
 جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة United Arab Emirates University 	Graduate Studies Policies Manual	Policy Number	GP-04
		Effective Date	12-Aug-2018
	Subject Professional Doctorate Programs	Most Recent Review Date	15-Apr-2018
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4. Professional Doctorate Programs

Overview

Outlines the framework that governs students' pathway to graduation from a professional Doctorate degree program.

Scope



Applies to all professional Doctorate degree programs offered by UAEU.

Objective

The University is committed to the highest academic and administrative standards in the operation of its graduate programs. This Policy and its related Procedures provide the structures and processes required to manage student application, admission, progress and graduation with respect to professional Doctorates offered by the UAEU.

Policy

1. The University adopts a common framework for the operation of Professional Doctorate programs to ensure that common standards and due process apply to student application, admission, progress and graduation from all professional Doctorate degree programs of the University.
2. Professional Doctorate programs are given effect by this Policy and its related Procedures. The Procedures are the shared responsibility of the respective Colleges hosting Professional Doctorate programs, the Graduate Studies Council and the Dean of the CGS.
3. Colleges may propose supplementary Rules and Regulations for individual Professional Doctorate programs as appropriate to the Program in the respective College. Supplementary Rules and Regulations must not contradict and cannot annul any part of these Policies and Procedures. The Graduate Studies Council and possibly the Academic Council must approve any related Rules and Regulations for a College before their implementation.

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Procedures of Policy No. (4) - Professional Doctorate Programs

1. Program Administration

Each Professional Doctorate Program (PDP) is administered through the following:



- a) The Graduate Studies Council that oversees the implementation of all doctorate programs at UAEU.
- b) A PDP is administered by a Program Coordinator who is recommended by the Dean of the College, after consultation with the College's Assistant Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, and approval of the Dean of the CGS, to the Provost for approval and is appointed by the Vice Chancellor.

The Program Coordinator is a senior graduate faculty member who is appointed to oversee the academic and administrative aspects of the PDP. The Coordinator is expected to demonstrate active scholarship within his or her discipline through a record of recent publications and presentations, projects, contributions to professional organizations, and/or membership on editorial or advisory boards.

- c) A Program Advisory Committee. This Committee is appointed by the College Dean and consists of the College's Assistant Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, the Program Coordinator, one faculty member affiliated with the Program, and three active (non-faculty and non-UAEU) community members who share an interest in the progress of the Program. The Coordinator chairs the Committee. It has the overall responsibility of advising and marketing the Program in coordination with the College Dean. The Committee meets at least once each academic year.
- d) A Program Admissions and Steering Committee. This committee is appointed by the College Dean and consists of the Program Coordinator and between 3 and 5 senior faculty members of the College. The Coordinator chairs the Committee. The Committee is responsible for overseeing admissions policies for the Program and their implementation, as well as other strategic decisions related to the Program. The Committee meets at least twice each academic semester.
- e) In consultation with the Assistant Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and the Program Coordinator, the College Dean may appoint additional staff, such as an Assistant Coordinator, or a committee in order to support the Coordinator in the administration and operation of a PDP if deemed necessary and in accordance with the approved rules and regulations of the particular PDP.

2. The PDP Advisor

- a) Each PDP student who has been accepted into a PDP will propose his/her choice of Advisor and a research area of interest to the Program Coordinator before the end of the first semester of study. The Advisor must be a faculty member in the Department/College. The name of the Advisor is to be approved by the Assistant Dean, in consultation with the College Dean.
- b) Faculty members, who serve as PDP Advisors, are expected to have obtained visibility and recognition within their discipline, demonstrated by substantial or sustained research, recent publications at the highest levels of their discipline, and/or leadership in professional organizations at the national and international level. PDP Advisors are expected to be able to direct the independent research project of the student. Advisors must have a terminal degree in the discipline in which the research is conducted, a strong record of research and scholarly activity, and prior supervisory experience, which may include supervision of a completed technical project, master's thesis or being a co-

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advisor of a completed Doctorate dissertation. Faculty members at the rank of Associate or Full Professor may supervise doctorate students even in the absence of prior supervisory experience.

- c) The student may request a change of PDP Advisor through the Program Coordinator and the Assistant Dean, in consultation with the current Advisor. Generally, a change of Advisor will not be accepted after the student has begun his or her dissertation research, and after the Research Proposal has been approved.



