identify what a successful student is expected to know and understand, together with the skills that they should be able to demonstrate on successful completion of the award. Learning outcomes can be attached to both modules and awards. It is the achievement of the learning outcomes that is important for the award of credit, not how or where the learning took place, nor how it was assessed, nor how long it actually took. Students usually demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes of a module, course or qualification by completing one or more pieces of assessed work. To be awarded the credits, a student must reach the minimum standard, known as the pass mark. The pass mark is published in the Rules of Assessment for the award.

2.2 Credit

Credit is an indicator of equivalence of workload. Credit value attaches to learning outcomes, and the achievement of these outcomes (evidenced by gaining at least a pass mark in the required assessments) allows the award of credit. For this reason, a credit rating is attached to each module, and these accumulate to allow awards (evidence of both volume and level of study) to be made. Credits are transportable and can be transferred between institutions, according to their rules of assessment.

Some modules have variations to the generic rules which must also be achieved to be awarded the credit. These variations could for example, take the form of a higher pass mark or have an additional requirement to pass individual parts of assessment such as an exam. In such cases, the additional requirement(s) must be met for credit to be awarded.

Students usually demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes of a module, course or qualification by completing one or more pieces of assessed work. To be awarded the credits, a student must reach the minimum standard, known as the pass mark. The pass mark is normally 50 at level 8, but any variations will be set out in the Rules of Assessment for the course.

2.3 The amount of credit which is required for a Professional Doctorate Qualification

Courses must comprise the following number of credits. Any variations would need approval:

Accredited:	540 level 8 credits <i>Accrediting bodies may stipulate a variation to this requirement</i>
Non-Accredited	540 credits: 180 credits of prior learning 360 level 8 credits obtained on the programme
Top up	540 credits: 240 credits of prior learning 300 level 8 credits obtained on the programme

2.4 Weighting of the Thesis

All Professional Doctorate courses must contain a thesis which must be passed. The thesis should not normally exceed 40,000 words in length, with a credit value of 240 credits at level 8.

2.5 Professional Doctorate Awards Framework

Tables 1 and 2 outline the standard structure for Professional Doctorates. Courses in existence prior to October 2020 may operate under a differing structure (see Table 3 below). Courses developed with an accrediting body may require a variation to the below structure.

Table 1 – Standard Non-accredited Professional Doctorate Structures:

Course type	Credits achieved via prior learning	Years undertaking taught components	Additional years to solely undertake research component	Completion period if required
Non-Accredited Full-time	180	Year 1	Year 2 and 3	Year 4
Non-Accredited Part-time	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4 and 5	Year 6
Non-Accredited Top-up	240	Year 1	Year 2 and 3	Year 4

Table 2 – Standard Accredited Professional Doctorate Structures:

Course type	Credits achieved via prior learning	Years undertaking taught components	Years undertaking research component	Completion period if required
Accredited Full-time (3-year)	0	Year 1, 2 and 3	Year 1, 2 and 3	Not applicable
Accredited Full-time (4-year)	0	Year 1, 2, 3 and 4	Year 1, 2, 3 and 4	Not applicable

Table 3 – Non-admitting Professional Doctorate Courses with variations to the standard structure for students who first registered prior to October 2020:

Course Name	Credits Achieved via Prior Learning	Years undertaking taught components	Additional Years to solely undertake Research component	Completion Period if Required
<i>Speech and Language Therapy (DOCTB62048)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3, 4, 5 and 6</i>	<i>Year 7</i>
<i>Public Health (Health Visiting) (DOCTB71248)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3, 4, 5 and 6</i>	<i>Year 7</i>
Nursing (DOCTB74048)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4, 5 and 6	Year 7
Health Service Management (DOCTB90048)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4, 5 and 6	Year 7
Health Care Education (DOCTB90448)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4, 5 and 6	Year 7
<i>Occupational Therapy (DOCTB93048)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3, 4, 5 and 6</i>	<i>Year 7</i>
Social Services Management (DOCTL59048)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4, 5 and 6	Year 7
<i>Social Care Practice Management (DOCTL59148)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3, 4, 5 and 6</i>	<i>Year 7</i>
<i>Social Care Education (DOCTL59248)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3, 4, 5 and 6</i>	<i>Year 7</i>
Applied Psychology (DOCTC84136)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4, 5 and 6	Year 7
<i>Physiotherapy (DPT B16048)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3 and 4</i>	<i>Year 5</i>
Sport and Exercise Science (DSESC60248)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3 and 4	Year 5
<i>Sport Performance and Coaching (DSPCC60748)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3 and 4</i>	<i>Year 5</i>
<i>Sports Therapy (DST C60548)</i>	180	<i>Year 1 and 2</i>	<i>Year 3 and 4</i>	<i>Year 5</i>
Advanced Practice and Research: Consultation and the Organisation (DOCTIPDD48)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4 and 5	Year 6
Advanced Practice and Research: Systemic Psychotherapy (DOCTIPDM48)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4 and 5	Year 6

Advanced Practice and Research: Education and Community Psychology (DOCTIPMT48)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4 and 5	Year 6
Advanced Practice and Research: Social Work and Social Care (DOCTIPDT48)	180	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4 and 5	Year 6
Child and Educational Psychology (DEDPC81248)	0	Year 1, 2 and 3	Year 4, 5 and 6	N/A
Consultation and the Organisation (DOCTD10T45)	0	Year 1, 2 and 3	Year 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8	N/A
Systemic Psychotherapy (DOCTM10T96)	0	Year 1 and 2	Year 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8	N/A

*Teaching out/*No students*

2.6 Exit Awards

Students who register for an award but have to withdraw from the University, or who do not meet the requirements for the main award, may be considered by the Board of Examiners for an exit award. Depending on the structure of the course, and the elements they have passed, the student might be eligible for a Masters by Dissertation, Masters in Professional Practice, PG Diploma or a PG Certificate.

Exit award titles will not be an equivalent to that of the studied Professional Doctorate, instead a general University of Essex title will be awarded (e.g. University of Essex Postgraduate Diploma of Higher Education).

2.7 Professional Body Requirements

On programmes which are subject to professional body regulations it should be noted that more stringent requirements may be imposed by the professional body for the purposes of professional qualification and accreditation. Professional Bodies may request an entirely different structure to be adopted during the development of a Professional Doctorate, the details of which will be considered on a case by case basis, with Rules of Assessment being developed accordingly.

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