Programme Specification for

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

(Various Topics & Specialism)

Online Hybrid Delivery, Part/Full Time

Contents

Programme Title

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in:

- Strategic Business Management
- Human Resource Management
- Digital Transformation
- Business Ethics and Governance
- Corporate Finance
- Healthcare Management
- International Business Law and Dispute Resolution
- Logistics and Supply Chain
- Diplomacy and International Relations
- Islamic Finance and Banking
- Cyber Security Management
- Computer Systems Management
- Artificial Intelligence and Business Application
- Educational Technology and Innovation
- Educational Management and Leadership
- Pedagogy, Curriculum and Instructional Leadership

Awarding Institution

Global Humanistic University (GHU)
State accreditation in the British Overseas Territory, and qualification notarized by the United Kingdom, Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO).

Duration

Minimum 24 months – Maximum 48 months.
Extension allowed with approval from Director of Learning[1].

Mode of Study

Part Time & Full Time, Hybrid Online Learning, more information:
https://premierlearning.org/hybrid-online-learning

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[1] Maximum of 6 years from initial enrolment. May incur additional fees. T&C's apply.

Programme Overview and features

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) is a globally recognised doctoral qualification representing the highest level of academic achievement. It is designed for scholars, researchers and professionals who seek to make an original and significant contribution to knowledge within their chosen field.

The programme develops the ability to undertake independent, critical and methodologically robust research that advances theoretical understanding and informs real-world practice. Candidates explore complex problems, challenge existing assumptions and contribute new perspectives to their disciplines through sustained inquiry and scholarly reflection.

The Ph.D. emphasises intellectual independence, critical analysis and originality of thought. Candidates engage in advanced study within their area of specialisation—whether in business, education, technology, law, healthcare or the social sciences—while demonstrating a command of research methods and ethical practice.

Through the production of a substantial doctoral thesis, candidates synthesise evidence, theory and practice to generate insights of scholarly and practical relevance. The process fosters analytical precision, creativity and resilience, preparing graduates to influence policy, lead innovation and contribute to academic and professional discourse at the highest level.

Graduates emerge as thought leaders equipped with advanced research expertise, strategic insight and the capacity to address complex challenges within global, organisational and societal contexts. The Ph.D. stands as both a hallmark of scholarly excellence and a gateway to impactful academic, professional and leadership opportunities worldwide.
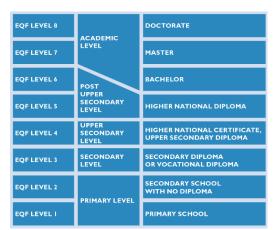
Entry Requirements

Applicants for the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programme typically hold a master's degree in a related field. However, we also welcome experienced professionals who may not hold a master's degree but have a good standing bachelor's degree and can demonstrate significant professional or industry experience in a related role.

- **Academic Requirements:** Applicants should have a bachelor's degree and/or a master's-level professional qualification, or equivalent experience / certifications.

- **Professional Setting:** You should be working in, or have access to a professional setting in an area related to your research topic, in order to conduct research.

- **Interview/Portfolio:** You will be required to attend an interview and/or submit a portfolio of work/CV for consideration.

- **References:** Satisfactory references will be required before enrolment on the course. One reference must be from your current/last employer (or school/university for continuing students), confirming your suitability to study on a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programme.

For applicants whose first language is not English, an English language qualification or proficiency test is required. Please refer to our apply webpage for further details.

Programme Level and Credit Value

Figure 1 EQF Qualification Level Chart

Programme Level

As a European-registered education service provider, Premier Learning Institute follows the European Qualification Framework (EQF) for the determination of qualification levels. Refer to Figure 1 for a qualification level chart. Refer to the Programme Structure table below for more information about the EQF Level for this programme.

Credit System

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the United States credit system, and the United Kingdom credit system are widely used frameworks for measuring and comparing academic credits in higher education institutions, and qualifications based on any of these frameworks can be converted and considered globally. As a European-registered education service provider, Premier Learning Institute follows the ECTS. Refer to the Programme Structure table below for more information about the credit value of this programme. Note that doctoral-level programmes are typically not credit-rated, hence any ratings provided are for reference only.

