

Postgraduate Research – Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Enterprise Regulations

VERSION: April 2026

CONTENTS:

- A. Admission to the Degree
- B. Duration of the Degree
- C. Financial Registration and Fees
- D. Supervision
- E. Academic Progression
- F. Skills Development
- G. Research Away from the University
- H. Change of Institution During the PhD Degree
- I. Extension to Programme
- J. Interruption to Programme
- K. Changes to the Aims of Research Projects
- L. Submission Pending Period
- M. Content and Length of Thesis
- N. Thesis Submission
- O. Examination

A. Admission to the Degree

1. Applicants will be required to hold an Upper Second Class Honours (2:1) Bachelor's degree, or an international equivalent, in a discipline directly relevant to the intended programme of study. Alternatively, applicants may be considered if they possess an Upper Second Class Honours (2:1) degree, or equivalent, in any subject area and, in addition, have obtained a Master's degree at merit level or above in a discipline directly relevant to the intended PhD research area.
2. Professional qualifications other than a Bachelor's Degree and/or relevant and appropriate experience may be taken into account for admission to a PhD degree but will be subject to additional approval by the relevant Faculty Associate Dean (PGR).
3. Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to take a recognised test and attain a minimum IELTS 6.5 overall with a minimum of 6 in writing and listening, and 5.5 in all other sub-tests.
4. Applicants may be admitted as a part-time PGR for the degree of PhD by Enterprise 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 programme / research topic is suitable for part-time study.

A PGR may be admitted to a PhD by Enterprise degree 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.

B. Duration of the Degree

5. Candidates for the degree of PhD by Enterprise shall be registered for a continuous period of up to 4 years full-time study and attendance is based on a notional 35 hour week, which includes time spent on the research project and enterprise activity (the degree is weighted approximately 80% research and 20% enterprise) and also time for personal and professional development. Actual hours and research patterns may differ for various reasons but it is recommended that they do not exceed 1800 hours annually. PGRs must be present on the University campus as required by the programme and/or any visa terms and conditions.
6. The duration of a part-time PhD by Enterprise degree will be no less than 50% of full-time study and normally be no more than 8 years, unless it has been determined that a lower FTE is a reasonable adjustment for a disabled candidate.
7. Extensions to the duration of a PhD by Enterprise degree to permit further supervised research may be considered only in exceptional circumstances (see section H).

C. Financial Registration and Fees

8. All PGRs must complete financial registration at the beginning of their degree and shall re-register at the same time annually unless a change to this pattern results from an approved period of interruption (see section I) or they fail to progress academically (see section D).
9. Appropriate fees are payable annually for the duration of the degree.

D. Supervision

10. Supervision for the degree of PhD by Enterprise will fully comply with the standards and expectations set forth in the Supervision Policy for Postgraduate Research Degrees, ensuring all postgraduate researchers receive appropriate academic guidance and support throughout their studies.
11. Each PhD by Enterprise researcher will be assigned a dedicated mentor from the Unit M Expert Mentor Network, managed by the Programme Director and in consultation with the supervisor. This mentor will offer strategic guidance and tailored advice to support the researcher's enterprise venture.
12. In addition to supervisory meetings, the PhD by Enterprise PGRs will also attend meetings with the Programme Director to update on progress and identify needs / obstacles.

E. Academic Progression

13. All PGRs registered for the degree of PhD by Enterprise shall maintain a record of their progression and personal development throughout their degree.
14. Progression for PGRs requires them to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress through the formal progression review process towards the end of each academic year (pro-rata for part time). The first progression review must be independently assessed, in line with the University's policy on progress and review. Subsequent reviews, including their format and assessment arrangements, are determined at the discretion of the relevant Faculty.
15. Full time PGRs will not be permitted to re-register until they have successfully completed the annual formal progression review process except where the University is unable to deliver an outcome on time (in such cases the PGR will be permitted to re-register in advance of the review outcome).
16. Part-time PGRs whose formal progression review is pro-rated therefore falling outside of the annual registration process will be permitted to re-register annually but are still required to demonstrate satisfactory progress at their formal progression review in order to continue on the programme.
17. The progress report shall be of sufficient length to demonstrate the PGR's understanding of the subject, their ability to pursue doctoral-level research, and evidence that they are capable of making an original contribution or substantial addition to knowledge in their research area and detail their progress towards business development.

