

Educational  
Research

Lancaster  
University



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# Doctoral Programme in E- Research & Technology Enhanced Learning

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## Programme Information

Part-Time, Structured, Doctoral Programme in  
E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning leading to a PhD.

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## Welcome to the Department of Educational Research

### Who we are

The Department of Educational Research is based in [the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences](#). Our Departmental Research is based upon our three research groupings that meet frequently, collaborate on writing research proposals and run on-going reading groups and seminars.

The PhD in E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning builds on the expertise of the members of the Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning and our extensive experience in running Masters Degrees in advanced learning technologies and networked e-learning.

The Department's three research groups are:

#### **Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning**

Focusing on teaching and learning with digital technologies and with widening digital participation across a range of populations; collaborative/team-learning and the co-construction of 'working knowledge'; learning with simulations; design methodologies, evaluations of ICT supported learning in educational settings.

**Higher Education Research and Evaluation Centre (here@lancaster)** supports a wide range of research and evaluation work that is concerned with higher education in all its manifestations: teaching; research; administration; income generation.

**Centre for Social Justice and Wellbeing in Education** explores questions about equity, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing. Our work is multi-disciplinary - drawing particularly on sociology, linguistics and psychology. It spans a range of formal and informal education contexts including schools, higher education, home and the workplace.

### Why Choose Lancaster?

- A top 10 UK University, receiving the TEF Gold award for our outstanding teaching and learning environment in June, 2017.
- Good student support and a friendly atmosphere.
- All courses allow for personal study and research and are valuable for academic, institutional and personal development.
- International mix of students.
- The Department has consistently been judged to be one of the best in the UK. The results of the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) placed us in the top six research-intensive Education departments in the UK, with 78% of our research activity graded as world leading or internationally excellent and 92% of our academic staff submitted.

## Key Information

### Introduction:

This structured, part-time Doctoral Programme in E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning leads to a PhD. This innovative programme, launched in January 2008, combines a limited number of face-to-face residential meetings with carefully designed 'online' learning activities and peer collaboration. It is available to anyone in the world wishing to develop their e-learning research and practice.

### Modular Structure

#### Part One (Years 1 and 2)

In Part 1 of the programme (Years 1 and 2) students follow five modules, assessed by coursework and cumulatively building knowledge of theory and methods of e-research and learning towards the thesis.

*(Part 1 modules do not always run in this order)*

- Module 1: Research Methods in Education and Social Science Settings: Philosophy, methodology, techniques and tools. 40 credits.
- Module 2: The Development of Professional Practice. 30 credits.
- Module 3: Researching Technology Enhanced/Networked Learning, Teaching and Assessment. 40 credits.
- Module 4: Groups and Communities: Researching the Design of Technology Enhanced/Networked Learning Communities. 40 credits.
- Module 5: Interculturality and Globalisation in Technology Enhanced Learning 30 credits.

#### Part Two (Years 3 and 4):

Preparing for the Thesis

- **Researching and Reflecting on Technology Enhanced Learning in Educational Settings.** This module provides support for the writing of a research proposal, for the individual research that you will carry out in Part Two and write up in your thesis.
- **Thesis** (approx. 50,000 words). The qualification awarded is a PhD.

## Admissions Information

**Next Start Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2021

There are two four day *compulsory* residential meeting in Lancaster,

**22nd - 25th March, 2021**

A further four day residential in March or April 2022. Dates to be confirmed.

The programme does not assume any previous research training but those admitted should normally have relevant professional experience. For admission to this programme applicants should normally have:

- an honours degree (2:1 or above) from a British university or CNAA, and preferably a taught Master's degree; or
- qualifications of a comparable standard from a university or recognised degree awarding body in another country;
- at least three years' experience of teaching, research or administration in a university, adult or further education college, school, or comparable institution or similar experience from a commercial or industrial training context.

Participants will need to spend about 12-15 hours studying per week. This includes reading and responding to online discussions and peer group activities at least two or three times a week (throughout the programme). This will, of course, vary from participant to participant and from time to time. The flexibility of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) medium and form of learning should allow each participant to manage this in ways which suit their professional and personal life, as well as allowing them to participate fully in the online activities associated with the Doctoral programme.