3. Expectations of Faculty Advisors

Departments and programs are responsible for encouraging and ensuring effective advising of their graduate students. Advisors and mentors are expected to do the following:

- a) Interact in a professional and civil manner consistent with university policies.
- b) Encourage students to learn creatively and independently.
- c) Develop clear understandings about specific research expectations and responsibilities, including timelines for completion of theses and dissertations.
- d) Provide feedback on student's work and progress toward degree in a timely manner.
- e) Discuss authorship policy with graduate students in advance of entering into collaborative projects.
- f) Acknowledge student contributions to research presented at conferences, in publications, and in applications for copyright and patents.

4. The PDP Advisory Committee

- a) The PDP Advisory Committee for a PDP student is approved by the Assistant Dean of the concerned College, upon nomination by the Program Coordinator in consultation with the concerned student. This action must be taken before the end of the student's last semester of course work in the program and is communicated to the CGS. The role of the Committee is to oversee the progress of the student and guide him/her towards the successful completion of all degree requirements.
- b) The PDP Advisory Committee consists of the student's Advisor and a minimum of one other full-time UAEU faculty member whose expertise is related to the student's area of specialization/research. Members of the Advisory Committee must have a terminal degree in the student's area of specialization/research.
- c) The student's Advisor is the Chair of the PDP Advisory Committee.
- d) A second faculty member, normally at the rank of Associate or Full Professor, is Co-Chair of the PDP Advisory Committee and will temporarily assume the PDP Advisor's duties if the main Advisor should become permanently unavailable. In this case the Co-Chair will serve as a temporary PDP Advisor until a new Advisor is appointed.
- e) Upon the suggestion of the PDP Advisor and in consultation with the student, an External Advisor can be added as an associate member of the PDP Advisory Committee. The external advisor is expected to provide further support and guidance to the student, whose plan may include spending some time at the external advisor's organization for training or research. Requests to appoint an external member to the Advisory Committee of a PDP student must be approved by the PDP Program Coordinator, the Assistant Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and the Dean of CGS.
- f) The student through the Coordinator of the PDP may request changes in the membership of the PDP Advisory Committee. Changes must be approved by the Assistant Dean, and communicated to the CGS.

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- g) The student's Advisory Committee must meet regularly, at least once per semester, to advise the student on the course work as well as the student's progress in his/her study and research project, identify any potential concerns/problems and provide possible solutions to deal with difficulties. After each meeting, a succinct report must be written by the student's Advisor and submitted to the Program Coordinator.
- h) Appointments and changes to the PDP Advisory Committee must be in accordance with the *Criteria for Selection of Faculty to Participate in Graduate Programs* document.

5. The PDP Research Proposal Defense Panel



- a) The PDP Research Proposal Defense Panel is appointed for each PDP student before the student reaches the final stage of writing the Research Proposal for the dissertation. The PDP Coordinator forms the Panel after consultation with the Assistant Dean. The Panel is chaired by the PDP Coordinator and includes all members of the student's Advisory Committee and one additional faculty member of the College whose expertise is related to the student's area of specialization.
- b) The committee has the overall responsibility of evaluating and deciding if the student has passed the research proposal defense.

6. The PDP Examination Committee



- a) The Dean of the CGS appoints a PDP Examination Committee for each PDP student, after nomination by the concerned College Dean, in consultation with the PDP Program Coordinator and the student's Advisor. This appointment will be made as early as feasible, but no later than two months prior to the student's targeted dissertation defense date.
- b) The PDP Examination Committee is composed of four members, which include the student Advisor, as Chair of the Committee, two other UAEU faculty members who are not members of the Advisory Committee, one of whom must be from outside the College, and an External Examiner. The selection of the External Examiner must comply with the *Guidelines for Selecting an External Examiner for a Doctorate Dissertation* published by the CGS.
- c) The Chair is a non-voting member of the Committee.
- d) The External Examiner must hold or have held a senior-level faculty appointment at a peer level or higher ranked institution outside of the UAE, and must have expertise in the field of the PDP student's research.
- e) The External Examiner will be expected to review the PDP dissertation on its completion, and to attend the dissertation defense at the UAEU.
- f) The College will cover the external examiner's travel, accommodation, and an honorarium.
- g) Appointments and changes to the PDP Examination Committee must be in accordance with the *Criteria for Selection of Faculty to Participate in Graduate Programs* document.

7. Applications to Professional Doctorate Programs

- a) The minimum requirements for admission to a Professional Doctorate Program are:
 - (i) A Master's Degree from an accredited university recognized by the UAE Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, in an area appropriate to the academic program to which application is being made.

