Research Postgraduate Glossary

PhD
Also known as Doctor of Philosophy, can normally be started immediately after an undergraduate degree awarded with honours or after a Masters degree. A PhD involves detailed research into a chosen topic under the supervision of an experienced academic and is purposely set to be highly intellectually challenging. PhD studies may contain little or no taught elements or formal professional training although this can vary between disciplines. Degree length is typically between three and four years when studied full-time, however this can be up to five years in Dentistry and Medicine. The degree normally requires the submission of a thesis of around 100,000 words depending on the discipline and an oral examination (normally referred to as a viva or viva voce). This definition of PhD is common across the University of Dundee and across the UK. A PhD can also be gained by publication (a compilation of published work replacing the thesis).

New Route/Integrated PhD
A four year full-time course which includes taught elements and practical experience alongside an advanced research project in line with that offered as part of a traditional PhD. This definition is common across the University of Dundee and across the UK.

Professional Doctorate
Equivalent in academic rigour to a PhD but with a focus on professional and/or vocational contexts. The Professional Doctorate is a mechanism by which practitioners carry out research relating to their work experience. Typically, Professional Doctorates are studied part-time and normally contain a significant taught element running throughout the course. The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is an example of a Professional Doctorate, others exist. This definition is common across the University of Dundee and across the UK.

MPhil
Also known as Master of Philosophy, can normally be started immediately after an undergraduate degree awarded with honours or after a Masters degree. MPhil is a research degree typically representing a minimum of two year's work. The degree requires the submission of a thesis that is normally shorter (~35,000 words) and/or less intellectually rigorous than a PhD thesis. An oral examination is normally required. MPhil is a stand-alone degree, but is normally awarded as an exit route to a PhD student who has completed but whose work has not met the required standard for PhD. This definition is common across the University of Dundee and across the UK.

MRes
A Masters level degree where the balance is towards independent project work. MRes is typically one to two years in duration when studied full-time and may comprise several projects or a longer, more focussed study. The degree requires the submission of a thesis of a standard and length that represents the duration of study and may also utilise an oral examination. Some degrees will include a significant taught element whereas others will be solely focussed on the development of a short research project. Life Sciences have a Masters of Research, which they differentiate from this particular MRes.

MAcc
The Master of Accountancy is a twelve month research only programme where students are engaged in research which is assessed by means of a dissertation which is sent to an external examiner who has the option (or not) to conduct a viva.

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