

Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	Course Title	Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
2	Course Code	PR0178
3	Awarding Institution	Birmingham City University
4	Teaching Institution(s)	N/A
5	Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation	N/A

6	Course Description
	<p>Looking to accelerate your career, transform your management practice and deepen your expertise? Then our DBA programme is for you.</p> <p>Our DBA enables you as an experienced business and management professional (whether in the in private or public sector) develop and apply your professional knowledge, skill and expertise to solve real life business and management challenges and achieve a doctoral level degree whilst working.</p> <p>On the DBA, you will conduct applied, work-based research on issues and/or topics directly relevant to your organisation or professional practice, thereby creating value for your organisation and enhancing your expertise and career.</p> <p>Overview of the DBA programme:</p> <p>Our DBA is an online, part time course, designed to allow you to complete within 4-7 years. You will develop critical inquiry and analytical skills, systematically and creatively, in applied research, and develop your ability to communicate clearly to a range of audiences. You will have a key opportunity of changing and/or transforming business/management practice by exploring knowledge and research in professional contexts through both theory (subject literacy) and application (subject competence) to practice. It will allow you to move beyond existing work, sector or industry mindsets to consider issues of practice, and identify an original contribution to practice along with its application in potential or reality.</p> <p>Your DBA will require active ongoing engagement. It is not passive as you progressively focus on practice or work based action research and progress towards making an original contribution to practice. In the first two years, you will study four consecutively taught modules that are assessed. You are expected to successfully complete each module in order to progress. This structured phase is followed by the research phase of the course. Here, you will be allocated a supervisory team to guide and support you as you conduct a practice/work based research, culminating in the submission of a practice-based thesis.</p>

	<p>The main benefits of undertaking a DBA are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You achieve a professional doctorate, designed for business and management professionals whilst working. • Our flexible online delivery means that you can study with us from anywhere in the world, at a time that suits you. • You make valuable, original knowledge and practice contribution to your organisation or practice thereby enhancing your profile and career. • You will work in conjunction with our thought-provoking supervisors and industry experts who will support you. Candidate support is at the forefront of our approach, with everything designed to provide you with the skills you need to succeed. • Our DBA provides you with a framework for practice based research, where your professional environment is also the core of your research environment and network. You therefore have a structured and theoretically robust framework to explore issue and/or problems within your professional environment. • The course also develops you into a reflective practitioner with the skills and ability to lead and influence organisational change. • Our DBA incorporates the University's Postgraduate Certificate in Research Practice, identifying you as a qualified academic researcher.
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7	Course Awards		
7a	Name of Final Award	Level	Credits Awarded
	Doctor of Business Administration	Level 8	N/A
7b	Exit Awards and Credits Awarded		
	Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	Level 7	N/A
	Postgraduate Certificate in Research Practice	Level 7	60

8	Derogation from the University Regulations
	None.

9	Delivery Patterns		
	Mode(s) of Study	Location(s) of Study	Duration of Study
	Part Time	Online	4 to 7 years
			Code(s)
			PR0178

10	Entry Requirements
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The admissions requirements for this course are stated on the course page of the BCU website at <https://www.bcu.ac.uk/>.

11	Course Aims
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- To equip you with the skills to make an original contribution to knowledge and practice through doctoral level practice based research.
- To provide a framework that will allow you to apply your professional knowledge, skill and expertise to develop a solution to a work based problem and/or issue thereby creating value for your employer/organisation and enhance your professional career.
- To enhance your analytical, problem solving, communication and decision making skills as well as deepen your expertise within your practice context.
- To help you develop a practice based approach that can potentially be applied in diverse disciplines or situations.

12	Course Learning Outcomes
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On successful completion of the DBA you will have demonstrated:

Knowledge and Understanding

1	Knowledge and Understanding – An organised understanding of knowledge and concepts, and their interaction with an area of work or practice.
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Skills and other attributes

