L-Università
ta' Malta

Guiding Principles for the Professional Development of Doctoral Students at the University of Malta

IN TERMS OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE
DOCTORAL OF PHILOSOPHY – Ph.D. – DEGREE REGULATIONS, 2024

DOCTORAL SCHOOL
2024

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Introduction

The University of Malta is committed to ensure that its doctoral students are trained to develop transferable skills as part of their professional development. This should enhance their employability and augment the quality of their research. This policy is in line with the Salzburg Principles on the reform in doctoral education (2005[1]; 2010[2]) and is endorsed by the European Council for Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (EURODOC[3]).

Throughout the Ph.D. programme, training is provided by the Faculty/Institute/Centre/School where the student is registered and/or by the Doctoral School. This training is meant to augment discipline-specific knowledge and to promote the acquisition of transversal skills, interdisciplinarity, and the acquisition of a broader scientific culture.

The Doctoral School offers a Professional Development Programme which runs annually between October and June. The Programme is advertised on the Doctoral School's website before registrations open in September and in January. The 3- or 6-hour training workshops are delivered by academics hailing from the different Faculties/Institutes/Centres/Schools and by members of the University's senior management. None of the workshops offered as part of the Doctoral School's Professional Development Programme are mandatory with the exception of *DOC6043 Research Integrity and Research Ethics*. Those doctoral students who are involved in any teaching activities are encouraged to follow *DOC6033 Basic Lecturing Skills*.

Doctoral students who commenced their studies from February 2023 onwards must complete approximately 100 hours of training during the course of their Ph.D., as mandated by the Doctor of Philosophy - Ph.D. - Degree Regulations (2023). These hours of training are to be completed by the time that the student signals their intention to submit their thesis for examination. Training and professional development activities may include, but are not limited to:

> auditing taught study-units[4];
> the writing and publishing of academic papers;
> presentations at conferences;
> training sessions organised by the Doctoral School;
> other training sessions that complement the students' doctoral studies and their professional career as doctoral graduates;
> participation at Faculty/Institute/Centre/School seminars, workshops and conferences, and study visits.

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[1]   *Bologna Seminar on "Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society"* (Salzburg, 3-5 February 2005)

[2]   *Salzburg II: Recommendations European Universities' Achievements Since 2005 in Implementing the Salzburg Principles* (EUA, 2010)

[3]   EURODOC, PRESS RELEASE: Eurodoc Report on *'Identifying Transferable Skills and Competences to Enhance Early-Career Researchers Employability and Competitiveness'* (2018)

[4]   University of Malta, 'Auditing Students' <https://www.um.edu.mt/study/auditingstudents/> (2023)

1 | Guiding principles for training

It is understood that doctoral students must be allowed independence and flexibility to grow and develop. Doctoral education is highly individual and by definition original. The path of progress of the individual is unique, in terms of the research project as well as in terms of the individual professional development. In order to uphold this principle, each doctoral student is responsible for the organisation of their training as part of a personal study plan drawn up in close consultation with their supervisory team. The principal supervisor is responsible for endorsing each choice made, ensuring the relevance of the study programme especially when selected training courses or activities fall outside the scope of the training and other activities organised and offered by the University of Malta.

The following should be taken into account when selecting training:

i.   To promote the diversity of training, the number of hours validated for each training activity should not exceed 30 hours.

ii.   The workshop on Research Integrity and Research Ethics offered by the Doctoral School is mandatory and does not count towards the approx. 100 hours of training.

iii. The completion of study-units that are an integral to a student's Ph.D. programme, as stipulated in the letter of acceptance, do not count towards the approx. 100 hours of training.

iv.   Training activities which are not offered by the Doctoral School or in collaboration with it may be validated upon the presentation of a certificate of attendance indicating the name of the training activity followed and the number of hours and signed by the training activity organiser.

v.   Training courses offered by the Doctoral School are not validated by a final examination, but by a certificate of attendance.

vi.   Some workshops offered by the Doctoral School are in high demand, so students should endeavour to register early. The Doctoral School administration will provide students with information about the programme via the mailing list, the University's Newspoint and other social media.

vii. The mode of delivery – in-person, hybrid, remote – of any training is decided by the organiser of the training activity and students may have to make arrangements to ensure that they take part in an activity for which they registered.

viii. Students are encouraged to present their work to the scientific community during seminars organised by the Faculty/Institute/Centre/School or the Doctoral School. Such presentations may take the form of an oral communication or a poster.

ix.   Students are encouraged to take up teaching opportunities in the University entity where they are registered.