For students whose first language is not English an English Language Test Certificate will be required.

As this is a distance learning programme the Pre-Sessional English Language Programme is not available.

### **Apply Online**

Applications can be made [online](#).

This programme was oversubscribed for the 2019 entry, so early application is recommended.

## Programme Information

The 4-5 year Doctoral Programme in E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning will provide you with training in research methodologies, expose you to key literature that will enable you to link cutting edge learning theories with your professional practice as well as providing you with a period of intensive, individual research that is supervised by an expert in the field leading to a PhD in E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning.

This PhD doctoral programme is designed specifically for professionals, for people who wish to study to an advanced level and carry out a piece of research of the highest possible standard in an aspect of their professional practice.

The programme in E-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning builds on the expertise of the members of the Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning in the Department of Educational Research and their long experience in running Masters Degrees in advanced learning technologies and networked e-learning.

### What is Technology Enhanced Learning?

The term 'technology enhanced learning' encompasses all uses of information and communications technologies in learning and teaching. It is also sometimes referred to as 'e-learning', 'online learning' and 'advanced learning technology'.

Our programme aligns with a particular aspect of technology enhanced learning, which is 'networked learning' in which there is promotion of connections between learners, one-to-one, or one-to-many; connections between learners and teachers; and connections between members of groups and communities and the social networking that takes place on the Internet. This view of technology enhanced learning as 'networked learning' puts an emphasis on the 'human' aspects of technology in learning, and highlights the need to consider the educational and training values that underpin the use of technology. It questions a simple view of technological determinism and understands technology and learning as each shaping the other.

### What is e-Research?

"The term 'e-research' indicates an emerging field in which advanced technologies are applied to existing research methods and approaches. This Programme will examine some of the trends in this new field and will lead participants in the use of accessible technologies for carrying out research into technology enhanced learning.

The term e-research encapsulates research activities that use the spectrum of advanced ICT capabilities and embraces new research methodologies emerging from increasing access to:

- Broadband and mobile communications networks, research instruments and facilities, sensor networks and data repositories;
- Software and infrastructure services that enable secure connectivity and interoperability;
- Application tools, that encompass discipline-specific tools and interaction tools.

e-Research capabilities serve to advance and augment, rather than replace traditional research methodologies, but there is a growing dependence on e-Research capabilities. Improved access to knowledge and information will enable researchers to perform their research more creatively, efficiently and collaboratively across long distances and disseminate their research outcomes. Using e-Research, researchers can work seamlessly

from desk-to-desk within and between organisations. E-Research advances rather than replaces traditional research methodologies.

## Programme Structure and Modules

The programme lasts a minimum of four years, and is divided into two parts. Part One consists of five compulsory modules aimed at offering you guided study in important and topical areas of technology enhanced learning and e-research. In Part Two you will carry out an original piece of research under the supervision of a member of staff.

### Part One

#### **Research Methods in Education and Social Science Settings: Philosophy, methodology, techniques and tools**

(Year One, January – June, 40 credits). Lead Tutor: Dr Kyungmee Lee

The primary purpose of this module is to provide you with an understanding of research methods and methodologies used within the field of technology enhanced learning (TEL). You will have the opportunity to learn about a range of methodological approaches, data collection and analysis strategies that can be used to design and evaluate enquiries into professional practice. These include ethnography; case study; action research; evaluative approaches, grounded theory; interviews and observation; questionnaire design; descriptive statistics; and analysis of qualitative data. We will introduce you to a range of resources (some traditional, some in digital forms) that you can draw on in your own research, and you will critically evaluate methodologies, methods and resources, and their application in educational settings.

The first few weeks are aimed at helping you and the programme tutors get to know each other, and share perspectives on being an online learning community. You will participate in a series of activities designed to orientate you to the programme and to help us all (participants and tutors alike) get to know each other and start developing a sense of community.

#### **Residential (Year One)**

The four day residential meeting in Part One is compulsory. It is designed to allow us to get to know each other and discuss research methodologies and methods, and for us to introduce you to the various modules, the virtual learning platform and associated technologies.

The first residential for the 2021 intake will take place 22nd - 25th March, 2021, at Lancaster University.



