Part A – University of Southampton Doctoral Programme Profile 2020/21

Part A of this document is the University of Southampton Doctoral Programme Profile, which provides a concise summary of the main features of a doctoral programme at the University of Southampton, and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Part B of this document is a programme-specific Doctoral Profile, which provides more Faculty and programme-specific detail.

This profile should be read alongside the University of Southampton's *Regulations Research Degrees* and the *Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision*.

Research Environment

The University of Southampton is changing the world for the better, working with industry, governments and research institutions to make a global impact. We are a world-class research-intensive Russell Group University; over 97% of our research has been assessed as world-leading and internationally excellent in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014. The University of Southampton is strongly committed to providing the very best learning experience to all our students in a friendly and stimulating environment. We are known nationally and internationally for our excellence in research and teaching, and are continually improving the scope and delivery of our activities, we aim to generate a community of doctoral graduates equipped to act as research leaders in the most pressing challenges of the 21st century.

Support for student learning

There are numerous facilities and services to support the learning of research students at the University of Southampton, some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more to students within particular Faculty or discipline areas. Information about support offered across the University can be found on the 'University life' pages of the website. Information about Faculty/programme specific support is detailed in programme-specific profiles.

Programme Outcomes

Having successfully completed a doctoral programme, a research student will be able to demonstrate:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline and merit publication
- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or an area of professional practice
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry

Professional Development and Transferable Skills

It is University policy that research students have access to a suitable programme of research skills, professional development, and transferable skills training which address individual needs and help research students to prepare for their subsequent careers. The Doctoral College delivers a range of skills training and personal development opportunities to meet the needs of researchers from across all of our disciplines. The provision has been informed by the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and an extensive range of development opportunities aligned with the RDF is listed on the Doctoral College webpages.

Progression

The following summary should be read in conjunction with your Faculty Postgraduate Handbook and the University Regulations as specified in Section V of the Calendar.

Research students will be required to undertake three Progression Reviews during their studies within the timescales shown in the table below. In all cases, the time windows refer to periods in which progression decisions must be made. These timings may be adjusted on a pro-rata basis for students registered on non-standard research programmes where other duties are a formal part of the programme.

Assessment in each Progression Review will be based on a piece of submitted work, followed by a viva with a Progression Review Panel. Two attempts at each review are permitted; and failure to meet the criteria for a successful progression review will lead to a termination of candidature in line with the *Procedures for Circumstances that may lead to Withdrawal or Termination.* Interim Progression Reviews will take place for part-time students who have not undergone a Progression Review in the previous 12 months. Exceptional Progression Reviews may be scheduled, on the direction of the Director of Faculty Graduate School, if significant academic concerns have been raised about a research student's candidature. The format of assessment for each milestone can vary by Faculty, and by discipline. Details on the formats of assessments are stated in Faculty handbooks.

	Full time		*Part Time*	
	First attempt	*Second attempt*	*First attempt*	*Second attempt*
First Progression Review	*Months 8-10*	*Before the end of month 12*	*Months 18-21*	*Before the end of month 24*
Second Progression Review (Confirmation)	*Months 18-21*	*Before the end of month 24*	*Months 30-42*	*Before the end of month 48*
Third Progression Review	*Months 30-33*	*Before the end of month 36*	*Months 61-66*	*Before the end of month 72*

Confirmation of PhD status/Transfer/Upgrade from MPhil to PhD

Research students must successfully meet the requirements of a Confirmation panel to submit for a PhD. The Second Progression Review will form the Confirmation. The student must meet the criteria set, and provide the supporting evidence, as detailed the Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision. The format of assessment can vary by Faculty, and by discipline. Students should be aware that the Panel may recommend that a student is transferred to an MPhil programme if the criteria are not met. With regards to the transfer of programme, the University will comply with its obligations under the relevant immigration legislation which may be updated from time to time. A student who is concerned about his/her entitlement to remain in the UK following a failure to progress should seek urgent advice from the Student Visa Guidance Service. Full details can be found in the Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision.

Thesis Submission and Examination

The maximum period of candidature, including nominal registration but excluding periods of suspension is four years (48 months) for full-time candidature and seven years (84 months) for part-time candidature. A research student who fails to submit a thesis by the end of the maximum period of study shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the course.

The maximum length of a thesis is 75,000 words in the case of a PhD, or 50,000 words in the case of an MPhil. The thesis is considered by at least one internal and one external examiner and a viva held. Both the written thesis and the performance of the candidate at the viva are assessed independently.

Please note: As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be

revised during a student's period of registration; however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our Disclaimer to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Fees, Additional Costs and Funding

The current fees charged for doctoral programmes are found on the University Postgraduate Fees and Funding website which also gives details of some opportunities to obtain funding for your PhD

Research students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments, laboratory reports and dissertations as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. If there are additional costs, these will be detailed in the programme-specific profile.

