

# FAQ: Doctoral Programme

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## **What are the eligibility requirements?**

You will need a minimum of an upper second class (2.1) honours degree from a UK university or equivalent overseas. You will also need to have completed, or be studying for, a specialist Master's degree in a subject directly related to your proposed area of research. We would expect a good mark overall in the specialist Masters degree and evidence of high achievement (ideally a distinction) in the associated dissertation.

## **Am I eligible to apply for the PhD in Finance?**

Admission to our PhD in Finance is extremely competitive and attracts international applications of the highest calibre. Students who tend to be successful in gaining admission to our PhD in Finance are high achievers from a finance-related MSc programme at an institution equivalent to Warwick. We would normally require a Masters in Economics or Finance but may consider a Masters in Accounting and Finance or Financial Mathematics with a significant Finance component.

We receive over 100 applications for fewer than 10 vacancies every year. As a result, even someone with a good first degree and good master's degree may not necessarily be accepted.

## **Can I apply to the Doctoral Programme without a specialist Masters qualification?**

We normally expect applicants to hold a relevant specialist Master's degree in order to be considered for our Doctoral Programme. You may wish to consider one of the specialist Master's degrees offered by WBS - see <http://www.wbs.warwick.ac.uk/students/masters> for details. Please note that entry on to a specialist Master's degree at WBS will not guarantee a place on our Doctoral Programme. A separate decision would be made while you complete your specialist Masters degree.

## Can I apply to the programme if I have an MBA?

We normally expect applicants to hold a relevant specialist Master's degree in order to be considered for our Doctoral Programme.

If you do not hold a specialist Master's degree in addition to your MBA, you have two options:

1. You can make a special case, with the support of your prospective WBS supervisor, outlining the relevance of your MBA to your proposed research area (the project or dissertation for example may be relevant to your proposed PhD research topic). The case will then be considered by the Associate Dean for the Doctoral Programme who will decide whether your MBA and any other relevant research or work experience is sufficient to meet our eligibility criteria. Find details on our academic staff at [www.wbs.ac.uk/faculty](http://www.wbs.ac.uk/faculty). Please note that this option is not open to applicants for the PhD in Finance programme.
2. You can undertake a specialist Master's degree and then re-apply to the Doctoral Programme. You may wish to consider one of the specialist Master's degrees offered by WBS - see <http://www.wbs.warwick.ac.uk/students/masters> for details. Please note that entry on to a Specialist Master's degree at WBS will not guarantee a place on our Doctoral Programme. A separate decision would be made while you complete your specialist Masters degree.

## **Will I have to take an English Language Test**

A good command of English is clearly important for study at the M.Phil./PhD level, regardless of the research area.

If your specialist Master's degree is from the UK or other majority English-speaking country, you are not required to submit proof of proficiency in English so long as you have completed your Masters course within two years of the proposed start date of your doctoral degree, although language competence is still a requirement. Otherwise, you are required to have achieved

- IELTS score of at least 7.0, or
- TOEFL with a paper based score of at least 620, computer based score of 260 or internet based testing score of 105.

## How do I apply to the Doctoral Programme?

First you need to write your research proposal. Advice about this can be found at <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/writing.cfm>

You should then complete an online application making sure that the research proposal is the main document that you upload in the first instance:

<https://postgrad.warwick.ac.uk/swift.web/skins/pgapp/login.aspx>. If you have discussed your application with a prospective supervisor, please include their name on the application form.

If you are also applying for a scholarship please indicate this in the appropriate part of the online form.

The supporting documentation should be supplied electronically, using the uploading facility within two weeks of making the application: [www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pg/apply/supportingdocuments](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pg/apply/supportingdocuments).

The supporting documentation required for upload to your online application comprises:

- Research proposal
- two academic references (if you supply an email contact for your referees they will automatically be sent instructions regarding supplying their reference electronically)
- Degree transcripts (both undergraduate and postgraduate levels)
- English language test certificate. This will be required unless you have been working or studying in the UK or in a majority English speaking country for the last two years. (TOEFL with a paper based score of at least 620, computer based score of 260 or internet based testing score of 105 or IELTS score of at least 7.0 )

Your application will not be considered without full supporting documentation.

