

# Professional Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA)

## Programme Specification

### **Primary Purpose:**

Course management, monitoring 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 and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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# **Programme Specification**

## **1. Named Awards**

DBA Professional Doctorate in Business Administration

## **2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)**

C2231 P

## **3. Awarding Body**

University of Portsmouth

## **4. Teaching Institution**

University of Portsmouth

## **5. Accrediting Body**

NA

## **6. QAA Benchmark Groups**

NA.

## **7. Document Control Information**

Version 3, June 2016.

## **8. Effective Session**

2016/17

## **9. Author**

Valerie Anderson

## **10. Faculty**

Portsmouth Business School

## **11. Subject Group**

Organisation Studies and Human Resource Management

## **12. Educational Aims**

The DBA Programme aims to:

- provide a vehicle for a high level of personal, professional and academic development for participants to achieve maximum levels of effectiveness as a professional practitioner or executive and contribute to the development of professional practice.
- enable practitioners involved in all aspects of business, an opportunity to explore their professional roles and implement research investigations in order to improve their contribution in a managerial, service, or educational, 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 equivalent to, but 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,
- provide a model scheme for DBA upon which the University can build and in so doing extend its reputation for providing work-based opportunities to the highest level.

### 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 Quality Code for Higher Education
- QAA framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

### 14. Learning Outcomes

#### A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

**A1.** current professional developments within their area of practice

**A2.** theoretical basis of academic and management research including a thorough understanding of “good practice” in research and its link with research ethics issues

**A3.** a range of advanced research techniques appropriate to business and management disciplines (including the research approach-specific research ethics issues that may arise with them)

**A4.** use of critical reflection in their own learning and professional practice

**A5.** academic writing skills and publication processes within the business and management field and specially within their own professional domain

#### Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

A 1 to A 5 are delivered through workshops; tutor-led tutorials; student-led and tutor-led seminars; personal critical reflection, problem based learning scenarios; advanced library study; oral presentations; independent research investigations; research presentations and publications in professional or peer reviewed journals. Students will also have access to a Moodle site which contains relevant links and resources and which will enable discussions to continue between formal workshops. Students will also be required to undertake independent study to supplement the formal teaching sessions, with appropriate guidance from a tutor or thesis supervisor.

## Assessment

A1-A5 are assessed in Part 1 through a range of coursework assignments including a portfolio. Assignments will require students to review the philosophies and theories underpinning research and knowledge and develop and justify their methodological position as a researcher practitioner; the selection and use of qualitative and quantitative research instruments which will require students to justify, evaluate and critique the choice of research method and the use of the instrument in the investigation and critically analyse the relevant practical, theoretical and ethical issues; the preparation of a research proposal. In Part 2 students are assessed on A1-A5 through the final thesis and the viva voce examination. A presentation of the research is also made.

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

**B1.** apply high level skills needed for advanced academic study such as in the testing of research hypotheses and evidence-based enquiry.

**B2.** research, analyse, synthesize and evaluate information and evidence so as to transfer new theoretical, research and professional understanding into areas of practice and beyond

**B3.** critically discuss the methodological, ethical and financial limitations of their proposed plan of investigation and be aware of the implications of such constraints

**B4.** critically appraise the value of the information collected and use it to effectively and logically challenge current concepts, thinking and approaches

## Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

B1 – B4 are developed through discussions, seminars and one to one interaction with tutors and the thesis supervisor. The preparation of work for assessment provides opportunities for students to develop these skills within the context of professional practice.

## Assessment

B1 – B4 are assessed in Part 1 through coursework assignments including the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data; the justification, evaluation and critique of the choice of research method and the relevant practical, theoretical and ethical issues; a report or journal article ready for submission to a named peer reviewed journal or professional publication; a portfolio which requires students to critically reflect upon their own skills, identify gaps, and develop a personal and professional development plan for the doctoral programme. In Part 2 students are assessed on B1-B4 through the final thesis and the viva voce examination.

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

**C1.** be aware of the changing professional context and manage the processes of change to enable solving of problematic situations as they arise

**C2.** use appropriate and well-reasoned methodology, and make a significant and original contribution to professional practice

**C3.** independently, critically challenge current assumptions relevant to the profession

**C4.** provide authoritative solutions when presented with practical, managerial, business, ethical and research problems within a professional context

**C5.** evaluate the various sources of information available and conduct effective library/information-based searches

**C6.** be able to select appropriate qualitative and quantitative methodological techniques and approaches to conduct research and professional development within their profession

**C7.** demonstrate the relevance and innovative approaches of their research and professional development to their area of theory and practice

**C8.** manage dilemmas and value conflicts in a way which takes forward wider professional practice

**C9.** attain critical and creative mastery of the latest available knowledge within their area of professional practice and theory.

**C10.** 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 and theory.

### Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

The underlying concepts relating to C1 – 11 are delivered through workshops and seminars when students will have the opportunity to acquire hands on experience with quantitative and qualitative data analysis packages. These concepts are developed through the preparation of a project proposal and the research project within input from a supervisor and the support of the student cohort.

