

Programme Specification

Doctorate in Education (part-time)

PPRZEDUCEDHR

For students entering in 2025/26

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	Doctorate in Education (part-time) - 72 months
Accreditation	Part A PG Diploma Master's Degree Doctorate in Education
Programme Start Dates	September
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	N/A

Programme information and content

The Doctorate in Education (EdD) is a part-time professional doctoral programme designed to offer high quality researcher and career development for professionals employed in a broad range of areas related to education. As a professional and practice-based doctorate, the EdD offers a post-experience qualification that is particularly appealing to mid-career professionals.

The EdD is formed of two parts:

Part A comprises of a cohort phase of two years. A special feature of this phase is that it provides a programme of blended learning, with two mandatory study weekends of learning at the University of Reading campus each year, combined with guided online learning, self-directed study, and experiential learning through a research project. This is supplemented by one online study morning, which will mostly comprise of assessment workshops and provide a discursive social space for learning. The EdD is exclusively designed to meet the development needs of the participant group of education professions, the programme is underpinned by sound principles of adult learning pedagogy to facilitate learning that builds upon the professional skills and experiences of participants. In connecting practice-focused research and academic learning it offers opportunities for challenging learning and innovative research that is professionally relevant, while working towards a doctoral degree.

Part B of the programme involves independent, supervised research, supported through one-to-one supervision at regular intervals during each subsequent academic year. Part B culminates with a thesis on an approved topic of approximately 60,000 words which will be examined by viva voce. The thesis is required to make a distinct contribution to professional

knowledge, be original, and demonstrate an ability to relate to the existing body of research within the field.

The programme is designed to appeal to a variety of professionals employed in a broad range of fields related to education, from compulsory education and further and higher education to learning and development in the public and corporate sector, as well as consultancy and other fields related to education.

Programme Learning Outcomes

-Doctorate in Education (part-time)

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

Learning outcomes	
1	Critically reflect on your professional context, explore and understand the research and values that inform your professional field.
2	Demonstrate research skills, knowledge and understanding about the nature and application of research, in terms of how we think about knowledge and then apply this knowledge to a professional field.
3	Search for, discover, access, retrieve, sift, interpret, analyse, evaluate, manage, conserve and communicate an ever-increasing volume of knowledge from a range of sources.
4	Think critically about problems to produce innovative research solutions that will lead to the creation of new knowledge.
5	Plan, manage and deliver projects, selecting and justifying appropriate methodological processes while recognising, evaluating and minimising the risks involved.
6	Exercise professional standards in research and research integrity, and engage in professional practice, including ethical, legal, and health and safety aspects.
7	Support, collaborate with and lead peers, using a range of peer-learning, communication and networking skills.
8	Apply the knowledge and skills acquired in Part A through an independent empirical investigation in Part B, demonstrating research competencies via independent and original research which contributes to professional practice and knowledge.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

Module information

Part A of the EdD programme comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Compulsory modules

Module	Name	Credits	Level
EDM205	Educational Leadership and Management	20	M
EDM206	Education and Professionalism	20	M
EDM207	Research Methods 1	20	M
EDM208	Theory in Education	20	M
EDM209	Research Methods 2	40	M

Part-time or flexible modular arrangements

The EdD is a part-time programme. Part A of the programme comprises of 120 credits of compulsory modules, taken over two years, as follows:

- In the first year of study, you will be required to complete the compulsory modules **EDM173 Educational Leadership & Management, EDM169 Research Methods 1 and EDM194 Professionalism.**
- In the second year of study, you will be required to complete the compulsory modules **EDM179 Theory in Education and EDM170 Research Methods 2.**

Part A of the programme may not be completed over more than two years.

Placement opportunities

N/A

Study abroad opportunities

N/A

Optional modules

N/A

Teaching and learning delivery

The programme aims to develop doctoral research skills by increasing knowledge and understanding about the nature and application of research in terms of how we think about knowledge and then by providing assessments that enable learners to apply this knowledge and hone their skills in research through desk-based research, empirical work and related tasks.

The suite of modules in **Part A** is underpinned by sound principles of doctoral researcher development for professional learners and will support the connection between theoretical learning with the development of ‘hard’ skills in research (e.g., data collection techniques, methods of data analysis) and ‘soft’ skills, behaviours and attitudes (e.g., reflexivity in research, researcher positionality, ethical dilemmas). By providing a detailed understanding of research techniques and enabling students to relate theoretical concepts to their professional field, the EdD programme aims to enable students to critically reflect on their professional contexts as well as explore and understand the research and values that inform

research in practice. A concurrent focus on theory, methodology, methods, ethics and research skills will involve inquiry-based, action-oriented approaches. This will equip participants with practical research skills, academic writing skills and confidence, alongside intellectual understanding to engage with doctoral research in Part B.

While this develops the individual doctoral researcher, uniquely, the EdD learning pedagogy is fundamentally aimed at building collective peer-to-peer learning and support through a cohort experience. As the EdD is designed for professionals working in fields related to education, participants will have had diverse life experiences and particular professional experience that informs the topic of their research studies. The programme adopts a learner-centred approach, akin to group mentoring, and using flipped classroom approaches it provides varying opportunities to share learning and experiences, enabling each person to bring a unique range of attributes and insights from which others can learn. To build the cohort experience, the EdD creates dialectic spaces where participants can share their research aspirations, knowledge, experiences and ideas. Peer feedback is an important part of the programme and is facilitated both through the study weekends and through guided online activity. The purpose here is to facilitate learning through collaborative processes of knowledge construction and the encouragement of inclusive dialogue. They will be supported through insightful contributions from highly experienced academic staff from within the Institute of Education. The experience of the team is varied in terms of its research, practitioner and academic background.