If you meet our eligibility criteria and we can find a suitable match with a potential supervisor, you will be contacted for a face-to-face or telephone interview

If you need to send hard copies of any documentation they should be sent to:

PG Team 5  
The Postgraduate Admissions Team  
Student Admissions and Recruitment Office  
The University of Warwick  
Coventry CV4 8UW  
Telephone: +44 (0)24 765 24585  
Email: [pgteam5@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:pgteam5@warwick.ac.uk)

## How do I find a potential supervisor?

There are ten academic subject groups at Warwick Business School. Information about these can be found at <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/faculty/subjects/>. Please then following the individual subject links. Once you have identified the most appropriate research group and prospective supervisor(s) for your proposed research you are strongly advised to contact a potential supervisor to discuss your application.

You do not need to have secured a potential supervisor's confirmation of supervision before applying, but it helps a student's application if a supervisor has already indicated some level of interest in the research project.

If you are unable to contact a member of academic staff, you can still apply for entrance. We will search for an appropriate supervisor for you.

In some cases we are unable to supervise research projects because we do not have the required expertise, or a member of academic staff is already at the permitted limit of research students.

## **What should I put in my research proposal?**

Your research proposal should provide approximately 2,000 words, plus your timetable and references or a short bibliography. Further advice about writing your research proposal can be found at <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/writing.cfm>

### **Can I study for my PhD as a part-time student?**

It is possible to study for our main Doctoral Programme part-time, but you would need to be available to attend the compulsory taught Research Training Programme in the first two terms of the first academic year. Your application to study part-time would also need to be supported by your prospective supervisor. In order to be considered for part-time study, you must be resident and working in the UK. There is no option to register for the PhD in Finance on a part-time basis.

### **Can I be resident overseas?**

No, you will be expected to be resident in the UK for the duration of your doctoral studies here at Warwick Business School. You are of course allowed to make overseas visits in order to attend conferences, training, and also to undertake fieldwork which are relevant to your studies.

### **Do you offer a PhD by distance learning?**

No, we do not offer our doctoral programme by distance learning. You can apply to study part-time, but you would need to be resident and working in the UK, and there is a compulsory taught part of the programme which you must attend here at WBS for the first two terms of the first year of registration.

## **What funding opportunities are available?**

There are a number of different funding opportunities available to you as a doctoral researcher at WBS. Up to date information about funding opportunities can be found on our website. Please see: <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/funding.cfm> .

Please note that, in most cases, you need to hold an offer of a place on our Doctoral Programme to be eligible for funding. We recommend early application. It is also helpful if on your application form you clearly state in the section regarding funding any scholarships for which you intend to apply.

For UK and EU students there is the opportunity to apply for ESRC funding. Details of these awards including deadlines can be found at <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/esrc.cfm>

## Can I join WBS as a Visiting Student?

Yes, we accept visiting students.

Visiting Students can come to WBS for periods of up to one year, and in shorter periods such as one or more months. Common periods of attachment are three or six months.

Prospective visiting students need to complete the standard online application form. See: [www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pgapply](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pgapply) . You will need to make contact with a prospective supervisor here at WBS as they will need to agree to provide supervision for the duration of your visit.

The documentation that will be required for you to be accepted as a visiting student will be:

- proof of English language capability (IELTS 7.0 or TOEFL equivalent)) or submission (and acceptance) of an English language waiver request by your proposed supervisor here at WBS
- a letter from your current supervisor or Head of Department at your home institution confirming that you are a current student and detailing a reference / letter of support for your period at WBS.

The fee structure for visiting postgraduate research students is:

- no fee for a registration period of less than 10 weeks ;
- 50% of the full fee for a registration period of 2-12 months , pro rata for the period of the visit.

You may find it helpful to visit Warwick University's International Office web site information and advice regarding applying for a visa for the duration of your studies here.

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international/immigration/exchange/>

## **Can I apply for a DBA ?**

We do not currently offer a Doctoral of Business Administration at Warwick Business School.

