

Professional Doctorate in Biomedical Science

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

Professional Doctorate in Biomedical Science (DBMS)

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2248P

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

N/A

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

N/A

7. Document Control Information

July 2018

8. Effective Session

2018-19

9. Author

Dr Suzannah Helps

10. Faculty

Science

11. Department

School of Health Sciences & Social Work

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

The Professional Doctorate Programme in Health and Social Care aims to:

- enable health and social care practitioners involved in all aspects of health and social care science, an opportunity to explore their professional roles and implement research investigations in order to improve their contribution in a clinical, educational, managerial or service delivery setting;

- provide a research and professional development learning opportunity so that graduates can make practical decisions relevant to their profession and generate new knowledge through professional practice;
- provide an award of the highest academic level that is distinct from the PhD, and that is clearly relevant to the needs of the individual's professional working situation;
- enable graduates to enhance their practice through systematic enquiry and development and demonstrate the relevance of their learning to their own professional context;
- provide graduates with the cognitive, practical, professional and transferable skills to enable them to assume leadership roles within their professional field;
- enable graduates to disseminate their research and professional findings to a variety of audiences and via a range of media;
- enhance partnership between doctoral candidates, their employers and the University and in so doing, develop consultancy work and joint research.

13. Reference Points

- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Regulations for Professional Doctorates
- The scholarship, professional experience and research expertise of academic members of staff
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) (Descriptor for qualifications at Doctoral level 8: Doctoral degree)
- National Qualifications Framework

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 8

Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication
- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments

15. Learning Outcomes

The doctoral programme is divided into two parts. Essentially, Part 1 is the 'taught' component and Part 2 the 'research' component. All the programmes have common learning outcomes; the named exit award is determined by the nature of the subject area of the professional research and development project.

On completion of Part 1 of Stage 2* of the programme of study students will be able to:

- identify learning needs, be autonomous in the management of their own learning and demonstrate a reflective and self-critical approach to the application of their learning to their professional practice;
- integrate theory of qualitative or quantitative research methodologies with professional expertise to propose strategies to solve problems relevant to health or social care;
- evaluate the various sources of information available including qualitative and quantitative research, conduct effective searches and critically appraise the value of the material collected and use it to effectively and logically challenge current thinking and approaches;
- present an article for publication in a scientific or professional journal including web based article;
- critically discuss the methodological, ethical and financial limitations of their proposed plan of investigation and be aware of the implications of such constraints;
- plan a research/professional development protocol and prepare an application for approval and demonstrate the likely relevance of the work to producing new knowledge and improving practice in health or social care.

On completion of Part 2 of Stage 2* of the programme students will be able to:

- be autonomous in the planning and management of their own learning;
- demonstrate a reflective and thoughtful approach to their research and professional development;
- interact and network within a multidisciplinary team so as to conduct research and professional development;
- understand and manage dilemmas and value conflicts in a way which takes forward wider professional practice;
- attain critical and creative mastery of the latest available knowledge in a healthcare science in a complex and often multidisciplinary context;
- research, analyse and evaluate information so as to transfer new theoretical, research and professional understanding into areas of practice and beyond;
- be aware of the changing professional context and manage the processes of change to enable the solving of problematic situations as they arise;
- using appropriate and well reasoned methodology, make a significant, original contribution to professional practice;
- independently, critically challenge current assumptions relevant to their profession;
- provide authoritative solutions when presented with practical, managerial, business, ethical and research problems within a professional context;
- disseminate their theoretical, research and professional understanding and recommendations to critical communities using a variety of formats;
- demonstrate the relevance and innovative approaches of their research and professional development to the practice of a health and social care.