Intermediate exit points (where available)

MPhil: In some cases, research students may not or cannot continue through to completion of the PhD. Students may make such decisions for themselves, or it can be based on unsatisfactory performance at one of the formal milestones described above. If a student decides to carry out research, but at MPhil, they will need to transfer onto an MPhil programme. In any case, an MPhil may be awarded only after successful examination of a suitable thesis by an internal and external examiner and passing a viva voce. See the University Calendar for further details on the award of an MPhil

Other intermediate exit points may be available; these will be detailed in the programme-specific profile.

Admission

At a minimum, successful applicants must meet the admissions requirements of the University Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision. Additional admissions criteria may be set in programme-specific profiles.

Applications are submitted using the University online application form. A full guide to this process may be downloaded from the accompanying guidance notes. Applicants may be interviewed and references will be taken up. A formal project proposal is not required, but applicants should indicate the area of their research interests at the time of application.

Part B – PhD Doctoral Programme Profile

Medicine

This Programme Profile provides.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Final award	PhD
Name of academic discipline	Medicine (Cancer Sciences, Clinical & Experimental Sciences, Human Development & Health, Primary Care & Population Sciences, Medical Education)
Interim Exit awards	MPhil
FHEQ level of final award	Level 8
Director of the Faculty Graduate School	Dr Ashley Pringle
Date Programme Profile was last revised	25/03/2019

All PGR Programme Profiles should be read alongside the *University of Southampton's Regulations for Research Degrees and the Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision.*

Admissions Requirements

At a minimum, successful applicants must meet the admissions requirements of the University Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision.

Subject-specific criteria: A minimum of an upper second class degree (or international equivalent) in a related subject.

English Language requirement for candidates whose first language is not English:
Applicants whose first language is not English are required to demonstrate that they have reached a satisfactory standard of English achieving an overall IELTS score of 7.0 or greater with a minimum of 6.0 in each discipline (University Band 2D). Other University-approved English language tests will be considered (full details can be found here).

Other Criteria:
All candidates whose first language is not English and who require a visa to study must comply with the minimum requirements for language proficiency set by UK Visas and Immigration for the issuance of the visa.

Candidates will not be able to register for the programme until they have received an offer letter and met and/or accepted the conditions laid out in it.

Students from outside the UK/EU may require an appropriate visa and ATAS to be in place prior to the commencement of the project.

Funding

Any offer of a place is distinct and different from any offer of funding. Offers of funding will depend on the availability of funds, the rules governing source of the funds, the academic competition for them, as well as eligibility due to nationality. This may vary from year to year and within each annual recruitment cycle.

This programme is eligible for funding from the University of Southampton's Postgraduate Scholarship Fund.

Fees

The current fees may be found here. Students in receipt of a studentship may have their fees and sometimes receive a stipend.

Procedure for Application

Apply using the University online application form. A full guide to this process may be downloaded from here.

All applicants will be interviewed and two academic references will be taken up.

At least two members of academic staff will consider the application.

Programme Outline

Brief outline of the programme
The University of Southampton is strongly committed to providing the very best learning experience to all our students in a friendly and stimulating environment. We are known nationally and internationally for our excellence in research and teaching, and are continually improving the scope and delivery of our activities, we aim to generate a community of doctoral graduates equipped to act as research leaders within the biomedical and clinical medicine fields.

Aims of the Programme
The aims of the programme are to provide each research student with:

- experience of, and the opportunity to gain expertise in, rigorous, leading edge research in a biomedical or clinical medicine discipline;
- broad knowledge of the contextual background of your research problem within the field of medical sciences;
- a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations of your chosen discipline and area of research;
- training in generic and transferable research skills;
- a high quality and intellectually stimulating experience of learning in a supportive, research-led environment;
- communication and presentation skills through opportunities to present at local, national and international conferences, publication in academic journals, and the production of progress reports and a final thesis;
- the ability to interpret and critically evaluate research and scholarship in you research area;
- the ability to conceptualise, design, implement and manage research for the generation of new knowledge, tools, applications or understanding at the forefront of the biomedical and clinical sciences;
- the ability to create and interpret new knowledge through original research of a quality to satisfy peer review and merit publication;

- the capacity to present ideas, arguments and research findings effectively to a variety of specialist and non-specialist audiences
- the ability to contribute to the research and development needs of the discipline/sector

Mode of Delivery
The maximum length of study for our PhD programmes is 48 months (full time registration) or 84 months (part-time registration).

Research programmes will be delivered at both the Southampton General Hospital Site and the Highfield Campus. Some projects may also involve working with collaborative partners within the NHS, other HEIs or industry.