### **The Development of Professional Practice**

(Year One, June – September, 30 credits). Lead Tutor: Dr. Sue Cranmer

The purpose of this module is to support your development of a reflective approach to research-based professional practice in the field of technology enhanced/networked learning. You will have the opportunity to contextualise research interests and problems in analyses of reflective practice, expansive learning, and communities of practice. Approaches to social and organisational learning will be examined, as will models for leadership in innovation and change initiatives.

### **Interculturality and Globalisation in Technology Enhanced Learning**

(Year One, September – December, 30 credits). Lead Tutor: Dr Murat Öztok

The purpose of this module is to introduce you to the rise of globalisation in education and the particular role of e-learning in that phenomenon. Many universities are globalising their market and reaching out to diverse cultures in order to recruit more students to their courses. Online learning is seen as a means to this end, and there are many experimental and evolving forms in higher education, for example. The challenge is to produce forms of learning that are sufficiently robust to attract and maintain large and diverse student populations. Universities and tutors need to engage with a range of cultural differences in their classes, yet many are not well-equipped to develop pedagogies that support and capitalise on cultural diversity. This module will examine the issues surrounding this phenomenon and will look critically at globalisation of higher education, and in particular the role of interculturality in the educational process.

### **Researching Technology Enhanced/Networked Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

(Year Two, January – June, 40 credits). Lead Tutor: Dr Brett Bligh

This module examines recent research and theorising about the nature of technology enhanced learning, teaching and assessment in HE/FE and professional contexts. Its focus is on understanding and researching the relationship between: learning, knowledge and pedagogy as part of TEL, including theories of learning and the ways in which participants learn in technology enhanced learning contexts and environments; and assessment, including current understandings of the aims and purposes of assessment and the ways in which assessment is conceptualised and conducted in HE/FE and professional contexts generally and specifically in TEL settings.

The module covers a range of methodological approaches. The aim of this module is to enable you to build on your knowledge and skills in researching TEL through reflecting on research advances in the field and by undertaking a small empirical research project relevant to your professional interests and concerns.

### **Residential (Year Two)**

The residential in year two includes reviewing the programme to date, looking ahead to the final two modules of Part One and community and social activities. It also looks ahead to years three and four (Part Two) and begins discussion on individual research activities and the writing of a research proposal.

### **Groups and Communities: Researching the Design of Technology Enhanced/Networked Learning Communities**

(Year Two, August – December, 40 credits). Lead Tutor: Professor Don Passey

The purpose of this module is to introduce you to recent advances in research and the ways in which TEL/networked learning communities can be formed, nurtured and maintained, including (1) applications of social technologies; (2) issues around participation, interaction, collaboration, and engagement in community design and assessment; (3) conditions for developing trust and social capital; (4) emerging avenues of scholarship and research; and (5) the relationship between technologies and learning and issues of technological determinism.

## **Part Two**

### **Researching and Reflecting on Technology Enhanced Learning: Writing a research proposal**

Lead Tutor: Dr. Julie-Ann Sime

During this module you will be reflecting on the knowledge and skills you have gained during Part One of the programme and planning the research you will be undertaking in Part Two. In this module you prepare a research proposal setting out your research questions and the proposed research plan; it shows your ability to; discuss current debates and issues in the literature, discuss relevant ethical issues, describe the methodology, research methods and tools, describe the ways in which data will be collected and analysed, and the timetable for carrying out the research project. The thesis is a major part of the Doctoral Programme and, for many programme participants, often the most challenging and rewarding part of the programme. A very wide variety of study is possible, including original empirical investigations employing one or more of a range of research methodologies. Usually studies have direct relevance to your own professional concern; a topic may also be chosen which is of concern to your own institution or employing authority. Because we believe it is important that the study you undertake should excite you, we ask you to play a major role in the selection of the topic. Of course, you will be provided with assistance within your learning set by your tutor and other learning set members.

## **Thesis (approx 50,000 words)**

You will complete a thesis of around 50,000 words. The thesis will represent a significant contribution to knowledge and will contain material which is of publishable quality. It will be comparable, in its presentation of the results of your work, with 'traditional' PhD theses at Lancaster University. It will also demonstrate some broader aspects of your capacity to pursue scholarly research or scholarship in your field of study, though this demonstration of competence will be made in conjunction with your assessed work on the five modules in Part One of your studies.