## Do you offer a joint PhD programme?

We do not currently offer a joint PhD programme. However, you may like to consider applying coming as a visiting student as an alternative. All applicants - including those applying as Visiting Students - need to complete the standard online application form [www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pgapply](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pgapply) . You will need to make contact with a prospective supervisor here at WBS as they will need to agree to provide supervision for the duration of your visit.

The application documentation required is:

- proof of English language proficiency (IELTS 7.0 or TOEFL equivalent) or submission and acceptance of an English language waiver request by your proposed supervisor here at WBS
- a letter from your current supervisor or Head of Department at your home institution confirming that you are a current student and detailing a reference / letter of support for your period at WBS.

The fee structure for visiting postgraduate research students is:

- no fee for a registration period of less than 10 weeks ;
- 50% of the full fee for a registration period of 2-12 months , pro rata for the period of the visit.

## **What is the compulsory attendance requirement for the PhD Programme?**

Both the main Doctoral Programme and the PhD in Finance require attendance at compulsory taught modules. Details of the current compulsory research training programme for the main Doctoral Programme can be found at <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/structure.cfm>

Details of the PhD finance programme can be found at <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/finance.cfm>

It is a requirement that all students attend and pass the compulsory taught modules before you can upgrade your registration from MPhil to PhD.

## **Are there any research topics for which supervisors are looking for students?**

The following link will give you some research topics for which academics are currently looking for students. Please see: <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/phd-topics.cfm>

## **What is the deadline for applications?**

We do not operate a formal closing date for applications but our Doctoral Programme begins at the start of the academic year in October and the majority of places are allocated between January and May in the year of admission. Generally, formal applications should be made by 30 June at the latest for entry in October of the same year. If you apply after this date, we will do our best to process your application but there may not be the time needed, especially if you need a Visa. It is sometimes difficult to arrange supervision in the later summer months because academic staff will often be away from the University.

If you wish to apply for a scholarship, please note the applications deadlines are much earlier in the year, 31 January 2012. For information on scholarships go to:

<http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/funding.cfm>

## **Can I apply for a MPhil degree?**

All doctoral research students are initially registered for the MPhil programme and are later upgraded to PhD. This is the standard process at most UK universities.

Registration is upgraded from MPhil to PhD towards the end of Year 1 if a student passes the taught research training modules and the PhD upgrading presentation. Very occasionally a student may be advised to continue with MPhil registration if their circumstances change and they are unable to complete the PhD or if they fail the requirements for upgrading to PhD but do satisfy the requirements for continuing with MPhil.

## Applying to transfer from another university.

The process of transferring to WBS is much the same as applying for entrance, with the additional work required for the agreement of project partners and funding body. There are three steps or parts of the transfer:

- 1) an online application (to satisfy the University and get on their records system)
- 2) sending information to WBS so we can check academic progress and issues such as upgrade, research training and any research ethics approval
- 3) support from your current institution, any funding body, and from any project or sponsoring partners that they are happy for the transfer.

### Step 1: For the University

You will need to follow the Graduate School's guidance for students transferring here. Please see: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/formslibrary/transferring> . This link also has a transfer form to complete and upload.

You also need to make an online application to get yourself on the University's records, upload an abstract and outline of your research accomplished on your thesis to date, and the work which needs to be accomplished. This should be perhaps two to three pages in length

<http://www.wbs.ac.uk/students/doctoral/applying.cfm>.

You will required to upload any supporting documents such as the transfer form and supply your Master's transcript and transcripts of any training/modules undertaken whilst studying for your PhD. Please submit the supporting documentation electronically using the upload facility:

[www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pg/apply/supportingdocuments](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/pg/apply/supportingdocuments)

A letter from your supervisor will be required by PG Admissions and WBS. This could be in the form of a supervisor's report on academic progress to date. You are also likely to be required to submit a second academic reference.