All students will be allocated a supervisory team of at least two members, one of whom will be the 'coordinating supervisor'. The coordinating supervisor should be an academic member of University of Southampton staff. The supervisory team must comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Current scientific and technological principles underlying your PhD topic
- General mathematical and statistical tools and approaches relevant to your PhD topic
- Current research issues relevant to your PhD topic.
- The terminology used in your PhD topic.
- Theory, practice, analysis and interpretation of data in your PhD topic.
- Theoretical and empirical developments at the research frontiers in your PhD subject.
- The principles of research design and research strategy.

Learning and Teaching Methods
You will develop core knowledge and understanding via guided independent study and your own research, laboratory and practical training, supervision meetings, local seminars, opportunities to attend conferences and summer schools, and through technical workshops.

Assessment methods
Regular meetings with the supervisory team. Formal assessment of progress will be through a written review document and viva voce (with independent examiner) at stage 1, confirmation report and viva voce (with two independent examiners) at stage 2, written progress report and presentation to supervisors at stage 3 with the final thesis due after four years (full time) or seven years (part-time). The period of candidature may include up to a maximum of one year in nominal registration – as outlined in the Regulations for Research Degrees).

Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills

Having successfully completed the PhD programme you will have developed a range of intellectual, practical and transferable skills that characterise a scientist's approach to research and scholarship, including the ability to:

- Identify and collate information from a variety of sources relevant to a specific area of research and/or a particular biomedical or clinical problem.

- Interpret and critically evaluate information from academic papers, patents, technical manuals, government and industrial sources.
- Modify and apply existing theory in novel situations and circumstances.
- Formulate a research problem and develop appropriate research methodologies
- Synthesise ideas and apply creative and original thought to the solution of complex scientific problems.
- Develop, test and evaluate models of complex scientific systems.
- Create and evaluate new knowledge through research of a quality to satisfy peer review and merit publication

Teaching and Learning Methods

Supervisory meetings, seminars, independent research (including projects carried out with collaborative partners where applicable), generic and technical skills training (some compulsory, some optional).

Assessment methods

Written progression reports, theses & viva voce examinations. Regular progress reports to the supervisory team may be required.

Professional Development and Transferable Skills

Having successfully completed this programme you will be able to:

- Undertake independent study.
- Access and use library based and electronic source material in an effective manner;
- Prepare, process and present data, using appropriate qualitative and quantitative techniques;
- Design, implement and project manage a substantial research project.
- Write-up the results of scientific research for publication or other purposes.
- Present the results of work through oral or written presentations in a form suitable for specialists or a more general audience.
- Work safely in a research environment, with awareness of appropriate risk assessment procedures.
- Manage time between diverse tasks.
- Collect and integrate several lines of evidence to formulate and test hypotheses;
- Read, use and attribute the work of others in an appropriate manner;
- Demonstrate a high level of competence in the use of IT, including the Internet, word-processing, databases and spreadsheets;
- Continue to develop the skills necessary for self-managed and life-long learning (such as working independently and within groups, time management and organisation);
- Identify and work towards targets for personal, academic and career development;
- Develop an adaptable and flexible approach to study and work;
- Demonstrate awareness and understanding of the ethical and legal issues associated with the conduct of research;
- Engage in critical discourse with colleagues, reflect on and constructively evaluate one's own research and that of others

Teaching and Learning Methods

You will develop your subject-specific and general and transferable skills via workshops and other interactive teaching sessions; use of the Internet for accessing data and general communication with staff and students; professional development workshops; research skills workshops; major independent research on a topic at the forefront of biomedical and clinical research; and individual supervision meetings. At the beginning of your programme you will be required to undertake an Academic Needs Analysis in conjunction with your supervisors in order to help you prioritise your skills development. This will be reviewed at regular intervals throughout your programme.

Assessment methods

Not all these skills are specifically assessed, but their acquisition will enhance your performance in other aspects of the programme. Assessment of some of these skills will be achieved through a combination of regular meetings with your supervisors, preparation of reports, poster presentations, oral presentations, seminar and workshop presentations, and the formal progression milestones (see below).

Programme Structure

Unlike undergraduate study, the open-ended nature of research means it is not possible to always predict the structure of a programme of study leading to a thesis. The following is an indicative list. Where there is a definite requirement to undertake a certain activity this is stated.

Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's Regulations for Research Degrees as set out in the University Calendar.

All students will initially be registered for PhD, and continuing registration on the PhD programme will be confirmed midway through their programme.

Stage 1

After one month you should have completed your Academic Needs Assessment and research plan and determined your initial technical and generic skills training requirements. You should have agreed a schedule of meetings with your supervisory team and have an agreed plan of work for the initial stages of your project.