Most of the work on the thesis will be carried out during Part Two of the programme (years 3 to 5) though it is hoped that a serious start will be made on defining research objectives and a research plan during year two. The thesis will be similar in form to, and at least as rigorous in intellectual demands as, the conventional PhD thesis. It will be more concisely written and presented as it will not have to demonstrate the full range of competences and achievements, as these are also partially documented through the module assessment tasks.

## Residential Meetings

There will be two four-day residential meetings in Part One of the programme. These meetings are compulsory and are designed to allow us to get to know each other and form a learning community, and for us to introduce you to the various modules, the virtual learning platform and associated technologies.

### Year One: Four Day Residential

The four-day residential meeting at Lancaster University in year one has a particular focus on becoming a PhD student in the area of e-research and technology enhanced learning; on making the most out of interactions with tutors and within the cohort; on the ethos of the programme, including its pedagogical model and the centrality of the peer-review processes; and on preparing for your initial assignments, which are to be written in the format of academic journal articles. There will also be presentations on selected research topics from members of staff at Lancaster and invited external speakers, and you will have the opportunity to meet members of the cohort currently in their second year.

### Year Two: Four Day Residential

The four-day residential meeting at Lancaster University in year two has a particular focus on writing a research proposal and thesis preparation as well as workshops on e-research methods. It also includes reviewing the programme to date, looking ahead to the final two modules of Part One and community and social activities.

### Costs

The cost of attending these meetings is included in the programme fees, but travel and accommodation still needs to be budgeted for. We suggest £500.00 per residential; this is dependent on the standard of accommodation required and this costing is based on campus accommodation.

## Who is the Doctoral Programme For?

This programme is suitable for senior managers, policy makers and experienced professionals in all areas of education, consultants and self-employed persons, and those in public and private sector organisations wishing to develop their understanding of the research and practice of technology enhanced learning. Learning technology professionals, educational developers and those with a strong interest in developing distance or blended learning in their courses are likely to be interested. The programme is aimed at those who are looking for a course of relevance to their current responsibilities and who wish to gain a doctorate. The focus of the programme is on technology enhanced learning in educational settings and sectors.

## Who Teaches on the Programme?

The academic staff who teach on the programme and who supervise participants' research theses are established practitioners and researchers in technology enhanced learning. They are members of the Department of Educational Research at Lancaster University, since the first Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 1992 the Department has consistently been judged to be one of the best in the UK. The results of the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) placed us in the top six research-intensive Education departments in the UK, with 78% of our research activity graded as world leading or internationally excellent and 92% of our academic staff submitted. Lancaster has received a TEF Gold Award for its outstanding teaching and learning environment (June 2017).

**Dr Brett Bligh** conducts research into the connections between our material surroundings, the technologies that permeate them, and the ways we act, think and learn. Two recurring interests are how universities design and evaluate their built environment estate to support opportunities for learning, and how very large display tools can support learners' collaboration.

**Dr Sue Cranmer** researches the design of innovative learning opportunities supported by digital technologies, digital inclusion, children and young people's uses of digital technologies and issues of online safety, digital literacy and innovative research methodologies.

**Dr Kyungmee Lee's** research lies at the intersection of understanding the nature of online/distance higher education and designing inclusive learning environments. She is particularly interested in the issues of access, power, and social justice related to distance education discourses, policies, theories and practices.

**Dr Murat Öztok's** interests concern collaborative work and group discussion in digitally-mediated environments, with a theoretical and practical commitment to social justice and equity within learning communities. He draws upon Marxist and Post-Colonial perspectives, and explores the manifestations of social, historical, political, and economic discourses in digitally-mediated environments. In particular, he is interested in understanding the ways that sociocultural elements inherent in applications of digital education operate to marginalize students who fall outside the ideations of dominant ideology.

**Professor Don Passey** is Programme Director and has responsibility for admissions and Part 1 issues. He researches how leading edge technologies impact on learning, particularly in how they are used in compulsory educational settings, with young people who are at risk of learning exclusion, across formal and informal learning contexts, and implications arising for practice and policy.