18. Progression between years of study requires completing any agreed skills development and enterprise training programmes.
19. PhD candidates who cannot demonstrate satisfactory progress will not be permitted to continue on the degree programme, but may be offered the opportunity to resubmit their progress report or submit a thesis for the degree of MPhil.

F. Skills Development and Enterprise Training

20. A programme of research skills development and enterprise training is a mandatory component of the PhD by Enterprise degree.
21. All PGRs registered for the degree of PhD by Enterprise 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 PGR and the supervisory team. The supervisory team will be responsible for ensuring that the PGR has access to the required skills training and development opportunities.
22. PGRs registered for the degree of PhD by Enterprise must complete structured entrepreneurship training and Unit M will be responsible for ensuring that all appropriate and required training modules are made available to PGRs, supporting their enterprise competencies throughout their studies.

G. Research Away from the University

23. Formal collaborative, split-site, or joint/dual delivery arrangements are not offered for the PhD by Enterprise. Research is primarily expected to be conducted on campus. However, PGRs may be permitted to devote part of the PhD degree to study and research outside the University of Manchester (in addition to fieldwork or short laboratory visits) if:
 - i. it is in the interests of the PGR'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. satisfactory IP arrangements are in place;
 - vi. it is in line with any visa terms and conditions.

H. Changing Institution during the PhD by Enterprise Degree

24. PGRs who start a degree leading to PhD by Enterprise at the University of Manchester may complete their degree at another academic institution, subject to agreement of the PGR, supervisory team, and the two institutions involved. In some cases, in order to transfer, the PGR might be required to transfer to a standard PhD programme rather than continue on a PhD by Enterprise. A University of Manchester qualification may only

be awarded where at least 50% of the degree has been completed while registered at the University of Manchester.

25. Universities make the final decision on registration transfers.

I. Extension to Programme

26. PGRs registered on the degree PhD by Enterprise are expected to submit their thesis within the standard period of the degree programme. However, in the most exceptional circumstances and with mitigating factors, a PGR can apply for an extension to the prescribed programme, but this extension is strictly for the purpose of conducting further research and not for the writing up of a thesis or business plan. PGRs should refer to the Change of Circumstances Policy and Procedures for full details.

27. Where permission for an extension to programme has not been granted and a candidate submits their thesis late, the thesis will be rejected.

J. Interruption to Programme

28. A PGR may be granted a temporary interruption of their PhD by Enterprise degree programme for approved reasons at the discretion of the University where the continuation of all research and enterprise activity 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 only be considered under extraordinary circumstances. PGRs should refer to the Change of Circumstances Policy and Procedures for full details.

29. Where appropriate, PGRs and the supervisory team should seek the advice of the Faculty Doctoral Academy before applying for an interruption and should seek permission as soon as the requirement for the interruption becomes apparent.

K. Changes to the Aims of a Research Project

30. PGRs may wish to adjust or refine their research focus based on market feedback and entrepreneurial development, particularly during Years 2 and 3 of the programme. Any changes, however small, must receive approval from the supervisor / supervisory team.

31. Where any changes to the aims of the research project are so fundamental that they may require a change of programme and/or supervisor, formal permission must be sought. In such cases, PGRs and supervisors are required to seek advice from the Faculty Doctoral Academy, UMIF—and, where relevant, the student immigration team—as early as possible in the process.

L. Submission Pending Period

32. Depending on the length of programme, PGRs registered on a PhD by Enterprise degree may request permission to register for the submission-pending period at the discretion of the University to allow additional time for preparation beyond the completion date of the PhD degree, as detailed in the [Change of Circumstances](#) Policy and Procedures.