2	Inquiry – Capability to conduct a literature review for concepts, ideas and methods of investigation as the basis for design and implementation of a substantial empirical research inquiry.
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3	Analysis – Critical evaluation applied to the work of others through creating and using an analytical scheme as part of a substantial research inquiry.
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4	Problem Solving – Originality in the application of acquired knowledge, along with applied understanding of recognised approaches to research and inquiry are used to create, interpret and apply new knowledge.
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5	Learning – The confident practice of independent learning appropriate to advance knowledge and understanding, and the development of new research skills.
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6	Cognition – Advanced cognitive processes involved in the gaining of knowledge and comprehension, incorporating thinking, knowing, remembering, judging and intuition, language, imagination, perception and planning.
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7	Decision Making – The outcome of cognition (mental processes) leading to the clear choice of a course of action from alternatives. This should result from judgment and choice, resulting in selection and development of action or an opinion.
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8	Communication – Communication of intentions, key messages and conclusions effectively to practice and wider audiences.
9	Application – Qualities and transferable skills necessary for career development including transferable skills appropriate to the exercise of initiative, self-direction, and originality, and of independent thinking and delivery in the planning and implementing of necessary tasks.
10	Reflection – Critical reflection on ways of applying new knowledge obtained in the research and investigations, and how results can be used to influence practice and/or a wider audience. This is not a complete list, and you will undoubtedly be exposed to a wider range of issues.

13	Level Learning Outcomes
	<i>Upon completion of PG Cert in Research Practice, students will be able to:</i>
1	Develop your knowledge of the key principles of research, the ways in which effective research practice is achieved and apply these to your own doctoral study;
2	Enhance your skills and confidence in positioning your research within a wider research context underpinned by a robust research question(s) or challenge;
3	Critique a variety of research methods and methodological approaches, and make informed decisions to develop your own appropriate research methodology;
4	articulate the ethical considerations, anticipated outcomes and impact of your research for the relevant field(s) of practice as well as the impact on your own developmental needs as a doctoral researcher;
	<i>Upon completion of the DBA, students will be able to:</i>
1	Develop, design and interpret new knowledge, through original practice based research and advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the discipline of practice based research, and is worthy of publication
2	Develop understanding of a substantial body of practice based knowledge which is at the forefront of academic discipline or area of professional management practice and exhibit a deep understanding of methodological and epistemological issues
3	Develop the ability to conceptualise, design and implement a practice based project for the generation of new practice based knowledge, new applications or new understanding, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems.
4	Critically reflect upon practice as a researcher using critical understanding of applicable techniques for carrying out practice based research and advanced academic inquiry and the acquisition of advanced research skills to undertake independent inquiry.
5	Exhibit informed judgment on complex issues in specialist fields, adopt an innovative approach to solving problems and demonstrate an ability to communicate ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

14	Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy
	<p>This section explains the learning and teaching approaches, activities and experiences that your programme will offer, the range of assessments and types of feedback and feedforward you will encounter. It also explains how these will support your continuous learning throughout the programme, and the expectations we have of you in this learning partnership.</p> <p>During the structured phase (the first two years of your course) you will be encouraged to attend an annual event (either in person or virtually) each year. Although not mandatory, you will be strongly encouraged to attend and participate at this event. This event will be followed by release of online course content. Learning and engagement with the online content will be facilitated</p>

through a blend of synchronous and asynchronous methods detailed below. During the research phase, your activities will be agreed with your supervisory team. Details of what is expected during this phase is also set out below.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

- The Learning and Teaching Strategy for the DBA has been specifically created for executives and professionals undertaking study on a part-time basis online. This means that it has been adapted to accommodate the demands of existing careers and career development.
- You will be encouraged to make full use of the opportunities provided by the course, and the University's supporting facilities, to achieve the course objectives. During the structured phase, you will be supported by module leaders of the respective modules. The course seeks to foster an environment in which you take responsibility for the management of your own learning and research in an active form of inquiry
- The modules on this course will utilise methods of teaching and learning which are appropriate to Doctoral level study, as set out in the framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ).
- The course will employ a variety of teaching and learning methods designed to meet its aims. The style of teaching will vary to represent individual modules. Information relating to the structure of modules, assessment and reading lists will be in the form of individual module specifications which will include indicative module content. You will be expected to read and be aware of current theoretical issues within the literature and relevant journals. You will also be encouraged to attend scheduled events including appropriate conference visits and external presentations.
- The earlier parts of the programme will enable you to critically re-examine aspects in the subject of your research and area of application, to identify key components, reconfigure them in relation to chosen ends, and to apply new knowledge to create the basis for a clear contribution to practice. Two parallel themes will be incorporated from the outset: one is the research process, the other is critical reflection on practice which can shape the research process itself throughout its development.
- Modules will be delivered exclusively online. Within this, synchronous and asynchronous methods will be adopted, using video lectures, virtual classrooms, online discussion forums, virtual individual and group tutorials etc. You will be expected to engage with the sessions. The application of key concepts during structured sessions should be developed further through self-directed study. You will also benefit from being part of a cohort of peers and from cross-cohort learning experiences. This will enhance your overall experience and progression to becoming a research informed business and management practitioner. Active engagement within and across cohorts will also provide opportunities for collaboration, networking and peer-to-peer learning.
- On successful completion of structured component, you will progress to the practice based research phase of the course and be required to have regular monthly meetings with your supervisory team at mutually agreed times via video conferencing. You will be actively encouraged to have at least one face-to-face meeting with your team annually. The Doctoral Research College regularly records engagement and performance of DBA candidates during the research phase.