**Dr Julie-Ann Sime** researches into online and networked learning in professional development focusing on: how new technologies (such as games, simulations and virtual learning environments) can support online educators; how learners can develop an understanding of complex dynamic systems; and how to design for personalised learning experiences so that education is more inclusive.

## Benefits of Studying on the Programme

One of our current programme participants explains the benefits she has gained from studying for a PhD on a structured programme within a supportive collaborative online learning community:

"Having completed my MA through involvement in a virtual learning community, I was looking for a similarly engaging and motivational learning experience which would allow

me to develop my capabilities and professional practice further. I learned of the development of this programme at the Networked Learning Conference 2006 and pestered Alice until details were available. I have not been disappointed. The programme is challenging and requires commitment but it is sufficiently open to enable professional relevance. I have found the learning community atmosphere hugely motivating and extremely supportive; I hope I've made some friends here for the very long term."

Jane Davis

Director of Learning: Higher Education, Colchester Institute  
2008 doctoral programme intake.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How is this programme different?**

#### **How does this programme differ from your Independent Study PhD, say, in e-Learning, or groups and communities in networked e-Learning programmes?**

By studying in this programme you will benefit from a) a two year structured set of modules, which will introduce you to major research and practice themes in technology enhanced learning. Your learning will be paced according to the modules and you will have the opportunity of submitting course work and receiving detailed comment on it from tutors and other programme participants; and b) being a member of an online learning community from where you will receive the support of participant and tutor members.

#### **Is it a full or part-time programme?**

Part-time.

#### **Can I study Full-Time?**

No. The programme is delivered part-time, with reflection on professional practice. Studying full-time is therefore inappropriate.

#### **Do I have to come to Lancaster?**

You must attend one four-day residential meeting at Lancaster University in years one and two. Other than that, you can study on this programme from anywhere in the world as most of the learning and teaching is conducted via the Internet.

#### **When are the residential meetings?**

The residential dates for the first year are 22nd - 25th March, 2021, the second year will be in March or April, the dates are still to be finalised.

#### **As an overseas student, will I be able to get a student visa to study on this programme?**

Rules about visas for part-time and distance learners are different from those for full-time students. As a part-time, distance learner, you will not qualify for a Student Visa. You will instead need to apply for a Student Visitor Visa. This visa will allow you to come to the UK for the purposes of attending your residential at Lancaster University.

The new Student Visitor immigration category for short-term students was introduced in November 2007. Formerly, distance learner students wanting to travel to the UK to attend residential could apply to enter the UK as a Visitor. This is no longer allowed and the Student Visitor Visa is the correct category in which to apply.

#### **I require a visa to visit the UK for the residential - how should I apply for this?**

If you are from a country which appears on the UK's Visa National List (known as visa nationals), you are required to apply for a Student Visitor Visa before travelling to the UK. You should apply for this from your nearest British Diplomatic Post or Visa Application Centre (see web link below).

If you are a student from a country which does not appear on the Visa National List, (known as non-visa nationals) you are not required to obtain prior entry clearance and can travel to the UK and make your immigration application to an immigration officer when you land in the UK.

The [Home Office UK Border Agency website](#) provides essential information on applying for a visa.

To check whether you are a visa national or not, please go to the [Visa section](#). For further information about Student Visitor Visas and how to apply go to the [Student Application section](#).

For a list of British Diplomatic posts and Visa Application Centres go to the [Where to Apply section](#).

**I live outside the UK - what are the requirements for me to visit Lancaster University, and what requirements and restrictions are there for me studying this programme outside the UK?**

You must attend one four day residential meeting at Lancaster University in Years One and Two. Anyone anywhere in the world can take this programme as most of the learning and teaching is conducted via the Internet.

**What time commitments must I make?**

**What is the anticipated weekly time commitment to the programme?**

Participants will need to spend around 12-15 hours studying per week. This includes reading and responding to online discussions, and taking part in peer group activities on average at least two or three times a week throughout the programme. This will, of course, vary from participant to participant and from time to time.