2 | Validation of the training

The validation of the training activities will follow the training activities validation guideline. The limit imposed on the number of times that a training activity can be validated is meant to encourage students to sign up for training opportunities that cut across the five categories. It does not, in any way, stop a student from pursuing activities beyond the limit given here. Indeed, students are encouraged to publish more than once and to choose peer-reviewed publication venues carefully to ensure maximum impact in their discipline. If students wish to undertake training of a type that does not fit in the categories below, they ought to contact the Doctoral School for guidance on: ✉ **professionaldevelopment.committee@um.edu.mt**

CATEGORY A	ENHANCING OF SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE	
Type of professional development/training activity	Number of hours validated	Frequency of validation in the course of the doctoral programme
Auditing a study-unit offered by the University of Malta as part of a degree programme	Up to 20 hours	Once
Participation in a doctoral summer school or a doctoral writing retreat (typically over a week/weekend)	Up to 20 hours	Once
Structured placement/internship at an institution of relevance for the research (cannot be less than 30 hours)	30 hours	Once
Participation in workshops offered as part of the UM's Doctoral School Professional Development Programme	As advertised (3 or 6 hours)	Once for each workshop
Participation in doctoral workshops/seminars/courses offered by external institutions	Actual hours attended for a maximum of 10 hours	Once
Lecturing on a degree programme	Actual hours delivered	Up to a maximum of 20 hours
Participation in a Master Class or an international workshop retreat	Up to 20 hours	Once

CATEGORY B	PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH	
Type of professional development/training activity	Number of hours validated	Frequency of validation in the course of the doctoral programme
Presentation of a paper (first author) in a doctoral workshop/seminar/symposium organised by the Faculty/Institute/Centre/School or the Doctoral School	5 hours	Twice
Presentation of a paper (first author) in a national conference	10 hours	Once
Presentation of a paper (first author) in an international conference	20 hours	Once
Presentation of a poster (first author) in a national conference	10 hours	Once
Presentation of a poster (first author) in an international conference	20 hours	Once
Presentation of a work demonstration or delivery of a workshop (main practitioner) in a national conference	Up to 10 hours	Once
Presentation of a work demonstration or delivery of a workshop (main practitioner) in an international conference	Up to 20 hours	Once

CATEGORY C	PUBLICATION AND PEER REVIEWING OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH	
Type of professional development/training activity	Number of hours validated	Frequency of validation in the course of the doctoral programme
Publication of a scholarly contribution in a peer-reviewed publication as first author:		
(i) Chapter in a book published by a non-academic press	5 hours	Once
(ii) Chapter in an edited book published by an academic press	15 hours	Once
(iii) Paper in a local journal, local conference proceedings	20 hours	Once
(iv) Paper in an international journal, international conference proceedings	30 hours	Once
(v) Book reviews or review articles in any venue	2 hours	Once
(vi) Article or critical essay in a performance programme	5 hours	Once
Peer reviewing of a scholarly contribution as first author:		
(vi) Paper submitted to a national conference	2 hours	Once
(vii) Paper submitted to an international conference	3 hours	Once
(viii) Paper submitted to a journal or an edited book	5 hours	Once

CATEGORY C	PUBLICATION AND PEER REVIEWING OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH		
Type of professional development/training activity		Number of hours validated	Frequency of validation in the course of the doctoral programme
Principal performer, director, producer, composer, scriptwriter, conductor, choreographer, film-maker, or principal set/sound/ light designer in a national event/production (concert, dance, theatre, film)		Up to 20 hours	Once
Principal performer, director, producer, composer, scriptwriter, conductor, choreographer, film-maker, or principal set/sound/ light designer in an international event/production (concert, dance, theatre, film)		Up to 30 hours	Once
Ensemble/group performer, or assistant set/sound/light designer in a national event (concert, dance, theatre, film – but not film extra)		Up to 5 hours	Once
Ensemble/group performer, or assistant set/sound/light designer in an international event (concert, dance, theatre, film – but not film extra)		Up to 10 hours	Once

CATEGORY D	CONVENING OF RESEARCH FORA		
Type of professional development/training activity		*Number of hours validated*	*Frequency of validation in the course of the doctoral programme*
Member on the scientific/organising committee of a national conference		10 hours	Once
Member on the scientific/organising committee of an international conference		15 hours	Once

CATEGORY E	PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE		
Type of professional development/training activity		*Number of hours validated*	*Frequency of validation in the course of the doctoral programme*
Participation in the governance of the Doctoral School, as student representatives elected to sit on its Board or the Professional Development Committee		5 hours	Once
Participation in the governance of the Faculty/Institute/ Centre/ School as student representatives elected to sit on its Board		5 hours	Once

3 | The student's portfolio of training

Doctoral students are responsible for completing and updating their portfolio of training which should include a personalised list of all training activities carried out as part of professional development. It should be updated regularly and it should contain the necessary documentation that is required for validation purposes. One template that can be used for the purpose will be provided shortly.

In their annual progress report, students are required to include a list of the training activities that were followed and are planned to be followed as part of their Ph.D. programme.

Validation of the portfolio will be carried out by the Faculty/Institute/Centre/School Doctoral Committee in collaboration with the Doctoral School twice during the course of a Ph.D. programme, when the student:

1. submits a request to transfer their studies from M.Phil. to Ph.D;

2. submits a request to present the thesis for examination.

Nothing in the content of this document takes precedence over *Doctor of Philosophy – Ph.D. – Regulations, 2024* which may be subject to amendment.

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