

Ordinances and Regulations: Degree of Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

February 2007

Research Office Graduate Education Team

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A. ORDINANCES

1. The Degree of Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a period of supervised research and training, the results of which show convincing evidence of the capacity of the candidate to achieve understanding and critical thinking. The results of the research shall then be embodied in a thesis comprising a practical, applied piece of research, which requires substantial fieldwork within a business or government organisation. The degree is designed to meet the needs of those people who seek advancement within a research oriented business or government organisation or who are, or expect to be, engaged in a significant amount of business consultancy work during their career.
2. The mode of admission to the degree and other conditions relating to the degree shall be prescribed in Regulations.
3. Applicants for admission to the degree must hold the qualification(s) prescribed by the Regulations and must satisfy the University that they are fit by reason of their ability and training to undertake the degree.
4. Except in so far as relaxation is granted in accordance with the Regulations:
 - a. for full-time study the degree shall be a continuous one, extending over such period as may be prescribed by the Regulations; and students will be required to devote their whole time to the degree and to attend in the University at all appropriate times;
 - b. for part-time study the degree shall be continuous and include study time equivalent to a full-time degree but should not exceed twice the full-time study. The students shall be required to attend the University at all appropriate times.

B. REGULATIONS

1. Admission to the Degree

- a. Applicants for admission will normally hold an MBA or other Masters degree in a relevant area of business and management with significant work experience, or a PhD in any discipline.
- b. Applicants must demonstrate that they have reached the minimum acceptable level of proficiency in use of the English language according to the published requirements of the degree.
- c. Applicants may also be admitted as a part-time student for the degree of DBA if:
 - i. the periods for which they will be free from employment or other commitments will be sufficient for the purposes of the degree;

and
 - ii. the subject is suitable for part-time study.
- d. Applicants may be admitted to the degree of DBA only if an appropriate research environment is available for the duration of the degree. This should include the availability of appropriate academic staff to provide supervision and training, other research-support staff, research facilities and learning resources.

2. Conditions of Admission

- a. Conditions will be prescribed for each student admitted to the degree of DBA requiring attendance and satisfactory completion of specified taught programme elements.
- b. The supervisory teams will consist of Academic Supervisor(s) and Industrial Adviser(s) where appropriate.

3. Duration of the Degree

- a. Candidates for the degree of DBA shall normally be registered for a continuous period of not less than 3 years and no more than 4 years full-time study.
- b. The duration of a part-time DBA degree will be dependent upon the time to be committed by the candidate for study but shall normally be no more than 6 years.
- c. Candidates shall be expected to submit their thesis upon completion of the DBA degree unless they have received prior approval from the University to register for the submission pending period (see section 3).

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- d. Extensions to the duration of a DBA degree to permit further supervised research may be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

4. Submission Pending Period

- a. Candidates registered on a DBA degree may register for the submission pending period at the discretion of the University to allow additional time for preparation of the thesis for up to one year beyond the completion date of the DBA degree.
- b. A fee will be payable for any such submission pending registration that is granted by the University.
- c. Extensions to the submission pending period may be sought only in exceptional circumstances.

5. Skills Development

- a. A programme of skills training and development is a mandatory component of the DBA degree.
- b. All candidates for a DBA degree must undertake a skills audit at the beginning of their degree, and annually thereafter throughout their degree to determine their research, transferable and generic skills requirements. The audit will provide the basis for a planned programme of skills training and development. The outcomes of the audit and programme of skills development must be agreed by the student and the supervisory team. The supervisory team will be responsible for ensuring that the student has access to the required skills training and development opportunities.

6. Progression

- a. Students admitted to the degree of DBA shall demonstrate satisfactory progress before the end of the first year of their research degree by submission of a substantial progress report which will be discussed at a formal progress meeting with the supervisory team and an independent assessor.
- b. The progress report shall be of sufficient length to demonstrate the student's understanding of the subject, and ability to pursue doctoral level research.
- c. Successful completion of the agreed programme of skills development and training will be a condition of progression between each year of the prescribed period of study.
- d. All candidates for the degree of DBA shall maintain a record of their progression and personal development throughout their degree.
- e. Students who are not able to demonstrate satisfactory progress before the end of their first year of registration, will not be permitted to register for the second year of the degree. They may, at the discretion of the supervisory team and independent assessor be judged to have fulfilled the attendance and performance requirements required for the award of an alternative degree.

- f. At the end of the second year of research a student shall submit a short progress report which will be discussed at a formal progress meeting with the supervisory team and an independent assessor. Students who are not able to demonstrate satisfactory progress after two years of registration will not be permitted to register for the third year of the degree. They may, at the discretion of the supervisory team and independent assessor be judged to have fulfilled the attendance and performance requirements required for the award of an alternative degree.
- g. Part-time students shall submit a progress report on an annual basis, with a major report occurring after the equivalent of one year's full-time registration.

7. Study Away From the University

- a. A student may be permitted to devote part of the DBA degree to study and research outside the University (in addition to fieldwork or short laboratory visits) if:
 - i. it is in the interests of the student's research and training;
 - ii. the institution or location of proposed study is suitable;
 - iii. a suitable work-plan for the period of study outside the University is agreed with the supervisory team;
 - iv. satisfactory supervision arrangements are in place;
 - v. it will not restrict freedom of publication of results.

