Programme Specification

Doctor of Education [Frenchay]

Version: 2026-27, v2.0, Validated

Contents

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Doctor of Education [Frenchay]

Highest award: EdD Doctor of Education

Interim award: PGDip Educational Research

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CHSS School of Education and Childhood, College of Health, Science & Society

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies: Not applicable

Modes of delivery: Part-time

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website.

For implementation from: 01 September 2026

Programme code: X90012

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: This is a Doctor of Education (EdD) located in the School of Education and Childhood in the College of Health, Science and Society.

In accordance with the University's Guidelines on use of the Professional Doctorate Framework, (2005), it consists of a minimum 120 credits taught programme (Part 1) (maximum 270 credits), and a minimum 24 month (maximum 48 month) supervised individual research project leading to an externally examined thesis of 60,000 words (Part 2). Professional doctorate programmes differ from the majority of research programmes in that, due to their significant taught component, they are subject to validation.

Features of the programme: The first distinctive feature for students on the programme is that it provides a cohort-based two-part route to a doctoral award assessed against the University's doctoral criteria. Through this, the cohort gain a shared experience and a level of peer support that is frequently missing from the more individual approach of other doctoral programmes such as the PhD.

The second distinctive feature is that, as it recruits students, educational practitioners, managers and policy-makers from across a wide range of professional sites, the course tutors and the students are not only able to draw upon this experience, but are also able to reflect understandings, gained from discussions, readings and other activities, back to it.

The third distinctive feature is that it consistently questions, through both the taught element of Part 1 of the programme as well as the individual research of Part 2, the ontological, epistemological and methodological foundations of knowledge – how we know what we know, and how we come to know it.

The fourth distinctive feature is that it is focused not only on some aspect of educational policy or practice, but is also relevant to that individual's own professional practice.

The fifth distinctive feature relates to regular opportunities to participate in seminars, writing retreats, reading groups and student conferences (at School and College

level) throughout Part 1 and Part 2. These provide a strand of continuity and for continued peer support and critical reflection. These events enable students to present their own work and to engage with that of others.

Educational Aims: The learning outcomes of the taught element of the Programme provide the foundation for their further development and enhancement in the research element. They are achieved through the following aims that address both the SEEC 'taught doctorate' level criteria and the ESRC education subject-specific domains of expertise:

To develop knowledge and understanding of the field of educational research, and the techniques, methodologies and epistemologies underlying different methods of empirical or philosophical enquiry.

To develop the ability to adapt such knowledge and skills to new situations, concerns and areas of research, and the ability to work with theoretical/research knowledge at the forefront of the discipline.

To develop the ability to analyse and manage the implications of ethical dilemmas, to understand the relationship between the researcher and the researched, and the range of concepts such as objectivity, subjectivity and reflexivity in educational research.

To develop the cognitive and intellectual skills leading to critical awareness and analysis of complexities and contradictions in data or in areas of knowledge, and to synthesise and evaluate data, scholarship and methodologies, and to act independently and with originality in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.

To develop, as an independent and self-critical learner, key transferable skills that include the ability to work and learn in a variety of situations and with a wide range of learning resources.

To develop the ability to communicate complex or contentious information clearly

and effectively to diverse audiences.

To develop the ability to operate, with responsibility, and largely autonomously and with initiative, in complex and unpredictable/specialised contexts that may be at the forefront of knowledge.

The candidate, at the submission of the final thesis, is required to demonstrate that they have met the requirements of the University descriptor for doctoral study, and that these are met through the individual research project of Part 2, examined through the thesis and the viva.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1.   Interrogate ethical issues and the positionality of the researcher in practice-based research studies.

PO2.   Analyse and critically review policies and practices of education within a variety of educational and professional contexts.

PO3.   Identify and analyse the influences on the development of educators' professional identities.

PO4.   Apply a critical approach to identifying theories relevant to learning, teaching and education in diverse contexts.

PO5.   Explore the different philosophical underpinnings of educational research and the methods, methodologies and epistemologies which are available to researchers.

PO6.   Design and provide a rationale for an empirical research study in a specified educational context and be able to articulate data gathering and analysis processes.

PO7.   Define a personal value position in relation to educational research and practice and articulate how it informs research design.

PO8.   Identify and critically analyse one or more existing fields of educational research and demonstrate deep understanding of these fields.

Assessment strategy: The EdD assessment strategy is guided by UWE's Enhancement Framework Design Notes and as such aligns with UWE's values: ambitious, inclusive, innovative, collaborative and enterprising.

The EdD assessment strategy is programmatic by design which means that the assessments in Part 1 (taught part, postgraduate taught PGT) support students in developing their skills and understanding of their substantive research area in tandem with their research skills which will be the foundation for their research work conducted in Part 2 (research part, postgraduate research PGR).

Part 1 Assessment Approaches

The assessment approaches used in Part 1 of the EdD programme align with the norms of debate and problematisation of ideas within the academic discipline of Education.

The assessment approaches have been chosen so that students will develop the understanding and skills they will need to succeed both within the programme and also beyond the programme e.g. at professional and academic events and in professional and academic publications.

The assessment approaches align with the programme learning outcomes by a) picking up on core concepts expressed in them and b) supporting students to personalise and apply those core concepts within the context of each module's assessment tasks.

The assessment approaches are designed so that students can explore their own professional and research context in relation to the specific focus of each module. This approach is both enquiry-led and a form of personalised learning as each student will generate new understanding of their own specific professional and research context. Each assessment task is open-ended and discursive in nature which supports the features mentioned above: enquiry-led, personalised.

