

University of Essex

Professional Doctorates (Full-time) Rules of Assessment

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1. COURSE STRUCTURE

- 1.1 The minimum period of study is three years and there is no maximum period.
 - 1.2 The minimum period can exceptionally be extended or reduced by up to one year on a termly basis.
 - 1.3 If students have exceptional extenuating circumstances they may apply to intermit from the course on a termly basis, for a maximum of two year.
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2. RULES FOR PROGRESSION AND AWARD

2.1 Requirements for a Pass

- 2.1.1 The pass mark for the required taught course assignments and the professional portfolio(s) (if required) is 50%.
- 2.1.2 In order to be awarded the Professional Doctorate a candidate must:
 - (a) Pass all pieces of assessment of the taught component of the programme
 - (b) Pass the assessment of professional competencies if they are a part of the programme (these are normally assessed on a pass/fail basis)
 - (c) Pass the research thesis.
- 2.1.3 In order to progress between years the student must have passed the taught course assignments and/or professional practice portfolios, any assessment of professional competencies, and, if appropriate to that year, made satisfactory progress on their research.
- 2.1.4 The research thesis can be submitted before all of the required taught and professional practice components/competencies are completed but the degree will not be conferred until all components are completed and passed.

2.2 Resubmission

- 2.2.1 Students should submit all taught work by the published deadlines. Students may request an extension to complete their assignments, only if there are extenuating circumstances. The late submission of an assignment where an extension has not been approved will result in a mark of zero and the student will be required to resubmit the work.
- 2.2.2 Resubmission is permitted for failed modules/assignments up to a total of 90 credits.
- 2.2.3 No more than one resubmission is permitted for each taught module assignment and/or professional components/competencies.

- 2.2.4 Any resubmitted work is only eligible for a capped mark of 50 unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances approved by the Board of Examiners.
- 2.2.5 Resubmitted work must normally be presented within two months of the notification of the original mark.
- 2.2.6 If a resubmitted assignment or reassessment of the professional component fails to achieve a pass mark, the student's registration on the programme will be discontinued on academic grounds. Fails on professional competencies are not permitted.
- 2.2.7 The standard arrangements for the research thesis apply. A research thesis may be referred for substantial revision for a period of no more than 12 months. Alternatively, minor editorial corrections may be required, to be completed in up to three months from notification of the requirements, or editorial revisions may be required, to be completed in up to six months from notification of the requirements.

2.3 Exit Awards

- 2.3.1 Each Professional Doctorate course should, where possible, include criteria for the award of a taught Masters for students who do not satisfactorily complete the full programme. If a student does not meet the progression requirements on the Professional Doctorate, they may be eligible to receive an exit award subject to completing a dissertation. To complete a dissertation they will need to be a registered student.
- 2.3.2 If a student does not meet the progression requirements on the Professional Doctorate, they may be eligible to receive an exit award of a Master of Arts/Master of Science by Dissertation subject to completing a dissertation of a maximum of 30,000 words. To complete a dissertation they will need to be a registered student.
- 2.3.3 If a student does not meet the progression requirements on the Professional Doctorate, the student may be eligible to receive an exit award of a Masters in Professional Studies subject to completing 180 credits of coursework at level 7 and completing a 60 credit dissertation (min 12,000, max 15,000 words), which they will need to be a registered student to complete.
- 2.3.4 If a student submits a thesis but the examiners feel that the thesis has not met the requirements for the Professional Doctorate, the examiners can recommend that a lower award of a Master of Arts by Dissertation, Master of Science by Dissertation (180 credits) or Masters in Professional Studies (240 credits)² be made, as appropriate for the course.

3. ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESSION PROCEDURES

3.1 Board of Examiners

- 3.1.1 Assessment for the taught and professional components/competencies will be considered by an annual Board of Examiners meeting that determines whether a student can progress to the next year.
- 3.1.2 Assessment for progress in the research thesis will be considered by an annual Supervisory Panel meeting that determines whether a student can progress to the next year.

²This section should be deleted as appropriate

- 3.1.3 The outcome of either the Board of Examiners or the Supervisory Panel is reported to the Research Student Progress Board (RSPB). The RSPB then makes a recommendation for final approval by the Dean of whether the student can progress to the next year.
- 3.1.4 An External Examiner will be appointed for the Professional Doctorate and will not normally act as the external for the research thesis. For research-only Professional Doctorates, where research methods is the only taught module for the course, the marks can be approved by the Board of Examiners for the appropriate Masters course and no course level External Examiner is required to be appointed.
- 3.1.5 The research thesis is assessed in accordance with the normal arrangements for research degrees, as outlined in the [Principal regulations for research degrees](#) and [Codes of practice relating to higher degrees](#).