You will be required to undertake your first formal progression review by the end of month 10 (full-time) or month 21 (part-time). For this, you will need to submit a written report (approximately 5000 words) containing a literature review of the background to your project and a report on your progress to date (including detailed methods, results and discussion). You will also need to submit a short reflection/assessment of your progress so far. A progression review meeting (viva voce) will be held with one of your supervisors and an independent assessor to consider your knowledge and understanding of the project, your understanding of the wider context of the work, your progress to date and your plans to develop the project. The panel may recommend that you progress to the next stage of your project or that you may require re-examination. If re-examination is required, the format of the second examination will remain the same, and must be completed by the end of your 12th month (full-time) or 24th month (part time) of candidature. The panel of the second examination may recommend either that you progress to the next stage or that your candidature is terminated.

The supervisory team is the main source of advice for students but you can also gain access to independent and impartial advice about any issues you may have by talking to the PGR mentor for your academic unit. You may also talk to the Graduate School office, any member of the Graduate School, or have matters raised at the Graduate School Board meetings through your research group student representative.

Stage 2

Confirmation of registration on the PhD programme must be completed by the end of month 21 (full-time) or month 42 (part-time). A confirmation report containing an overview of the research problem and the rationale for the project, a substantive literature review, significant results and analysis and well-developed plans for work for the remainder of the project should be submitted.

Typically, this report will be 15,000-20,000 words in length although this will vary with the nature of the project and the amount of information presented. A *viva voce* takes place at which the supervisors and internal examiner may examine you on any aspect of the confirmation report, research to date and future plans for the project. The examiners must be satisfied that you have the potential to undertake independent research and produce a doctoral level thesis within the timescale of the programme. The examiners may recommend either confirmation of PhD registration and progression to Stage 3 or re-examination. If re-examination is required, the format of the second examination will remain the same and must be completed by month 24 (full-time) or month 48 (part-time). The panel of the second examination may recommend confirmation of PhD registration and progression to Stage 3, transfer of candidature to MPhil or termination of candidature. All reports will be returned to the Faculty Graduate School Office, and is the outcome confirmed by the Graduate School Directorate and reported to the Faculty Programmes Committee.

Stage 3

Evidence of continued progress may be provided by several methods including continued consolidation of research findings, publications, presentations in a suitable venue (e.g. conference). Formal review of progress in stage 3 will be undertaken by the end of month 33 (full-time) or month 66 (part-time). You will need to submit a report including details of your progress since the confirmation report, details of the proposed structure of your thesis including a plan for each chapter and details of progress in each section and a workplan for the remainder of your candidature up to submission of your final thesis. A progression review meeting with all of the supervisory team will be held to determine that sufficient progress has been made and that you are likely to submit your final thesis within candidature. The progression review meeting will also determine what is required prior to you being eligible for nominal registration. The panel may either recommend that you progress to the final stage of your candidature or that you be re-examined. If re-examination is required, this must be completed by the end of month 36 (full time) or month 72 (part-time). The format of the written submission for the re-examination will remain the same, but the progression review panel will constitute one supervisor and an independent assessor. The panel must determine that there is sufficient evidence to support a submission of the final thesis within candidature, and that you will be able to successfully defend your work in a viva voce examination. The re-examination panel may either recommend that you progress to the final stage of candidature, submit your work for MPhil or that your candidature is terminated.

Stage 4

The final thesis must be submitted *at the latest* by the end of your candidature (which may include a period of nominal registration). The thesis is considered by at least one internal and one external examiner and a *viva voce* held. Possible outcomes are the recommendation to the University of the award of the PhD; award of the PhD subject to minor corrections to the thesis; award of the PhD subject to modest corrections to the thesis; major revision of the thesis with the award of the PhD subject to a further examination or rejection of the thesis with the recommendation that the PhD should not be awarded. *In the latter case an MPhil may be awarded based on earlier performance in the viva.* All examiners reports will be returned to the Faculty Graduate School Office, the outcome confirmed by the Graduate School Directorate and reported to the Faculty Programmes Committee.

Support for student learning and development

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)
- standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Student Services Centre
- Enabling Services offering assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, dyslexia, mental health issue or specific learning difficulties
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career Destinations, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
- a range of personal support services : mentoring, counselling, residence support service, chaplaincy, health service
- a Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.
- a Doctoral College, which provides professional development and skills training
- An appropriate research environment, as set out in the Code of Practice

The Students' Union provides

- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

Associated with your programme you will be able to access:

- Faculty induction and training Programme
- Training in technical and generic skills
- Research infrastructure appropriate to your research project
- Access to appropriate desk space and computing facilities (as per Faculty policies).
- Academic supervisory team who will provide advice and support throughout the programme and who are actively engaged in research closely related to your chosen area.
- The Graduate School Office for the Faculty