** Stage 1 refers to the level 7 learning (usually the entry point qualification) and Stage 2 the level 8 programme being considered here.*

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

A.1 current professional developments within their area of practice;

- A.2 models of evidence based practice, evaluation and audit used to inform and innovate practice within their professional area;
- A.3 the theory and practice of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and techniques appropriate to health and social care;
- A.4 the ethical and governance frameworks applicable to research within their chosen area of study;
- A.5 critical reflection for own learning and professional practise;
- A.6 styles of scientific writing and publication processes within the health and social care fields and specifically within their own professional domain.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B.1 integrate knowledge of science and or social theory to analyse problems or opportunities related to practice and justify strategies to inform practice;
- B.2 formulate questions, critically appraise, synthesise and evaluate evidence so as to transfer theoretical, research and professional understanding into areas of practice;
- B.3 critically discuss the methodological, ethical and financial limitations of their proposed plan of investigation and be aware of the implications of such constraints;
- B.4 critically appraise the value of theoretical perspectives and research evidence collected and use it to effectively and logically challenge current concepts, thinking and approaches.

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C.1 outline changing professional context and manage the processes of change to enable solving of problematic situations as they arise;
- C.2 use appropriate and well-reasoned methodology, and make a significant and original contribution to professional practice;
- C.3 independently, critically challenge current assumptions relevant to the profession
- C.4 provide authoritative solutions when presented with practical, managerial, business, ethical and research problems within a professional context;
- C.5 evaluate the various sources of information such as relevant library databases and conduct rigorous library/information-based searches;
- C.6 select appropriate qualitative and quantitative methodologies and techniques to conduct research and professional development within their profession;
- C.7 demonstrate the relevance and innovative approaches of their research and professional development to their area of practice;
- C.8 manage dilemmas and value conflicts in a way which takes forward professional practice
- C.9 attain critical and creative mastery of the latest available knowledge within their area of professional practice;
- C.10 take responsibility as a leading practitioner, innovator and manager of others in a community of practice and beyond;
- C.11 plan a research/professional development protocol and prepare an application for approval and demonstrate the likely relevance of the work to the area of practice.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D.1 disseminate theoretical, research and professional understanding and recommendations to critical communities using a variety of formats;
- D.2 manage and make professional use of resources (e.g. human, financial and physical) where appropriate;
- D.3 manage information and research data;

- D.4 manage change effectively, prioritise time and workloads and respond to changing professional demands;
- D.5 command the attention and respect of others in providing professional and intellectual leadership, inspiration and motivation;
- D.6 present articles for publication in a scientific or professional journal or other media;
- D.7 interact and network within a multidisciplinary team to conduct research and develop professionally;
- D.8 identify learning needs and be autonomous in the planning and management of their own learning;
- D.9 demonstrate a reflective and thoughtful approach to their research and professional development;
- D.10 demonstrate a reflective and self-critical approach to the application of their learning to their professional practice.

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Lectures (A2-6); tutor-led small group work (A2-6); student-led and tutor-led seminars (A1); personal critical reflection (A1, A5), problem based learning (A1, A3, A4); advanced library study (A1-A6); problem solving using tutor generated problems and data (A3).

Tutor-led tutorials and small group work (B1-2); critical reflection (B1), student-led and tutor-led seminars (B2); problem-based learning associated with own research (B3, B4); self-directed learning activities associated with own research study such as critical evaluation and synthesis of published and experimental research data (B3, B4).

Student or tutor-led seminars and small group work (C3, C4, C9) practical exercises (C5, C9), problem based learning (C6, C9), self-directed learning facilitated by research supervisors (C1, C3, C4, C6, C7, C8, C11); independent learning associated with protocol for and the professional research and development (C2, C3, C6, C7, C8, C9, C10, C11).

Student or tutor-led seminars and small group work (D1, D8) practical exercises (D3); self-directed learning facilitated by research supervisors (D4, D7, D8); independent learning associated with protocol for and the professional research and development (D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, D10).

17. Assessment Strategy

Coursework as critical reports and portfolios (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6), oral presentation (A1, A3, A5); review article or primary research publication (A6), development of a reflective practice portfolio together with a final thesis and commentary (A1-A6), report of analysis of data (A3).