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- (ii) A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or equivalent, in the Master's degree earned at an accredited university recognized by the UAE Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.
- (iii) A Bachelor's Degree from an accredited university recognized by the UAE Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, in an area appropriate to the academic program to which application is being made with a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent
- (iv) A score of 6.0 or higher on the IELTS Academic exam or equivalent, for all disciplines in which the main language of instruction is English or the dissertation must be written in English. This test score must be less than two years old at the time of application, with the following exception:
 - a. A native speaker of English who has completed his/her Master's degree in an English-medium institution and in a country where English is the official language, or
 - b. An applicant with a Master's degree from an English-medium institution who can provide evidence of acquiring a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 or its equivalent, at the time of admission to his/her Master's program.
- (v) A minimum of five (5) years of professional experience at the managerial or executive level.
- b) A minimum IELTS score of 5.0 or equivalent is required for admission into a PDP whose language of instruction is Arabic.
- c) Individual Colleges may set additional and/or higher standards for admission to a PDP. Such requirements must be approved by the Graduate Studies Council and, if necessary, the Academic Council.
- d) All PDP applications must be reviewed and recommended for admission or rejection by the respective College (or the Executive Committee for an interdisciplinary program).
- e) The Graduate Studies Council must endorse all PDP applications recommended by a College before admission procedures are initiated.
- f) The complete application package must include the following:
 - (i) Completed application form;
 - (ii) Identity documents as required for Emirati students (copies of passport and Khulasat Al-Qaid) and international students (copy of passport);
 - (iii) One certified copy of official diploma and transcript from each university attended;
 - (iv) Two passport size photos;
 - (v) An official copy of the applicant's score on the IELTS exam or equivalent;
 - (vi) A detailed CV;
 - (vii) Three confidential letters of recommendation from professionals familiar with the student's academic work, with at least one letter from an academic reference, one from a professional reference; and
 - (viii) A motivation statement (up to 1000 words), describing the applicant's personal and professional motivation for pursuing a doctorate degree written in the same language as the PDP's language of instruction.
- g) Selected candidates are required to interview with the PDP Admissions and Steering Committee before the College makes its recommendation for admission decisions.
- h) The deadline for applications is set annually by the Graduate Studies Council and announced on the UAEU website.



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8. General Academic Requirements for Professional Doctorate Programs

- a) The student and the student Advisor, in coordination with the student's Advisory Committee, will prepare a plan of study based on the degree requirements of the Program, which must be approved by the PDP Coordinator. The plan of study is to be submitted to the CGS before the end of the student's first semester in the PDP.
- b) A plan of study will:
 - (i) Be relevant to the student's chosen field and the student's need for preparation, as determined by the PDP Advisory Committee;
 - (ii) Specify the general field of interest in which the student proposes to conduct major research;
 - (iii) List appropriate courses including any courses required as preparation, the language/s in which proficiency is to be established and the method/s by which proficiency is to be achieved; and
 - (iv) List all general requirements of the CGS and any other specific requirements of the Department, Program, College, and University (if applicable).
- c) The student's registration for courses in the first semester will be based on a model study plan prepared by the PDP Coordinator for all new students.
- d) Students must complete all degree requirements within a maximum of six (6) years after matriculation, excluding leave periods.
- e) One extension of the time limit for a period no longer than two semesters can be requested when mitigating circumstances preclude completion of requirements within the maximum period allowed. Requests have to be recommended and supported by the PDP Advisor, and approved by the PDP Coordinator, College Dean, and the Dean of the CGS.
- f) Students must register for all work to be taken for graduate credits. The University publishes a Class Schedule, approximately two weeks before the beginning of registration for the approaching academic semester, as well as Registration Guidelines providing details on prerequisites, registration dates, and procedures, including required approvals and signatures.
- g) Students who have completed all required credits but not yet completed their dissertation will be allowed to continue their registration for dissertation work on a zero-credit basis, until the abovementioned time limit is reached.

