The Development of a Professional Doctorate

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Potential value of Doctoral Research?

1. The highest university qualification
2. Advances knowledge and practice
3. Solves problems
4. Improves performance
5. Develops intellect
6. Develops theory and builds models
7. Tests theory and practice
8. Demonstrates critical use of extensive literature
9. Displays rigorous methodology, producing sound evidence
10. Provides apprenticeship in research design & operation
11. Accords with the highest academic standards
12. Receives moderation by peers
13. Satisfies refereed criteria for publication
Some problems with the conventional Ph.D.

- The focus of many new built environment graduates is on becoming professionally qualified.
- This involves gaining a series of competencies during a period of professional practice.
- Once qualified they can reap the rewards of professional status both financially and through holding responsible company positions.
- The full-time Ph.D. cannot help in this endeavour.
Problems with the conventional Ph.D. cont’d

- Once chartered, in mid career, they cannot afford the time to attend university for three years
- They might lose touch with industry
- They may lose important promotional opportunities
- Ph.D. research tends to focus on a very narrow topic area which may not meet the needs of industry
- This narrow focus may not help them develop the skills they need for their employment
- Supervision tends to be by just one person
What about the part-time Ph.D.?

As with the full-time option

- Part-time Ph.D. research also tends to focus on a very narrow topic area which may not meet the needs of industry
- Supervision also tends to be by just one person
- Difficult to complete
- Completion usually takes at least six years
- The research interferes with work, family & social life
Characteristics of the Professional Doctorate (Pr.D.)

1. Has all the advantages of the Ph.D. without the disadvantages
2. Can be completed in three years, largely in the workplace
3. Based on originality and contribution to knowledge
4. Candidates develop expert knowledge & skill
5. Cohort based and supervised by a multi-disciplinary team
6. Employer is the client commissioning the work
7. Workplace is the laboratory for research
8. Focus is on the professional needs of industry
9. Work-based, solution-oriented research
10. High value placed on transferability of research finds to the workplace & professional practice
11. Enhances candidates reputation and that of their company
Professional Doctorate in the Built Environment Pr.D.

- This Pr.D. is designed for senior professionals who wish to study at doctoral level and who work in organisations that appreciate the benefits that accrue from this special form of education
- The focus of their study is their own professional practice
- The work-based programme is divided into two stages
- Stage One (minimum 16 months) is examined by three papers which develops candidates’ research focus, literature review and research skills in the context of their workplace
- Stage Two (minimum 20 months) focuses on the individual research topic and culminates in the normal thesis and viva examination
Visualising professional doctoral research

Contribution to Knowledge

Research Issue

Gap in Knowledge

Conceptual Conclusions

Identification of Workplace Problems

Interpretative Conclusions

Research Question(s)

Factual Conclusions for the workplace

Conceptual Framework for the workplace

Research Design

Contribution to Knowledge

FIELDWORK

Adapted from Source: Trafford, V.N. and Leshem, S. 2004
The Built Environment Pr.D. programme

MSc entry qualification

Stage 1
16 to 24 months
Submission of 3 7000 word Papers

Research Proposal (4 pages)

Stage 2
20 to 48 months
Execution of research and writing a 60000 word thesis

Examination of Thesis and Viva in exactly the same way as a Ph.D.
Support for the Professional Doctorate

The programme is supported by:
1. Workshops delivered by a strong multi-disciplinary built environment research team,
2. Individual tutorials with supervisors,
3. Candidates themselves - supporting each other as a multi-discipline cohort
4. Each year cohort - supporting the next
5. Virtual learning environment (WebCT)
Professional Doctorate in the Built Environment

General Resources

Communication between Cohorts

Useful Documentation

Cohort 1

Cohort 2

NOTICES: Welcome to this online version of the Professional Doctorate
Welcome to the Pr.D Virtual Research Environment, designed to support your Professional Doctorate in the Built Environment at Anglia Ruskin University. Ian Frame
Evaluation of the first year of the programme

- Six candidates started the programme in 2004
- One candidate dropped out within the first two months
- The remaining 5 completed the first year
- 2 candidates completed Stage 1 within the minimum 16 month period
- 1 candidate is well on target to complete within the maximum 24 months
- The 2 remaining candidates will have difficulty completing within 24 months
Evaluation of the first year cont’d

- The main reason cited for non completion is lack of time and work commitments.
- It will be difficult to complete the Pr.D. within 3 years (even with MSc entry) if there is not a strong link between work commitments and the research.
- The feedback from the candidates about the workshops and the provision of online support is very positive.
Thank you for Listening
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A demonstration of the online support can be found at:
http://webct.anglia.ac.uk
ID: guest67
Password: open