Programme Structure

This programme is a **Level 8** doctoral-level qualification within the UK Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), representing the highest level of academic achievement. The programme carries a total of 360 UK credits (CATS), equivalent to 180 European credits (ECTS), reflecting the depth of independent research, critical enquiry, and original contribution to knowledge required at doctoral level.

Phase 1 | 60 ECTS

During the first phase, candidates focus on developing the foundational components of their doctoral research. They will undertake modules, including:

- Module 1: Research proposal
- Module 2: Academic writing/method skills
- Module 3: Review of professional capability (reflection)
- Module 4: Planning an advanced practitioner research program (exposè)

This stage equips candidates with the methodological, analytical and reflective skills required to design a robust doctoral project. Phase 1 is flexible and allows candidates to complete modules in any order, supported by guided reading, interactive seminars and regular supervisory meetings.

Phase 2 | 120 ECTS

This phase constitutes the execution and dissemination of the doctoral research. Candidates will complete the three parts of this phase sequentially:

- Module 5: Project report / thesis
- Module 6: Research paper
- Module 7: Oral presentation and viva voce (defense)

Throughout this phase, candidates receive ongoing supervisory support, formative feedback and opportunities to present work in progress through online research colloquia and peer review sessions. The learning approach combines asynchronous study materials, live tutorials and one-to-one supervision meetings, typically held on a fortnightly or monthly basis depending on progress. Candidates are encouraged to maintain reflective journals, contribute to online research communities, and engage in scholarly dissemination activities.

Module 1: Research Proposal

ECTS: 5
Word Count: 3,500 words
Phase: 1
Assessment: Pass/Fail

Module Overview

The Research Proposal marks the first formal milestone in the doctoral process. It establishes the foundation of the candidate's research by defining the topic, aims, theoretical context, and methodology. This module ensures that candidates demonstrate academic readiness and a clear direction for their doctoral inquiry.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, candidates will be able to:

1. Formulate a clear and coherent research title and abstract.

2. Identify and justify a research problem situated within a theoretical or professional context.

3. Articulate precise research objectives and questions.

4. Design a basic methodological framework suitable for addressing the research aims.

5. Evaluate the relevance and significance of the proposed research in relation to existing knowledge and practice.

Indicative Content

- Structure and purpose of a doctoral-level research proposal.

- Contextualising the research problem and identifying gaps in knowledge.

- Reviewing relevant literature and theoretical underpinnings.

- Designing appropriate research methods and outlining data collection strategies.

- Ethical considerations and alignment with professional standards.

- Planning the scope, limitations, and expected outcomes of the study.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

- **Independent Study:** Literature search, reading, and synthesis.

- **Tutorials & Supervision:** Individual guidance and formative feedback.

- **Workshops/Seminars:** Proposal development and methodology refinement.

- **Peer Discussion:** Sharing and critiquing preliminary ideas.

Assessment

- **Submission:** 3,500-word Research Proposal.

- **Assessment Method:** Pass/Fail, based on advisor and academic review.

- **Criteria:** Clarity of research focus, methodological appropriateness, coherence of argument, academic writing quality, and ethical awareness.

Module Aim

To enable candidates to conceptualise and articulate a structured, justified, and feasible research plan that forms the intellectual and methodological foundation for their doctoral thesis.

Module 2: Academic Writing / Method Skills

ECTS: 15
Word Count: 15,000 words
Phase: 1
Assessment: Pass/Fail

Module Overview

This module develops the essential academic and methodological competencies required for doctoral-level research. Candidates will strengthen their ability to write scholarly texts, apply research methods appropriately, and engage critically with scientific sources. The module also ensures familiarity with academic standards of integrity, referencing, and research ethics.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, candidates will be able to:

1. Apply advanced academic writing conventions and referencing systems (APA or discipline-specific).

2. Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate literature and synthesise ideas in an academic format.

3. Design a research approach aligned with established scientific methodologies.

4. Apply principles of research ethics, data integrity, and transparency.

5. Produce an academic paper that demonstrates methodological competence and scholarly rigour.

Indicative Content

- Academic writing conventions: coherence, argumentation, structure (IMRaD), and style.