Two of the characteristics increasingly expected in professionals and executives are the “wider business skills” acquired through communicating and presenting (internally and externally), and the ability to work independently and collaboratively at the same time. This profile of teaching and learning strategies embedded across the course therefore prepares you to accelerate your standing, expertise and career. The use of such approaches and resources encourages active learning and the ability to select and make appropriate use of supporting evidence. In particular, you will develop problem-solving skills and higher-order skills of reasoning and analysis, as well as explore information, and draw appropriate original conclusions. Moodle, the University’s virtual learning environment (VLE), will be used to support modules where appropriate, supporting you to undertake appropriate independent learning. Analysis, synthesis and evaluation are developed as themes throughout the programme.

Formative learning (including formative feedback) will be provided during structured phase. Learning and teaching will be supplemented by:

- Initial Induction. This includes preparation for learning, teaching and assessment, use of library and Moodle resources.
- Course handbook. This will contain supporting guidance on the course structure plus learning, teaching and assessment guidelines.
- Module handbooks or Moodle pages. These contain key learning materials, formative learning, and summative assessment tasks.

You will be encouraged to identify and, with guidance, consider your own learning needs and be offered the following support as appropriate to meet those needs:

- Supervisors available for individual support and guidance.
- Course Administrator and Course Leader(s).
- Student services (ASK) including Disability Services, Health and Child Care, Financial advice and Counselling Services.

Assessment Objectives and Strategy

The assessment strategy adopted within the DBA is designed to facilitate the intended learning outcomes of the course being appropriately tested through the assessment process.

Assessment methods will represent the differing theoretical and practical approaches, and learning outcomes of the modules. The assessment procedures are intended to achieve a number of objectives. These are:

- a. To provide constructive feedback regarding progress at each stage of the course and to provide information for counselling where needed.
- b. To check that the required academic standards are being achieved/maintained.
- c. To provide information to the examiners on which the decision can be made regarding the award of the DBA.

Formative learning

Formative learning will form an integral part of the assessment strategy and will be integrated into each module throughout the course. On a regular basis, you will gain ‘informal formative learning

and feedback' which will contribute to the overall learning process. This feedback is not recorded against your record, but is to be *used* to allow you to improve your work and prepare you for summative assessment. This feedback will be gained from supervisors. Care will be taken to ensure that you fully understand the level of engagement with assessment that is required to meet the FHEQ requirements for Doctoral level study.

Summative assessments

Summative assessments will be used on each module throughout the course. These assessments are formal and recorded against your record, and informs the decision on your progression and exit options and readiness for assessment in a viva for the final award of the course. It is intended that you will have a clear idea and approach for the area of research you wish to pursue, and have negotiated, or demonstrate the process to negotiate, appropriate access to required information, people and/or material to establish your original data. Supervisors will be allocated when you start your independent research activities. The allocation of supervisors is based on their existing workload and areas of expertise.

Assignment Marking

Assignments (excluding the Thesis) will be marked by the module supervisor and moderated by another lecturer. Samples will then be sent to the relevant external examiner for confirmation. The progression or pass mark will be 50% for each module. Following assessment, feedback is given to you within four weeks (or other date as shown on each assessment brief) of the date of submission regarding your performance to aid you in enhancing your work. All credit bearing marks remain provisional and subject to internal moderation and external examiner scrutiny until they are confirmed by the Research or Examination Board. The final Practice Based Thesis will be examined by viva-voce. The submitted document will be examined by a panel of examiners and the candidate will defend the research and contribution to practice in a panel interview/discussion.

