UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Guidance Note on Professional Doctorates and the QA Code of Practice Statements

This guidance document is primarily intended for:
- Associate Deans (Research)
- Faculty/School Director of Doctoral Studies
- Directors of Studies
- Supervisors
- Doctoral Students
- Assistant Registrars (Faculty/School)
- Admissions Tutors
- Doctoral College staff

Queries:
First point of contact –
- Assistant Registrars (Faculty/School)

Technical/specialist contact
- Doctoral College

Framework
The University's Quality Assurance Code of Practice is the key reference point for information on the quality management framework and good practice in learning and teaching: Code of Practice statements. Broadly speaking, the research elements of professional doctorates are covered by the Code of Practice section 7 (QA7) alongside the more traditional research degrees such as MPhil and PhD. For taught elements of professional doctorates the relevant section of the QA Code of Practice will in general apply and the sections which are of specific relevance to professional doctorate programmes are set out in Appendix 1 (overleaf).

Programme development and approval
New professional doctorate programmes are developed within (or sometimes across) Departments and subject to stage one initial approval and stage two full approval as described in QA3. The responsible bodies are Board of Studies followed by Academic Programmes Committee for initial approval and Faculty/School/ Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee followed by Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee and Senate for full approval. If the proposals involve a new or current partner institution this aspect will need to be approved at the same time, as explained in QA7. For some programmes there may also be professional body accreditation to consider QA8. As a rough indication of the timescale, the initial approval process could take place in semester one and full approval in semester two for a start date of the following September, although in terms of marketing and advertising a longer timeline would be rather more advantageous.

Minor and intermediate changes to the taught elements of professional doctorate programmes are subject to approval by Faculty/School Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees and major changes need the approval of Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee (QA4) on the recommendation of Faculty/School Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees. Changes to the research element are subject to the approval of Senate, normally on the advice of the University Doctoral Studies Committee.

Monitoring and review
The progress of individual postgraduate research students should be reviewed regularly and whilst QA7 gives an indication of the expectations, arrangements for professional doctorates should be set out in programme-specific regulations and handbooks.

Annual monitoring of the taught units which form part of professional doctorate programmes will take place in the standard way (QA51). Programme level annual monitoring will follow the process for all research degrees set down in QA7.

Professional doctorate programmes are subject to five-yearly Degree Scheme Review (QA13).

Further information and advice
The Sections of the Code of Practice which are relevant to the student journey are set out in more detail in Appendix 1. For further advice contact the Doctoral College.

TOPIC	QA STATEMENT(S)/ REGULATIONS	NOTES
Programme approval	QA3	
Changes to programmes: taught elements	QA4	
Research element	QA7	
Collaborative provision	QA20	
Recruitment and admissions AP(E)L	QA22, QA7 Regulation16 QA45	Sets out admissions requirements for all higher degrees of the University:
Induction	QA38/QA7	
Approval of candidature	Programme-specific regulations and QA7	
Supervision/ personal tutoring	QA7/QA33, Programme Regulations	Consideration needs to be given to support mechanisms during both taught and research elements.
The student voice	QA7 QA48: SSLCs	Professional doctorate students should be encouraged to participate in Staff/Student Liaison Committees, and relevant student surveys including the Postgraduate Research Students Survey (PRES).
Annual (student) review	Programme specific regulations, QA7	
Annual monitoring • of units • of programmes	 QA51 QA7	
Periodic Degree Scheme Review	QA13 QA7	Five-yearly Degree Scheme Review is mandatory for professional doctorates
External examiners : • research elements • taught units	 QA7 QA12	thesis or equivalent and viva
Thesis and viva	QA7 Appendix 6 QA7	

The above list is not exhaustive and other sections of the Code of Practice may apply in context, notably:

QA6: Work-based learning	QA8: Professional Accreditation
QA9: Professional Development and Recognition for All Staff and Students who Teach and Support Learning	QA28: Conduct of Examinations
QA31:Recruitment and Support of International Students	QA41: Distance Learning
QA53:Assessment offences	

Other relevant documents to be aware of include:

- Individual Mitigating Circumstances and Assessment (IMCA) document:
  http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/imc/documents/imca.pdf
- Student Complaints Procedure: https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/student-complaints-procedure/
- Appeals: Regulation 17: http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/appeals/
- Fitness to Practice Policy: http://www.bath.ac.uk/university-secretary/guidance-policies/fitnesstopractise.pdf