- Research paradigms and methodological choices: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods designs.

- Data collection, analysis, and interpretation techniques.

- Research ethics, citation management (Citavi), and academic integrity.

- Structuring academic documents, abstracts, and literature reviews.

- Applying the GHU research format and referencing guidelines.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

- **Independent Study:** Self-paced online learning through Course 8001 "Science and Research Methods" (by Dr Jan Kruger).

- **Seminars & Tutorials:** Focused discussions on methodological approaches and academic conventions.

- **Workshops:** Practice-based exercises on writing style, structure, and referencing.

- **Feedback:** Formative feedback from an independent GHU professor (not the candidate's own supervisor).

Assessment

- **Submission:** 15,000-word academic paper demonstrating mastery of academic writing and research methodology.

- **Assessment Method:** Pass/Fail (evaluated by independent assessor).

- **Criteria:** Academic quality, methodological soundness, referencing accuracy, coherence, and ethical compliance.

Module Aim

To cultivate advanced scholarly communication and research methodology skills that enable candidates to design, articulate, and present doctoral research to an international academic standard.

Module 3: Review of Professional Capability (Reflection)

ECTS: 10
Word Count: 10,000 words
Phase: 1
Assessment: Pass/Fail

Module Overview

This reflective module enables doctoral candidates to examine their personal, academic, and professional development in relation to their doctoral studies. It encourages deep reflection on past experiences, achievements, and professional values to establish a coherent link between prior learning and the research journey ahead.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, candidates will be able to:

1. Critically analyse personal and professional growth in the context of academic and leadership practice.

2. Evaluate achievements, competencies, and areas for continued development.

3. Reflect on ethical, cultural, and professional dimensions of practice.

4. Integrate insights from professional experience into the doctoral research agenda.

5. Present a structured and academically sound reflection that demonstrates critical self-awareness.

Indicative Content

- Personal and professional development overview: career trajectory and major milestones.

- Reflection on successes, failures, and lessons learned.

- Ethical and moral considerations in professional and academic contexts.

- Identification of leadership, management, and communication competencies.

- Linking professional experience to academic inquiry and research goals.

- Constructing a self-assessment of strengths, gaps, and future vision.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

- **Reflective Practice:** Independent writing and journaling on professional experiences.

- **Supervision & Feedback:** Advisor-guided reflection and formative review.

- **Peer Engagement:** Discussion and comparative analysis of professional narratives.

- **Workshops:** Support sessions on reflective frameworks and writing styles.

Assessment

- **Submission:** 10,000-word Reflective Report on Professional Capability.

- **Assessment Method:** Pass/Fail (evaluated by advisor or designated GHU faculty).

- **Criteria:** Depth of reflection, coherence of argument, integration of professional experience, and academic writing quality.

Module Aim

To promote critical self-evaluation and reflective learning that connects prior professional experience with future academic and research aspirations, fostering self-awareness and leadership in practice-based inquiry.

Module 4: Planning an Advanced Practitioner Research Programme (Exposé)

ECTS: 30
Word Count: Approx. 15,000 words
Phase: 1
Assessment: Pass/Fail (Written submission and oral presentation)

Module Overview

This capstone module of Phase 1 consolidates the candidate's theoretical understanding, methodological competence, and professional insight into a comprehensive exposé that outlines the full doctoral research plan. The exposé serves as a blueprint for the thesis, demonstrating coherence between research aims, theoretical framework, methodology, and ethical practice.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, candidates will be able to:

1. Design a structured, detailed research plan consistent with doctoral standards.

2. Integrate theoretical perspectives, professional practice, and empirical methods coherently.

3. Demonstrate critical understanding of methodology, ethics, and feasibility.

4. Articulate a clear conceptual framework and rationale for the chosen study.

5. Present and defend the proposed research design in both written and oral form.

Indicative Content

- Structuring an exposé: aims, objectives, and expected contributions.

- Theoretical and conceptual framework development.

- Research design, methods of data collection, and analysis strategies.