8. Change of Institution During the Degree

- a. Students who start a DBA degree at the University of Manchester may complete their degree at another academic institution, subject to agreement of the student, supervisory team and the two institutions involved. A University of Manchester qualification may only be awarded where at least 50% of the degree has been completed at the University of Manchester.
- b. Students who start a degree leading to a business administration doctorate at another institution may complete their degree at the University of Manchester, subject to agreement of the student, supervisory team and between the two institutions. A University of Manchester qualification may only be awarded where at least 50% of the degree has been completed at the University of Manchester.
- c. In each of the above cases the final decision for a transfer of registration lies with the Universities.

9. Interruption of the Degree

- a. A student may be granted a temporary interruption of their DBA degree for approved reasons at the discretion of the University where the continuation of study, research or thesis preparation is not possible. An application should be

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made before the beginning of the proposed period of interruption with the support of the supervisory team. Retrospective applications will not normally be considered.

- b. Where appropriate, students and the supervisory team should seek the advice of relevant sponsors before applying for an interruption and should in all cases seek permission as soon as the requirement for the interruption becomes apparent.

10. Changes to the Nature of the Degree

- a. Permission for significant changes to the nature of the research to be undertaken must be sought by the supervisory team with the agreement of the student. Where appropriate, students and supervisors should seek the advice of relevant sponsoring body before making such changes.

11. Thesis Submission

- a. Notice to submit a DBA thesis shall be made on the prescribed form not less than six weeks and not more than six months before submission.
- b. If a thesis is not submitted before the end of the degree or submission pending period, the student's candidacy automatically lapses and the student cannot subsequently submit, unless further approval is granted by the University.
- c. If a student wishes to submit a thesis more than 3 months before the end of their DBA degree (or 6 months if part-time) they will require the permission of the supervisory team and the University. Permission will only be granted up to one year before the end of the DBA degree for full time students, and 2 years before the end of the DBA degree for part time students.

12. Registration and Fees

- a. Subject to individual degree requirements, a student will normally register for a business administration doctorate in September and must re-register at the same time annually unless a change to this conventional pattern results from an approved period of interruption. Appropriate fees are payable annually during the duration of the degree and for any period of submission pending registration.

13. Content and Length of Thesis

- a. Candidates shall submit two copies of a thesis embodying the results of the research undertaken during the degree. The thesis should demonstrate an understanding of the application of theories and analytical frameworks in a particular subject area of business and management and contain structured, rigorously tested empirical evidence. The thesis may embody reprints of published material, must be free from restrictions on publication, and must be presented and bound in a satisfactory manner. The University shall have the right to retain both copies.

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- b. Matter which has been included in a thesis or report submitted in support of a successful application for a degree or qualification of any university or professional or learned body must not be embodied in the thesis submitted for the degree, except that such matter:
- i. If unpublished, may be reported in sufficient detail to enable the work done during and for the purpose of the degree to be fairly evaluated;
- or*
- ii. If published, may be mentioned for purposes of reference in the same way as publications by other workers.

In either case the fact of the previous submission of such matter must be made clear at all relevant points in the thesis.

- c. Work to be embodied in the thesis should be reported concisely. The normal maximum length is 80,000 words of main text (including footnotes or endnotes).
- d. All theses must be written in English; quotations, however, may be given in the language in which they were written.
- e. All theses should be submitted in accordance with the information set out in the University's Guidance for the Presentation of Theses.

14. Examination

- a. The candidate shall be required to attend an oral examination on the subject of the thesis and matters relevant thereto. The candidate may also be required by the examiners to undergo a written or other examination. The oral examination shall be attended by the candidate and the examiners. The examiners may, at their discretion and subject to the agreement of the candidate, invite the candidate's supervisors to attend an oral examination as silent observers and to answer questions put directly to them. If requested in writing by the candidate, an open invitation shall also be issued for the attendance of additional appropriate members of the University, for example, teaching staff and other postgraduate students. If such an invitation is issued, all attendees shall be required to give a prior undertaking in writing to maintain confidentiality in respect of the subject matter of the thesis, and in relation to any matters relevant thereto which may arise during the course of the examination.
- b. Each candidate shall be examined by two or more examiners of whom at least one shall be an external examiner. The appointment of examiners shall proceed in accordance with the policy set out in the University's Guidance for the Examiners of Research Degree Theses (excluding MPhil).
- c. After examining the thesis presented by a candidate and considering the results of any oral or written examination which they have conducted, the examiners, at their discretion, shall make one of the following recommendations:

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- i.** That the candidate be awarded the degree of DBA with no corrections to the thesis being required.
- ii.** That the candidate be awarded the degree of DBA subject to minor corrections being made to the thesis.
- iii.** That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for the degree of DBA. A candidate will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion. A fresh examination of the thesis, normally by the original examiners, is required and may include further oral examination.
- iv.** That the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil.
- v.** That the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to minor corrections being made to the thesis.
- vi.** That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for the degree of MPhil. A candidate will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion. A fresh examination of thesis, normally by the original examiners, is required and may include further oral examination.
- vii.** That no award be made to the candidate and no resubmission be permitted.