

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

June 2022

**Research & Business Engagement  
Research Degrees and Researcher Development**

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**A. ORDINANCES**

1. The Degree of Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is designed to meet the needs of senior professionals who seek to improve their critical thinking and research skills whilst pursuing their profession. The DBA is awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of research training and supervised research, the results of which shall be embodied in a thesis comprising evidence of the candidate's capacity to conduct a comprehensive and critical analysis of the relevant literature and to carry out substantial fieldwork designed to extend current knowledge. The thesis should make an original and substantial addition to knowledge which will also be relevant to a business, government or not-for-profit organisation, and have the potential to make significant improvement to practices.
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. These regulations provide the framework for the DBA programme and should be read in conjunction with programme specific detailed notes of guidance and handbooks.
5. Except in so far as relaxation is granted in accordance with the Regulations, the DBA programme is for part-time study and 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 with a minimum of 6 years of full-time management experience, showing significant career progression.
- 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 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 and Industry 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 4 years part-time study and shall normally be no more than 5 years study.
- b. After successfully completing the required assessment (where required) for each year of part time study, students will be permitted to register for the subsequent year of study.
- c. Candidates shall be expected to submit one electronic copy and two paper copies of their thesis by the end of the standard DBA degree programme unless they have received prior approval from the University to register for the submission pending period (see section 5).
- 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 request permission to 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 as detailed in the Policy on Circumstances Leading to Changes to Postgraduate Research Study. Candidates are advised to check any conditions imposed by the relevant Faculty on extensions to the degree on which they are registered and of any restrictions applied by any funding bodies

- 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 to ensure that students have the research and other academic skills necessary to conduct their research project.
- 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 of the DBA programme will present themselves for assessment as required in the programme handbook.
- b. Students admitted to the degree of DBA shall demonstrate satisfactory progress at the end of each academic year via the annual review process.
- c. At the end of the second year of their degree programme students must submit a substantial progress report which will be discussed at a formal progress meeting with the supervisory team and an independent assessor.
- d. The progress report shall be of sufficient length to demonstrate the student's understanding of the subject, and ability to pursue doctoral level research.
- e. 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.
- f. All candidates for the degree of DBA shall maintain a record of their progression and personal development throughout their degree.
- g. 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 offered the opportunity to submit a thesis for the degree of MPhil.

## **7. 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.

## **8. 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 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.

## **9. 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.

## **10. 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. A DBA thesis submission (examination and final version) shall consist of an electronic copy in Portable Document Format (PDF) with a plain-text metadata record. The University shall have the right to retain copies. Full details of thesis presentation requirements can be found in the [Presentation of Theses Policy](#).
- c. 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.
- d. If a student wishes to submit a thesis more than 6 months before the end of their DBA degree 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 degree. Students who are granted permission to submit early, will still be required to pay full fees for the degree period for which they originally registered.

## **11. Registration and Fees**

- a. A student will 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.

## **12. Content and Length of Thesis**

- a. Candidates shall submit one electronic copy of the examination version of the thesis embodying the results of the research undertaken during the degree. The thesis may embody reprints of published material, must be free from restrictions on publication, and must be presented in a satisfactory manner. The University shall have the right to retain copies.
- 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 70,000 words of main text with no fewer than 60,000 (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 [Presentation of Theses Policy](#).

## **13. 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 and, if required, an independent chair.
- b. A DBA oral examination is open to members of University staff, including the candidate's supervisor, and other postgraduate research students of the University. The candidate, however, has the right to exclude particular individuals if they feel their presence will be detrimental to their performance in the examination. The examiners and/or the independent chair have the right to exclude from the examination anyone they believe may jeopardise the smooth running or integrity of

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the oral examination. All attendees other than the candidate, examiners and, where applicable, independent chair, 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

- c. 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 Examination of Doctoral Degrees Policy.
- d. 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:
  - 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.

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<b>Document Control Box</b>	
Policy / Procedure title:	Degree of Doctor of Business Administration
Lead contact email	Alex.Hinchliffe@manchester.ac.uk
Date updated:	June 2022
Approving body:	MDCSG
Version:	9
Supersedes:	May 2021
Previous review dates:	May 2021; June 2014
Next review date:	May 2027
Equality impact outcome:	
Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations:	<a href="https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/rdrd/ordinancesandregulations/">https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/rdrd/ordinancesandregulations/</a>
Related policies/procedures/guidance etc.	<a href="https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/rdrd/code/">https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/rdrd/code/</a>
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