**When can I study on the course - are there scheduled classes/contact times or can I choose when to log on and participate?**

The only scheduled classes are during the four-day residential meetings in years one and two. The flexibility of the VLE medium and form of learning should allow each participant to manage this in ways that suit their professional and personal life, as well as allowing them to participate fully in the online activities associated with the Doctoral programme.

**The course involves quite a lot of contact between students and tutors through online tools, for seminars and project work. Is this flexible or are connections mainly at fixed times? I am trying to understand if I would need to be available at certain times during a working week or whether I can participate at weekends and in evenings.**

The flexibility of the VLE medium and form of learning should allow each participant to manage this in ways that suit their professional and personal life, as well as allowing them to participate fully in the online activities associated with the Doctoral Programme. This for some students will be mainly weekends and evenings. When synchronous meetings are required, their timing is negotiated with participants.

**Who studies on the course?**

This professional doctorate is designed specifically for people who wish to study to an advanced level and carry out a piece of research of the highest possible standard in an aspect of their professional practice. Students taking this programme are highly motivated, self-managing individuals who work in positions of influence in any sector of education.

**I have been in teaching for 12 years and have a Masters - do I fit the profile of a suitable applicant for this course?**

Yes. Most of our applicants are established professionals with experience in the field of education and training. It is unlikely that we would accept someone who does not have some professional, further or higher education experience, or experience in public and private sector organisations (e.g. as a teacher, librarian, resource person or learning technologist, etc.).

**Is there an age limit?**

No. Most of our applicants are established professionals so our participants do tend to be mature people. Offers to study are made on qualifications, experience and suitability for the programme, not age.

**What technical skills are required?**

**Does the course assume or require a certain level of proficiency with specific web-design packages or the use of HTML or programming?**

The only technical skills required for this programme are the ability to use a personal computer and associated software, and an ability to access the Internet. The programme does not focus on the technical issues of course design or programming. We focus on the educational and learning potential of technology enhanced learning.

**To what extent is the practical use of technologies and actual hands on experience gained on the course?**

The programme does not focus on the technical issues of course design or programming. We focus on the educational and learning potential of technology enhanced learning.

**Is the course/qualification fully recognised?**

**Is this kind of PhD recognised in Europe?**

A PhD degree is the highest possible qualification attainable in UK Higher Education.

**Since the programme is blended with an online component, what is its acceptance by the academic circle generally in the UK? I'm concerned about its recognition by other universities or accreditation bodies, as some have reservations for programmes delivered online.**

No distinction is made between the various study methods leading towards the award of the PhD degree. The degree is universally recognised by other universities and accreditation bodies.

**When is the next start date for the course?**

1<sup>st</sup> January, 2021



**What is the duration of the programme in terms of months/years?**

The minimum period of registration is four years; the majority of students take five years to complete. It is possible to extend your registration to seven years if required. Students remain on full fee until a final draft of their thesis has been submitted.

**How many students are accepted?**

The 2019 intake was 30 students, the programme is normally over-subscribed and our intake is a maximum of 30.

**Is there one intake stream per year or multiple?**

We only have one cohort, or group, of students who start in January of each year.

**When is the application deadline for this class?**

We don't set a deadline for applications but we do recommend you apply early, in order to ensure your application is considered for the first allocation of places. We can however accept applications right up until the course start date if places are still available. You should check with the Course Administrator as to the likelihood of available places after the end of June each year.

**Is it possible to take a break during the course, between years, if the demands of one's full-time employment require it, for example?**

Yes. Intercalations are possible but this does mean that you will need to suspend your studies and restart by joining a new cohort and you won't continue the programme with your original cohort.

**How much does it cost and is there any financial help?**

**What are the tuition fees for this programme including any incidental items such as exam fees?**

The 2019/20 fee is £4,130.00 per academic year, for four years minimum, for UK/EU nationals. The Overseas Student fee is £7,390.00 per academic year, for four years minimum (*fees are subject to an increase each academic year*).

**Are there any other costs associated with the programme?**

Additional costs will include travel to Lancaster and accommodation and subsistence for the two compulsory short residential meetings. You will also require a personal computer and printer, and a broadband connection to the Internet. Core readings are made available electronically and a wide range of electronic resources are used, e.g. e-books and e-journal papers, but you will also have key texts recommended for further reading which you may wish to purchase or borrow from a library.