33. A fee will be payable for any such submission pending registration that is granted by the University.
34. Extensions to the submission-pending period may be sought only in exceptional circumstances.

M. Content and Length of Thesis

35. Candidates shall submit an electronic copy of the thesis for examination.

The submitted thesis must only embody the results of research, data analysis and enterprise activity undertaken whilst registered on the degree and must contain material of a standard appropriate for peer-reviewed publication, demonstrating an original contribution and substantial addition to knowledge. The thesis may embody reprints of published material if free from restrictions on publication.

36. 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:

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

If published, may be mentioned for purposes of reference in the same way as publications by other workers.

37. In either case the fact of the previous submission of such matter must be made clear at all relevant points in the thesis.
38. Work to be embodied in the thesis should be reported concisely. The normal maximum length is 80,000 words of main text (including footnotes and endnotes) but PGRs should refer to any programme specific requirements.
39. All theses must be written in English; quotations, however, may be given in the language in which they were written. In exceptional circumstances a candidate may be granted permission to submit a thesis written in a language other than English where the nature of the research makes this appropriate.
40. PhD by Enterprise theses should be submitted in accordance with the information set out in the University's Presentation of Theses Policy.

N. Thesis Submission

41. Notice to submit a PhD by Enterprise thesis shall be made on the prescribed form not less than six weeks and not more than six months before submission.
42. A PhD by Enterprise thesis submission (examination version) shall consist of one

electronic copy in Portable Document Format (PDF) with a plain-text metadata record. The University shall have the right to retain the electronic copy. Full details of thesis presentation requirements can be found in the Presentation of Theses Policy.

43. If a thesis is not submitted before the end of the PhD by Enterprise degree, the PGR's candidacy automatically lapses and the PGR cannot submit, unless further approval is granted by the University.
44. If a PGR wishes to submit a thesis earlier than 3 months before the end of their PhD by Enterprise degree (pro-rata for part time) they will require the permission of the supervisory team and the local Faculty Doctoral Academy. Permission will only be granted up to one year before the end of the PhD by Enterprise degree for full time PGRs, and up to 2 years before the end of the PhD by Enterprise degree for part time PGRs. PGRs who are granted permission to submit early, will still be required to pay full fees for the degree period for which they originally registered.

O. Examination

45. 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.
46. A PhD by Enterprise oral examination is open to members of University staff, including the candidate's supervisor, and other PGRs of the University. The candidate, however, has the right to exclude 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 the oral examination.
47. The examination panel shall consist of two external examiners—one academic and one entrepreneur—along with an internal examiner. These appointments are to be made in accordance with the guidelines set out in the University's Nomination of Examiners and Independent Chairs for PGR Degree Examinations Procedure.
48. The examiners, after evaluating the thesis and the outcome of any oral or written examination, may make one of the following recommendations:
 - i. That the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD by Enterprise with no corrections to the thesis required.
 - ii. That the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD by Enterprise 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 PhD by Enterprise. 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, having not met the requirements for a doctoral level award, be awarded the degree of MPhil.
 - v. That the candidate, having not met the requirements for a doctoral level award, be

- awarded the degree of MPhil subject to minor corrections being made to the thesis.
- vi. That the candidate, having not met the requirements for a doctoral level award, 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.

Document Control Box	
Policy / Procedure title:	Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Enterprise
Lead contact email	Alex.Hinchliffe@manchester.ac.uk
Date updated:	April 2026
Approving body:	MDCSG
Version:	1
Supersedes:	N/A
Previous review dates:	N/A
Next review date:	April 2031
Equality impact outcome:	
Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations:	Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students
Related policies/procedures/guidance etc.	https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/rdrd/code/
Policy owner:	Alex Hinchliffe, Research Degrees and Researcher Development Officer
Lead contact:	Alex Hinchliffe