- Ethical approval procedures and data protection considerations.

- Risk assessment and contingency planning.

- Anticipated outcomes, limitations, and implications for professional practice.

- Preparing for the oral presentation (Defensio) and responding to feedback.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

- **Supervision:** Individual guidance and iterative feedback from the research advisor.

- **Workshops:** Sessions on research design, methodology refinement, and presentation skills.

- **Peer Review:** Critical review of peers' exposés for collaborative learning.

- **Independent Study:** Extensive literature analysis and proposal writing.

Assessment

- **Submission:** 15,000-word Exposé outlining the complete research plan.

- **Presentation:** 10-minute oral summary and Q&A (online or in person).

- **Assessment Method:** Pass/Fail – assessed on clarity, structure, theoretical coherence, and methodological robustness.

- **Criteria:** Conceptual depth, feasibility, originality, ethical alignment, and professional relevance.

Module Aim

To enable doctoral candidates to develop, justify, and defend a comprehensive research plan that integrates academic theory, methodological precision, and professional practice—forming the formal foundation for Phase 2 of the doctoral journey.

Module 5: Project Report / Thesis

ECTS: 85
Word Count: 40,000 – 60,000 words
Phase: 2
Assessment: Pass/Fail (Double-marked and subject to viva voce)

Module Overview

The Project Report, or Doctoral Thesis, represents the culmination of the doctoral research process. It requires candidates to conduct original, practice-based, or theoretical research that contributes to knowledge and professional advancement. The thesis must demonstrate intellectual rigour, methodological integrity, and a meaningful contribution to the candidate's field of study.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, candidates will be able to:

1. Conduct and present original research that extends or applies existing knowledge in a professional or academic field.

2. Demonstrate advanced competence in research design, analysis, and interpretation.

3. Critically engage with theory and practice, showing depth of understanding and scholarly independence.

4. Exhibit ethical responsibility and transparency in all aspects of the research process.

5. Present findings in a coherent, well-structured academic format consistent with international doctoral standards.

Indicative Content

- Execution of the approved research plan (data collection, analysis, and evaluation).

- Structuring the doctoral thesis: introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis, discussion, and conclusion.

- Integration of theory and practice in applied research contexts.

- Ethical management of data and responsible research conduct.

- Drafting and revision process guided by supervisory feedback.

- Preparing the thesis for submission and external evaluation.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

- **Supervision:** Ongoing one-to-one academic and methodological guidance from advisor(s).

- **Independent Research:** Autonomous data collection, analysis, and writing.

- **Progress Reviews:** Scheduled monitoring to assess progress toward completion.

- **Formative Feedback:** Iterative draft submissions for academic and structural refinement.

Assessment

- **Submission:** A thesis of between 40,000 and 60,000 words (excluding appendices and references).

- **Evaluation:** Pass/Fail based on internal and external examiners' reports.

- **Criteria:** Originality, research quality, methodological validity, theoretical depth, contribution to practice, and academic writing quality.

- **Language Requirement:** The final version must be translated into English if written in another language.

Module Aim

To enable candidates to design, conduct, and report an original doctoral-level investigation that demonstrates advanced research competence, contributes new insights to their discipline, and reflects both scholarly and professional excellence.

Module 6: Research Paper

ECTS: 30
Word Count: Approx. 15,000 words
Phase: 2
Assessment: Pass/Fail (Reviewed by independent assessor)

Module Overview

This module requires candidates to produce a publishable-quality research paper that summarises and reflects the essential findings of the doctoral thesis. The paper should meet the standards of an international academic or professional journal and demonstrate the candidate's ability to communicate complex ideas with clarity, rigour, and academic precision.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, candidates will be able to:

1. Summarise and interpret the key arguments, methods, and outcomes of their doctoral research.

2. Present research findings in a concise and coherent format suitable for publication.

3. Demonstrate advanced academic writing and referencing competence.

4. Apply ethical and professional standards of academic dissemination.

5. Critically engage with peer review processes and reflect on the dissemination of research outcomes.

Indicative Content

- Structure and conventions of academic journal papers.