Reports of critical appraisal of primary or secondary research (B2); individual research case studies pertinent to own area of professional practice; oral presentations (B1, B3, B4); report of analysis of data, portfolio of evidence, together with a final thesis and commentary (B1, B3, B4).

Research protocol (C11), detailed report of professional research and development in a thesis format (C1-C10), any publications in refereed journal (C7, C9) formal oral presentation of portfolio and thesis, ability to defend their work in a viva voce situation (C1-11).

Portfolio of critical reflection (D8, D9, D10).

Detailed report of professional research and development in a thesis format (D1-D9). Any publications in refereed journal (D1, D5) formal oral presentation of portfolio and thesis, ability to defend their work in a viva voce situation (D1-D10).

Coursework assignments; presentations of various formats, reports and development of a portfolio of evidence; formal oral presentation of portfolio and thesis and defence of this work in a viva voce situation.

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)¹ for full details on the course structure and units

The professional doctorate comprises 540 credits. Stage 1 requires 60 level 7 credits in a relevant subject area. Direct entry to Stage 2 is the normal route into the programme. Stage 2 comprises Part 1 (the taught component) made up of 120 level 8 credits and Part 2 (the research component made up of 360 level 8 credits). Students without entry requirements of 60 level 7 credits can obtain these during Stage 2, Part 1 (the taught component). Students who have completed Stage 2, Part 1 may exit with the following exit awards of PGCert (60 credits), PGDip (120 credits) or MSc (180 credits) available to students who exit the programme during or at the end of taught phase. The default title of these awards will be that of 'Professional Research Methods'.

19. Employability Statement

The programme learning outcomes are achieved through activities that are based in, or are derived from, students' professional context and practice. All unit assessments are located in the specific work-based context of the student. The Professional Development and Review unit requires students to reflect explicitly on their current professional role and their future personal and professional development. Formal and informal links with employers and alumni are maintained through workshops, events and networking opportunities.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Programme Manager, Deputy Programme Manager and Pathway Course Leaders.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor (usually the Pathway Course leader), responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- Students will be assigned through agreement a First Supervisor and an additional supervisor for the duration of Part 2 of the course.
- Additional electronic resources such as e-mail and a virtual learning site facilitating online course notes and presentations, discussion rooms to aid small group work, and presentations.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing and counselling.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK) and Maths café.
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments from two independent assessors.
- Centre for Simulation in Healthcare

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

All applicants are interviewed prior to entry on the programme.

For entry onto Stage 2 (level 8) of the programme:

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

Admission will require the applicant to demonstrate:

- Engagement with an appropriate professional environment that will enable students to achieve the programme learning outcomes AND
- A postgraduate Master's level degree in a suitable health or social care discipline OR
- An MPhil Degree OR
- A good honours degree (plus 60 credits at Master's level) both in a suitable health or social care discipline OR
- A good honours degree in a suitable health or social care discipline (plus successful completion of 60 credits at Master's level from one of our established flexible-learning Masters programmes) and before progression to Stage 2, Part 2.

An outline of the research and development activity planned for Part 2 of the course that provides an indication of:

- the focus for research
- potential research strategies
- the course participant's professional role
- potential service development or leadership activities

The unit coordinator of the Professional Research and Development unit and, if appropriate, with the pathway course leader will assess the suitability of the outlined activities for the course and the ability of the relevant University department and named work-based and professional advisors/mentors to support the research and development activities.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student-Staff Consultative Committees.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).

- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student-Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g. Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staffs undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.
- New academic staff required to undertake appropriate University of Portsmouth learning and teaching programmes.
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Academic staff new to teaching required to undertake Initial Professional Development Programme (iPROF).
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations²](#)).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

None

² www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

Fitness of Purpose of Curriculum Confirmed and Annual Monitoring and Review Processes Effective (2015).

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)*³).

D. Others

None.

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](#)⁴ and [School](#)⁵ websites

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

⁴ www.port.ac.uk/

⁵ www.port.ac.uk/school-of-health-sciences-and-social-work/