### Step 2: For WBS

We also need to make sure that we as the receiving department are happy with the transfer. The Associate Dean for the Doctoral Programme will require copies of:

- An abstract and outline of your research accomplished on your thesis to date, and the work which needs to be accomplished. This should be perhaps two to three pages in length.
- The exact date of when your registration started at your current university and the end date of your registration had you stayed at your current university (please also include information on any temporary withdrawal from study – if applicable)
- A timeline for the work remaining on your research project, bearing in mind that your submission of thesis for examination must be made within four years (full-time) and seven years (part-time).
- A full outline of the Research Training undertaken at your current institution or elsewhere at PGT or PGR levels. If there were assignments associated with the research training, it would be useful to know the results.

- **The above 4 documents should be uploaded as one main supporting document with your online application form.**
- Whether the upgrade from MPhil to PhD has been accomplished. Any reports supplied to the panel or subsequently given by the panel would be helpful.

**All other documents (including the transfer form) should be uploaded as supplementary documents with your application form, using the link which will be sent to you by Postgraduate Admissions after you have submitted your online application.**

Your current institution's PhD office should inform us of any financial arrangements such as fees from project partners, the amount spent from any allowances such as the ESRC's Research Training Support Grant, and how much of any maintenance payment has been paid.

This information should be sent by email to: [phdadmissions@wbs.ac.uk](mailto:phdadmissions@wbs.ac.uk) .

Step 3: From Project Partners and Funding Body

- Your current institution should write a letter addressed to any funding body eg ESRC, EPSRC, etc., stating that they are happy for the transfer of student and award to go ahead.
- If there is a project partner, they have to write a letter addressed to the funding body stating that they are happy for the transfer to go ahead.

WBS will write a letter to any funding body agreeing to the transfer as well.

The letters should be coordinated at your current institution. You should stay on their system of payments until the transfer of award has been approved and you have received an offer from WBS. Once you have accepted the offer from us, and the transfer of award has been confirmed, our scholarships office can arrange for payments to continue; the date for the transfer of any award and starting at WBS must be the same.

## **Can I still apply for a PhD although my Specialist Master's degree is unrelated to my proposed research area?**

This does not preclude acceptance on the Doctoral Programme but needs to be accompanied by a convincing case of academic achievement/potential in the proposed area. You need to make a case making clear that you have sufficient specialist knowledge and can academically engage with the topic in your proposed area.

## **Can I be enrolled on another course whilst studying on the Doctoral Programme?**

This is not possible. Warwick University will not allow a student to enroll on one of our courses if they are still studying for another course at another institution. You will need to provide proof that you have either completed your course or have withdrawn your registration at your other institution.

This regulation applies also to short term programmes such as vocation qualifications such as accounting exams.

## **My Masters programme will not end until November, and I want to start in October?**

In exceptional circumstances we will allow you to enrol on the Doctoral Programme while you are in the final months of another Masters course. The criteria is that all course work and examinations must have been finished and submitted by 1 October. If there is any work outstanding such as a dissertation to be submitted in late October or a re-sit to be undertaken on the Masters, you cannot start our programme until the following year.

This is because the first six months of the PhD programme has a mandatory, assessed, and intensive Research Training Programme that all students, full and part time, must attend. Upgrade to PhD is dependent on successful completion of the research training and upgrade. If you cannot focus 100% on the research training and upgrade because of a delayed commitment to the Masters course, you should not start the PhD programme.

If, however, you are just awaiting the final Masters results with no further work commitment you can request a temporary enrolment with us. This enrolment is conditional on you subsequently bringing in the Masters final transcript to Student Records when released and proving you have been awarded the degree. If you have not been awarded the degree or require a re-sit or further work, your Warwick registration would likely be suspended until the following year.

## **Can I start on the programme at another time of the year other than 1 October?**

No, the Doctoral Programme has only one entry point for new students per year, and that is 1 October in any academic year. New students cannot start at any other time.

This is because we require students to attend all of the compulsory research training programme, and this runs from the second week in October for two terms. Upgrade to PhD is dependent on successful completion of the research training, its two assignments, and the upgrade review. Joining us mid-stream would mean that you would be at a significant disadvantage in completing the research training and assignments.

The only exception to this rule is if a student is currently a PhD student at another university and wishes to transfer to us having completed a research training programme which is quantifiably similar to our own, and has upgraded to PhD at the other institution (see FAQ on transferring to Warwick).