The assessment tasks in Part 1 of the EdD programme are as follows:
Module 1: Action Research, Evaluation and Ethics in Education

Small group presentation and essay

Module 2: Researching Educational Policies and Professional Identities

Individual presentation and essay

Module 3: Theoretical Perspectives on Learning and Teaching

Individual presentation and essay

Module 4: Advanced Preparation for Research

Written research proposal

Part 2 Assessment Approaches

Part 2 of the EdD programme is guided by the Doctoral Academy's postgraduate research degrees code of practice, their regulations and guidelines which in turn conform to higher education norms and practices.

Summative assessment is conducted through an oral examination (known as a viva voce) in which a written thesis of 60,000 words is discussed.

Formative assessment is carried out throughout the time the student spends in Part 2 of their studies, at regular intervals. These milestone assessments involve an oral examination in which a piece of written work is discussed.

Further formative assessment takes place during individual supervisory tutorials between the student and their supervisory team.

Formal assessment of knowledge and understanding is through the assessed presentations and written assignments of Part 1 of the programme, and the thesis and viva of Part 2.

Non-formal, formative assessment is through the individual supervisory tutorials and the group discussions of the taught units.

Intellectual Skills:

Formal assessment of intellectual skills is through the assessed presentations and written assignments of Part 1 of the programme, and the thesis and viva of Part 2.

Non-formal, formative assessment is through the individual supervisory tutorials and

the group discussions of the taught units.

Subject Professional/Practical Skills:
Formal assessment of subject, professional and practical skills is through the assessed presentations and written assignments of Part 1 of the programme, and the thesis and viva of Part 2.

Non-formal, formative assessment is through the individual supervisory tutorials and the group discussions of the taught units.

Transferable Skills:
Formal assessment of subject, professional and practical skills is through the assessed presentations and written assignments of Part 1 of the programme, and the thesis and viva of Part 2.

Non-formal, formative assessment is through the individual supervisory tutorials and the group discussions of the taught units.

Student support: Students on the EdD programme are encouraged to participate in events and workshops organised by the UWE Doctoral Academy which provide skills development and networking opportunities for doctoral students across disciplines.

The College provides funding for activities which support EdD students' learning needs, for example, attending conferences relevant to each students' area of interest.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

In order to achieve the Doctor of Education students complete two elements: Part 1 (taught modules) and Part 2 (research thesis).

Part 1: Completion of 120 credits at Level 7 (Year 1 and Year 2)

Part 2: Completion of a 60,000 word thesis examined at viva by external and internal examiners, as per the Professional Doctorate Framework. (Year 3 - Year 6)
Progression to Part 2: 120 credits at level 7

Year 1 Compulsory Modules Part 1 Year 1

The student must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules Part 1 Year 1.

Action Research and Evaluation in Education
Researching Educational Policies and Professional Identities

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UTLG7X-30-M	Action Research, Evaluation and Ethics in Education 2026-27	30
UTLG85-30-M	Researching Educational Policies and Professional Identities 2026-27	30

Year 2

In order to achieve the Doctor of Education students complete two elements: Part 1 (taught modules) and Part 2 (research thesis).

Year 2

Part 1: Completion of 120 credits at Level 7 (Year 1 and Year 2)

Year 2 Compulsory Modules Part 1 Year 2

The student must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules Part 1 Year 2.

Theoretical Perspectives on Teaching and Learning
Advanced Preparation for Research

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UTLG7U-30-M	Theoretical Perspectives on Teaching and Learning 2027-28	30
UTLG7Y-30-M	Advanced Preparation for Research 2027-28	30

Year 3

In order to achieve the Doctor of Education students complete two elements: Part 1 (taught modules) and Part 2 (research thesis).

Year 3

Part 2: Completion of a 60,000 word thesis examined at viva by external and internal examiners, as per the Professional Doctorate Framework.
The duration of part two varies for each student, usually between 2 years to 4 years.

Year 3 Thesis

Students must complete a 60,000 word thesis. The Thesis will take 2-4 years.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
THESIS	Doctoral Thesis 2028-29	0

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Students who complete this award will have demonstrated skills, understanding, experience and knowledge in areas including:

Research design, evaluation and execution;

Critical engagement with existing research and theories, including those on learning and teaching;

Generation of viable research questions;

Critical awareness of ethical issues in their own and others' research;

Skills in the analysis of policies affecting educational practice and their impact on professional identities.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

Subject benchmarks: i) QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications; ii) Doctoral level SEEC (South East England Credit); iii) UWE Doctoral descriptor.

Doctoral programme: ESRC recognised the EdD programme as meeting its doctoral programme requirements.

As a doctorate the EdD addresses the University's commitment to the development of Postgraduate Research.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures: Academic regulations and procedures - Academic information | UWE Bristol

Assessment Regulations

Progression to Part 2

A student, who has successfully gained 120 credits but who wishes (or is counselled) to withdraw at this point, may be considered for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Research.

Twelve months following progression to Part 2, the student is required to submit a report detailing the development of their research, and this, in line with University requirements as set out in the Code of Practice and the UWE Academic Regulatory Framework, forms the basis of their Progression Viva which can lead to continued registration, re-submission of the report, or withdrawal from the programme.

In subsequent years, the student and the Director of Studies are required to complete an annual progress report, after which continued registration is approved or not. The College Research Degrees' Committee receives any request for a change in registration, such as period of suspension or withdrawal.

The final assessment of the programme is the Part 2 thesis and viva involving

external and, for non-UWE staff, internal examiners (see the UWE and the UWE Academic Regulatory Framework and the PGR Code of Practice). The thesis is 60,000 words in length and, unlike the slightly longer PhD thesis, includes a small section of critical reflection on the significance of the study for the candidate's professional practice. The first possible submission date for the thesis is 24 months from the start of Part 2. The final possible submission date is 48 months from the start of Part 2.

The procedure for the examination of the thesis is the same as that for the PhD in accordance with the University Academic Regulations.