- Writing abstracts, summaries, and structured discussions.

- Adapting the doctoral thesis into a concise, publishable article.

- Use of tables, figures, and citations in journal-standard format.

- Ethical publishing practices and avoidance of self-plagiarism.

- Submission procedures and responding to editorial feedback.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

- **Independent Study:** Writing, editing, and revising the paper based on the completed thesis.

- **Supervisory Guidance:** Advisor support in shaping the paper for publication.

- **Workshops:** Sessions on academic publishing, referencing, and style adaptation.

- **Peer Review:** Simulated journal review feedback to strengthen writing and argumentation.

Assessment

- **Submission:** A research paper of approximately 15,000 words, formatted to academic publication standards.

- **Assessment Method:** Pass/Fail – evaluated by an independent GHU assessor (not the candidate's supervisor).

- **Criteria:** Academic quality, originality, theoretical and practical relevance, clarity of argument, and adherence to GHU publication guidelines.

Module Aim

To prepare and produce a concise, high-quality research paper that communicates the doctoral project's core findings and contribution to knowledge, reflecting both scholarly excellence and professional impact.

Module 7: Oral Presentation and Viva Voce (Defense)

ECTS: 5
Duration: 30-minute presentation + 30-minute discussion (approx.)
Phase: 2
Assessment: Pass/Fail (Formal examination by committee)

Module Overview

The Oral Presentation and Viva Voce represent the final stage of the doctoral journey. This module assesses the candidate's ability to present, justify, and critically defend their research findings before an academic committee. The defense demonstrates mastery of the subject, understanding of theoretical and methodological principles, and the ability to engage in scholarly dialogue.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, candidates will be able to:

1. Present the aims, methodology, and findings of their doctoral research with clarity and academic rigour.

2. Defend the coherence, originality, and contribution of their research in response to academic questioning.

3. Demonstrate deep understanding of relevant theoretical and methodological frameworks.

4. Critically evaluate their research's implications, limitations, and ethical dimensions.

5. Engage confidently in scholarly debate and communicate research to expert and non-expert audiences.

Indicative Content

- Structuring and delivering a professional oral presentation.

- Summarising complex research findings succinctly.

- Responding effectively to examiner questions and critique.

- Reflecting on research limitations and broader impact.

- Academic presentation skills: clarity, visual aids, and delivery.

- The examination process, feedback, and final submission requirements.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

- **Preparation Workshops:** Guidance on defense structure, Q&A handling, and presentation delivery.

- **Supervision:** Mock viva practice sessions with advisor feedback.

- **Independent Study:** Refinement of slides, notes, and oral responses.

- **Peer Review:** Collaborative sessions for feedback on presentation clarity and confidence.

Assessment

- **Format:** 30-minute oral presentation followed by examiner questioning (approx. 60 minutes total).

- **Assessment Method:** Pass/Fail – evaluated by a three-member committee (advisor, GHU professor, and chair).

- **Criteria:** Clarity of presentation, depth of understanding, critical thinking, research justification, and communication skills.

Module Aim

To enable candidates to articulate and defend their doctoral research confidently and competently, demonstrating comprehensive mastery of their subject, methodological soundness, and the ability to engage critically with academic peers.

Accreditation and Award

This programme is accredited by the **Global Humanistic University (GHU)**, a state-accredited and licensed university based in Anguilla, a British Overseas Territory ([read more](#)). It is authorised by the Higher Education Licensing Board, Ministry of Education, Government of Anguilla, to award and confer this programme. GHU holds international accreditations and is recognised by the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings as one of the top 800 global universities. Graduates will also have the opportunity to attend the official GHU graduation ceremony in Anguilla or at one of its international partner venues.

This Ph.D. affords holders the title of 'Doctor/Dr'.

Further Information and Contact Details

For more information, prospective candidates are encouraged to contact our admissions team or visit our official website. Detailed module guides, reading lists, and additional learning resources are provided upon enrolment, ensuring transparency and alignment with best practices in postgraduate research.

- **Admissions Office**: admissions@premierlearning.org
- **General Enquiries:** info@premierlearning.org