9. Requirements for the Degree of a Professional Doctorate Program

- a) The degree of a PDP is granted in recognition of (1) scholarly proficiency and (2) distinctive achievement in a specific field of an academic discipline, dealing with a practical issue. The first component is demonstrated by successful completion of advanced coursework (of both a formal and an unstructured nature) and by adequate defending the research proposal. Traditionally, the student demonstrates the second component by independently performing practice-relevant research, which is presented in the form of a dissertation, publicly defended before the PDP Examination Committee. The dissertation may take the form of a major project undertaking, which, although not of a traditional research nature, presents the results of independent study and rigorous research to a practical problem.
- b) Students are required to demonstrate that they are capable of evaluating existing research, applying it to their professional practice, and expanding the body of knowledge on which their professional practice is based. This requirement is met by the

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design and conduct of a research or scholarly project submitted in writing and presented formally before the members of the program.

10. Minimum Credit Requirements for the Professional Doctorate Programs

- a) Completion of at least 24 credit hours of graduate “taught” course work prior to Candidacy. All courses, including any preparatory courses, must be included in the student’s Study Plan.
- b) Completion of at least 24 credit hours in research.
- c) Other Program requirements as determined by the respective College and approved by the Graduate Studies Council and the Academic Council, if applicable.

11. Registration Requirements

- a) The Doctoral Degree is earned on the basis of satisfactory completion of the required courses, the research proposal and the dissertation. Courses taken at other institutions and in other degree programs may be used to satisfy program requirements upon approval of the PDP Advisory Committee and the Program Coordinator (see section on “Transfer of Credits” for limitations).
- b) Students must have an active registration in the academic semester in which they plan to graduate.

12. Residency Requirement



The minimal period in which the Professional Doctorate degree can be earned is three academic years of full-time study (i.e., registered in a minimum of nine graduate credit hours per semester). A Part-time PDP student must enroll in a minimum of six credit hours each semester until he/she completes all degree requirements. However, the total time allowed for the completion of a PDP degree must not exceed twelve (12) semesters. The nature of PDP study requires close contact between the student and the faculty of the Program and the student Advisor. Other special work leading to the dissertation must be done under the guidance and supervision of a faculty member affiliated with the PDP in the College.

13. Foreign Language or Other Special Research Tools

In consultation with the College Dean and the Assistant Dean, the Coordinator of the PDP can specify any additional requirements, such as a reading knowledge of a foreign language or a working knowledge of statistics, which are considered essential to mastery of the academic discipline. Such requirements become conditions for the completion of the degree and must be included in the approved program of study.

14. The Comprehensive Examination and Research Proposal Defense

- a) Every PDP student is required to prepare and defend a formal proposal for dissertation research. The written proposal should communicate the problem to be researched, a thorough review of the relevant literature, and a complete description of the research

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methods to be used. Each College is to provide the logistics for submission and approval of research proposals to its PDP students.

- b) Students defending their Research Proposals must be in Good Academic Standing, with cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, after completion of the required course work.
- c) The student's Research Proposal Defense Panel must approve the proposal before the student is "Advanced to Candidacy" and is permitted to commence work on the dissertation.
- d) If, during the proposal defense presentation, the student does not demonstrate enough proficiency to progress to the dissertation stage, the student is given a second chance to defend. A failure of the second defense leads to dismissal from the Program.
- e) Students must be registered for at least six semester hours of graduate work during the semester(s) in which the proposal is prepared and defended.
- f) The Research Proposal Defense is a credit or non-credit rated, while a grade for each attempt will be recorded on the student's academic transcript.
- g) Students who plan to perform research for their dissertation on human or animal subjects at UAEU or elsewhere must obtain approval of the University through the Office of Research in advance.

15. Admission to Candidacy



When the student has passed the proposal defense, has satisfied any program requirements for foreign language proficiency or special tools of research, and is in good academic standing, the PDP Coordinator will recommend the student to advance to Candidacy. The Dean of the College and the Dean of the CGS must approve the recommendation. Accordingly, the Dean of the CGS will communicate the decision to advance the student to Candidacy to the Registrar.

16. Application for Degree

Each candidate for the award of a Professional Doctorate degree must signify the intention to complete the requirements by a particular graduation date by submitting a completed Application for Degree Form. Because this form is used to check requirements, order the Diploma, and enter the student on the commencement program, it must be received in the CGS no later than the end of the third week of classes of the expected academic semester of graduation. Students must have an active registration in the semester they plan to graduate.

17. Dissertation



- a) The results of the candidate's individual inquiry must be presented in a written dissertation comprising a practical/applied contribution to knowledge in the particular field of specialization. The document should also demonstrate the candidate's acquaintance with the literature of the field and the proper selection and execution of research methodology. The physical form of the dissertation must comply with the regulations stated in the booklet, *Thesis and Dissertation Preparation Guidelines* published by the CGS.
- b) The dissertation must be written in the same language as the instructional language of the student's degree program.