Progression

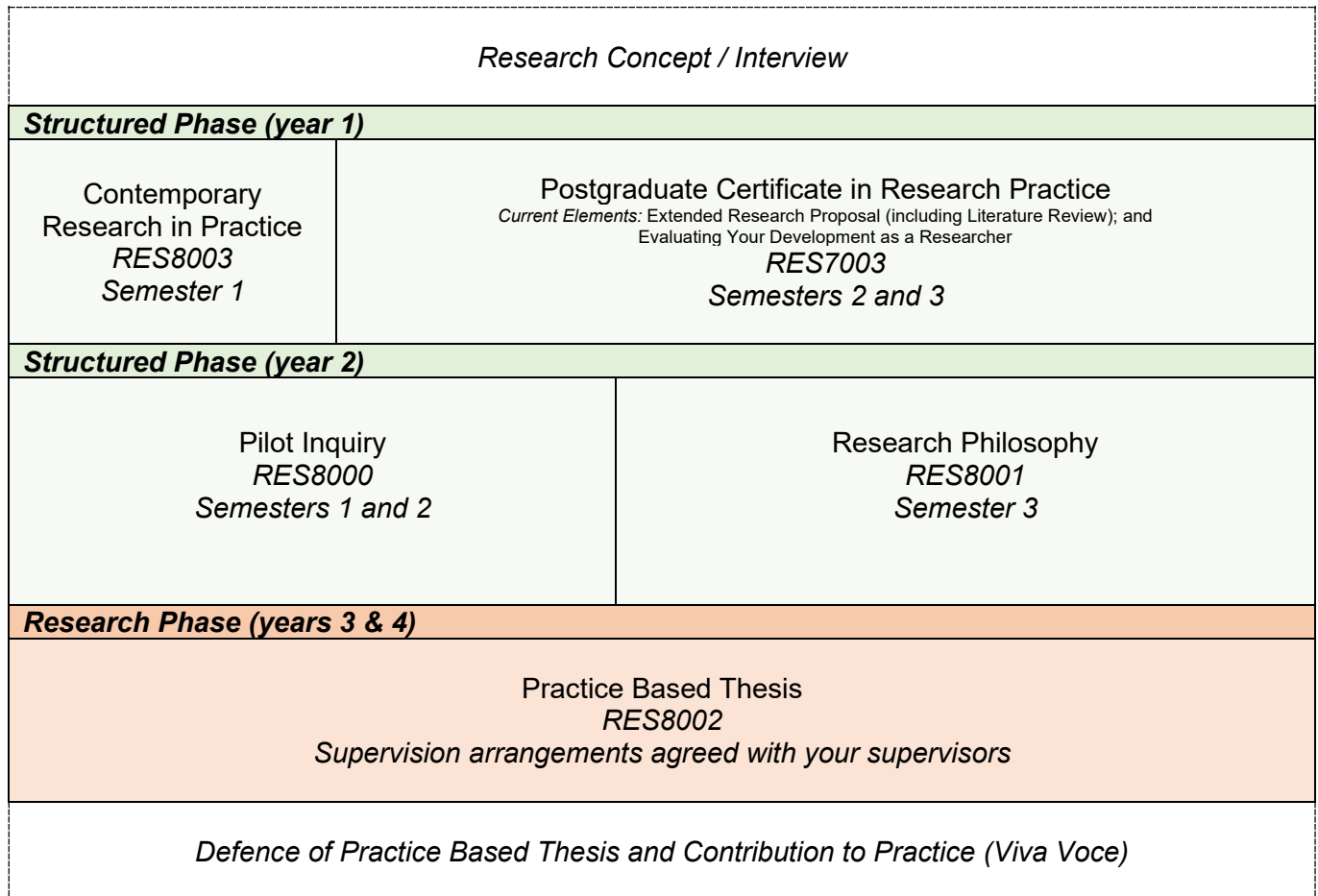
The Progression Board will meet as required, and at least annually, during the course to review your performance. You are required to submit work and reports as necessary from time to time to support your progression during the course and attend reviews when requested. Some of these may be conducted remotely if and as agreed by the Progression Board chairperson.

15 Course Requirements

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 60 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
RES8003	Contemporary Research in Practice	0
RES7003	PG Cert in Research Practice	60
RES8000	Pilot Inquiry	0
RES8001	Research Philosophy	0
RES8002	Practice Based Thesis	0

15b Structure Diagram



16	Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment
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The approximate percentage of the course assessed by coursework, exam and in-person is shown below.

Workload

Level 8

% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	0
Directed Learning	720
Private Study	2880
Total Hours	3600

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	
Exam	
In-Person	100%*

*Assessment considered is the viva-voce at the end of the course