The EdD programme is delivered over 2 campus-based weekends a year for two years, plus one morning (1 x 3-hour) synchronous online study session a year for two years. In addition to learning through the study weekends, elements of the programme will be delivered via digital technology for each of the compulsory modules in the programme. Alongside this provision, self-directed learning is essential. Some of these will have been designed by and/or involve staff and will give some flexibility for choosing when to complete them. However, to prepare for doctoral study, a challenging schedule of self-directed independent study will be required. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study normally expected for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Part B - the research thesis element of the programme enables knowledge and skills acquired in Part A to be applied through a supervised but independent empirical investigation. Part B is assessed by the completion of a 60,000-word thesis based on an original piece of empirical research and a viva voce examination.

In Part B, all postgraduate research students automatically become members of the University-wide Graduate School. The Graduate School's Reading Researcher Development Programme (RRDP) offers a programme of optional training sessions and workshops which have been especially designed to help develop additional skills. The RRDP is delivered primarily using the expertise of academic and specialist staff within the University and complements any subject-specific training provided by the EdD programme. Typically, the RRDP includes training sessions on research methods, writing academic papers, getting published, public engagement and career planning.

Further opportunities for honing the doctoral researcher experience are available through the Institute of Education (IOE) Post Doctoral Research (PGR) community and IOE research

clusters, the IOE (PGR) conference and the University wide Graduate School PGR conference, which is held annually.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

Part A of the programme will be assessed through a combination of methods that include: a literature review, theoretical essays, small scale empirical research and written research report, and research proposal. The assessments provide an opportunity for learners to develop their own research interests over the first 2 years. Assessments are designed to be flexible enough for students to tailor what they focus on in their assignments to their own topic of research interest. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

To progress to Part B students must gain an overall average of 65% for Part A. Students must also achieve 65% or more in the module EDM209 Research Methods 2 and a pass mark in all remaining compulsory modules.

In part B students must pass a formal review within 18 months of transferring to Part B with two assessors to progress to thesis stage.

- To progress to Part B students must gain an overall average of 65% across Part A modules. In addition, a minimum grade of 65% is required in the module EDM209 Research Methods 2 as this module involves a research proposal that will be implemented in Part B. Failure to meet these grades will result in automatic de-registration from the EdD. Students who fail to transfer to Part B or choose to exit the programme may qualify for a **PG Diploma** (see requirements for the Postgraduate Diploma on the next page).
- The next milestone is in Part B. Within 18 months of transferring to Part B, students will be required to undertake a formal review. This will involve submission of two chapters from the thesis (e.g., literature review and methodology chapters) and a contextual statement. Students will be required to undertake a face-to-face interview/examination (online or campus) with two assessors (not the student's supervisors). This process will be conducted in line with the University Code of Practice on Research Students, sections (f).

Recommendations for progression to the thesis stage will be made on the basis of:

- a. Is the work presented by the student such as might reasonably be expected as a result of their having studied for 18 months in Part B of the EdD.
- b. Has the student shown that they are able to exercise independent critical judgement.
- c. Has the student demonstrated that they understand how their research topic is related to a wider field of knowledge or area of professional practice.

- d. Has the student demonstrated the ability to produce an original contribution to knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.
- e. Is the student's work, and their understanding of it, of a standard that indicates that it will lead to the successful submission of a EdD thesis within the maximum registration period.

The outcomes of the formal review will be either:

- i. Confirmation as an EdD candidate
- ii. An agreed plan of remedial action (following advice on how to improve) and an opportunity to provide a further report and be re-interviewed, to an agreed timescale, normally within 3 months of the original interview.
- iii. Recommendation of PG Diploma (in line with EdD exit award requirements set out in programme specification), which will need to be approved by the Head of School; or
- iv. recommendation for referral to the Head of School (via the School Director of PGR Studies), who will need to consider invoking the University's Policy on and procedures relating to Doctoral student academic engagement and fitness to study, which can lead to de-registration from PGR programmes.

Procedures for appeals will be in line with item (g) and procedures for illness, changes in family circumstances or exceptional circumstances will be in line with item (h) of the **Code of Conduct on Research Students**.

- As noted, the final assessment in Part B is a 60,000-word thesis based on an original piece of research and a viva voce examination. Students who successfully complete Part B qualify for a **Doctorate in Education**.

Classification

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Wor

For Postgraduate Diploma

Students who fail to achieve the progression requirements or choose to exit the EdD programme after successful completion of Part A may qualify for a Postgraduate Diploma. The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma:

Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 120 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 80 credits
- (iii) not more than 20 credits with a mark below 40%

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, the following further conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 120 credits and marks of 70% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 120 credits and marks of 60% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40.

Additional costs of the programme

Optional textbooks (£200). Costs are indicative and subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. In addition, students should budget for the potential cost of travel/ subsistence, where required, to conduct fieldwork and travel/subsistence costs relating to study weekends and IT equipment. It is not possible to indicate travel costs as this will vary according to travel distances.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2024.

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

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