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- c) The CGS has the responsibility for ensuring that the final version of the dissertation meets the standards required of a permanent published document. Therefore, after the student successfully passes the final oral examination (at least 20 days before the expected graduation), the candidate submits to the CGS one error-free, unbound copy of the dissertation. This copy will be examined carefully, and the CGS reserves the right to require changes to bring the document up to the standards stated in the *Thesis and Dissertation Preparation Guidelines*.
- d) After making these final changes, the candidate must submit to the CGS an electronic version along with other documents, as stated in the *Steps Leading to Graduation for Doctorate Students* published by the CGS, as well as the required number of copies of the approved dissertation. These materials must be received in the CGS no later than ten (10) working days before the due date for grades for the semester as set by the Registrar's Office.
- e) The bound copies of the dissertation will be distributed as follows:
 - (i) One copy to the student;
 - (ii) One copy to the student's Advisor;
 - (iii) One copy for the PDP Office;
 - (iv) One copy to the student's Department or College;
 - (v) One copy to the Registrar's Office;
 - (vi) One copy to the CGS;
 - (vii) Two copies to the University Library; and
 - (viii) Additional copies as required by the student's College.
- f) Students will have up to one semester only after their defense date to submit their final, bound dissertation.
- g) Students can request to delay making their dissertation public for up to two years from their defense semester by requesting to place a delay on releasing their dissertation to the University Library for public access at the time of submitting the bound dissertation to the College of Graduate Studies. Requests require the approval of the Dean of the CGS.

18. Oral Examination and Dissertation Defense

- a) The Final Oral Examination will take the form of a presentation and defense of the dissertation. The PDP Program Coordinator will schedule the Final Examination, in consultation with the CGS.
- b) The defense portion of the session must be open to all interested parties, will be publicized on campus by the CGS, and take place at least twenty (20) working days before the end of the semester of graduation.
- c) The external member of the Committee must attend the defense. However, if for special circumstances he/she is unable to attend the defense, the defense will be rescheduled in coordination with the CGS for a new date as early as possible. The conduct of the dissertation defense must comply with the *Guidelines for Holding a Thesis or Dissertation Defense* published by the CGS.
- d) Immediately after the presentation, the Committee will convene in a closed meeting to deliberate the student's dissertation and overall performance. It will then prepare and submit, on a form provided by the CGS, a report stating the outcome of the examination, as well as the Committee's recommendation to the PDP Coordinator, who will in turn submit copies of the report to the Assistant Dean and to the Dean of the CGS. Based on the outcome, the Coordinator will also submit the relevant grade to the Registrar.

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- e) The recommendation concerning the dissertation will be made by a majority vote of the Examination Committee members and show one of the following:
- (i) Recommendation to approve the dissertation as presented;
 - (ii) Recommendation to approve the dissertation after minor modification and verification by the student's Advisor. Student must submit modified dissertation to the Advisor within five (5) working days of being informed of the decision;
 - (iii) Major revision of the dissertation according to stated guidance, and resubmission for review by the Examination Committee within a period of not less than three months and no longer than one year; or
 - (iv) Rejection of the dissertation and academic dismissal of the student from the Program. The student may file a written appeal to the Dean of the CGS within five (5) working days from the date of being informed of the decision.
- f) Within three (3) working days of the dissertation defense, the Chair of the Examination Committee will notify the student in writing of the Committee's recommendations and, where applicable, any reason/s for rejection of the dissertation. In cases where major revision and resubmission is required, a second and final Oral Examination will be scheduled and will be conducted by an Examination Committee, which will consist of at least two-thirds of the original members of the previous Committee, including the student's Advisor. The Committee's recommendation after the second oral examination can only be either to approve the dissertation as presented or to reject it.

19. Recommendation for Degree

Successful candidates will be recommended for the PD Degree to the Dean of the CGS by the Dean of the College by no later than the date when the semester grades are due to the Registrar's Office (as listed in the University Academic Calendar). Candidates must be in good academic standing to graduate, with no temporary grades ("I" or "N") for courses required for the degree on their transcripts. Accordingly, the Dean of the CGS approves the recommendation and informs the Registrar. The Enrollment Office will verify that the student has met all degree requirements and will proceed with the procedure to clear and approve the student for the award of the PD degree.