### Assessment

C1 – C11 are assessed through coursework, including a research proposal; qualitative and quantitative data analysis which will require students to justify, evaluate different research methods and the discussion of relevant practical, theoretical and ethical issues; a portfolio which requires students to critically reflect upon their own skills, identify gaps, and develop a personal and professional development plan for the doctoral programme. In Part 2 students are assessed on C1-C9 through the final thesis and the viva voce examination. A presentation of the research is also made.

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

**D1.** disseminate theoretical, research and professional understanding and recommendations to critical communities using a variety of formats

**D2.** manage and make professional use of resources (e.g. human, financial and physical) where appropriate

**D3.** manage information and research data

**D4.** manage change effectively, prioritise time and workloads and respond to changing professional demands

**D5.** command the attention and respect of others in providing professional and intellectual leadership, inspiration and motivation

**D6.** present articles for publication in an academic or professional journal or other media

**D7.** interact and network within a multidisciplinary team to conduct research and develop professionally

**D8.** identify learning needs and be autonomous in the planning and management of their own learning

**D9.** demonstrate a reflective and thoughtful approach to their research and professional development

**D10.** demonstrate a reflective and self critical approach to the application of their learning to their professional practice

### Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

The concepts underpinning D1 –D 10 are delivered through interactive workshops led by the course team. D 2, 4, 8, 9 and 10 will be developed through the professional development unit and its seminar activities in particular, D 1, D 6 and D 7 will be developed through the publication and dissemination unit where tutorial and peer support in developing an article for publication and a presentation will be provided and D 3 will be particularly developed by the Advanced Research Methods unit.

### Assessment

D1 – D 11 are assessed through coursework, including the preparation of a report or journal article ready for submission to a named peer reviewed journal or professional publication; a contribution to an appropriate conference (e.g. DBA conference ) a portfolio which provides a critical reflection on the student's learning and development. In Part 2 students are assessed on D1-D7 through the final thesis, a viva voce examination and a presentation given to an invited audience prior to the viva voce.

## **15. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements**

The professional doctorate comprises 540 credits. Stage One requires 180 M level credits in a relevant subject area. Direct entry to Stage Two is the normal route into the programme. Stage Two comprises Part 1 (the taught component made up of 120 D level credits) and Part 2 (the research component made up of 240 credits). Students who have completed Stage 2, Part 1 may exit with a PgDip Advanced Professional Research. Standard University rules apply. The regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.

## **16. Employability Statement**

The programme learning outcomes are achieved through activities that are based in, or are derived from, students' professional context and practice. . 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.

## **17. Support for Student Learning**

- The Course is managed by a DBA Director.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- 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 etc.
- Appropriate individual or group feedback is provided for all assessments.

## 18. Admissions Criteria

### A. Academic Admissions Criteria

The DBA is a recognised qualification aimed at Masters level postgraduates who wish to take their management and professional development into new levels and add to the professional and managerial body of knowledge. Admission criteria are as follows:

- A Masters degree in a related suitable field.
- A minimum of three years' experience of business and management experience
- Evidence of recent CPD in a relevant area of business and management / management science.
- An outline research idea suitable for development to a research proposal suitable for Part 2 of the course.

Applicants must be in relevant employment which enables them to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

### 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.

## 19. 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.
- DBA Director for day-to-day running of course.
- University Contact for day-to-day running of course.

#### Partner Institution Academic Contact (For Partnership Programmes)

- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- 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, eg National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

### **D. Staff Development Priorities**

Academic staff 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

## **20. Assessment Strategy**

The assessment strategy in Part 1 assesses unit learning outcomes through a developmental series of assignments. The units assess the capacity for professional development and review and knowledge and skills relating to the use of advanced research techniques, the students' capacity to disseminate research findings in a range of formats and to a range of audiences and their capacity to design of a research proposal which will lead to Part 2 where students undertake research which makes an original contribution to knowledge and to professional practice. Part 2 is assessed by a presentation and viva voce examination of the thesis.

## **21. Assessment Regulations**

Standard university rules apply (see [Assessment and Regulations](#)).

## **22. Role of Externals**

For Part 1 Subject External Examiners will:

- oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards;
- approve unit assessment strategy;
- sample assessment artefacts;
- present their report to Unit Assessment Boards.

For Part 2 External Examiners will:

- assess the Stage 2, Part 2 (Professional Research and Development Unit) thesis;
- assess the Stage 2, Part 2 (Professional Research and Development Unit) presentation;
- conduct a *viva voce* examination;
- make a report on the above Unit assessment activities for presentation at the Unit Assessment Board.

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) 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.

The DBA programme will be reviewed by external assessors at periods (usually every five years) as proscribed in the University post-graduate course quality and research degree regulations.

### **23. Indicators of Standards and Quality**

#### **A. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)**

Fitness of Purpose of Curriculum Confirmed at validation in 2006 and Annual Monitoring and Review Processes Effective

#### **B. Quality Assurance Agency**

QAA Institutional Audit, December 2008, 'broad confidence' (for full report see [QAA Institutional Audit: University of Portsmouth 2008](#)).

#### **C. Others**

None.

### **24. Other Sources of Information**

Other sources of information may be found in

- Course Approval Document.
- Student Handbook.
- University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework.
- Assessment Regulations.

University of Portsmouth (<http://www.port.ac.uk/>) and PBS dedicated DBA webpages <http://www.port.ac.uk/courses/business-and-management/prof-doc-business-administration-dba/>