**Are there any scholarships available for the programme?**

Not at present.

**As a British citizen currently residing in another country (outside EU) would I pay the UK/EU fees or the overseas ones?**

The general criteria governing "home" (UK) fee status are that you should be a UK national AND that you should have been "ordinarily resident" in this country for the 3 years immediately preceding the start of the programme.

Each case is decided by the Postgraduate Admissions department and they may need to request further documentation from you to help them with this decision.

Full guidance notes on fee classification can be viewed on the [UKCISA](#) web site,

**As a foreign student am I allowed to pay in instalments?**

All self-funding students are able to pay their yearly fees in 2 instalments, the first in January and the second around April. Full details will be sent to you on completion of your registration at the start of the course.

**Do you offer internships after completing or while pursuing the programme?**

No.

**How do I apply?**

Applications can be made [online](#).

**Do I have to write a research proposal to apply for this scheme?**

As this is a taught PhD programme we don't need a research proposal but you should explain why you wish to join this course and what benefits you expect to gain. This section is an important section of your application form as this programme is traditionally oversubscribed.

**Do my research interests have to match those of the staff on the programme?**

PhD Research in years three and four does need to be supervised by an academic member of staff in the Educational Research Department so your study will need to match their interests in some way. But you will have the opportunity to discuss your research project interests with tutors and negotiate a topic that suits your interests and the interests of the tutor.

**Is it best to start thinking now about a possible research topic and would I need to find a staff member interested in my ideas?**

It is useful but not essential as you won't be allocated a supervisor until you move into Part 2 - you will find a list of the interests of staff in the department on the [department website](#). During Part 1 your ideas may change as a consequence of your study on the programme.

**Could you provide me with your admissions requirement for this program?**

The programme does not assume any previous research training but those admitted should normally have relevant professional experience and be currently engaged in teaching and learning activities as this programme supports professional development activities. For admission to this programme applicants should normally have:

- an honours degree (2.1 or above) from a British University or CNAAB, and preferably a taught Master's degree; or
- qualifications of a comparable standard from a University or recognised degree awarding body in another country;

- at least three years' experience of teaching, research or administration in a university, further education college, or comparable institution or similar experience from a commercial or industrial training context.

**What English Language score is required - are equivalent tests/certificates from other institutions considered?**

For students whose first language is not English an English Language Test Certificate will be required:

An IELTS result of at least 6.5 overall (with no less than 6.0 in the reading and writing elements and 5.5 in the speaking and listening elements) or

An internet-based TOEFL result of at least 93 overall (with no less than 22 in the reading and writing elements and 20 in the speaking and listening elements) or

**Alternative English Language Requirements:**

Alternative qualifications are detailed on the [University website](#).

**I have qualifications from a non-UK university, will these be accepted?**

Yes, as long as these are of a comparable standard to a UK University. We require copies of certificates.

**As an overseas student, will I be able to get a student visa to study on this programme?**

As this is a part-time, distance learning programme a student visa is not needed and would not be given for this programme.

**I require a visa to visit the UK for the residential - how should I apply for this?**

If you are from a country which appears on the UK's Visa National List (known as visa nationals), you are required to apply for a Student Visitor Visa before travelling to the UK. You should apply for this from your nearest British Diplomatic Post, or Visa Application Centre (see web link below)

If you are a student from a country which does not appear on the Visa National List, (known as non-visa nationals) you are not required to obtain prior entry clearance and can travel to the UK and make your immigration application to an immigration officer when you land in the UK.

To check whether you are a visa national or not, please refer to the following link to the [UK Border Agency](#):

For further information about Student Visitor Visas and how to apply for one, see the following link to the [UK Border Agency](#):

Visas should be applied for via your local [Visa Application Centre](#).

**How can I get more information?**

**Would it be possible to speak to a programme tutor at some point in the future?**

Yes, of course, all our tutors are happy to speak with prospective students. You should contact the Programme Administrator, Alice Jesmont, in the first instance; she will be able to arrange this.

**I have read all the details on the website but I'd like to get a fuller flavour. Could you recommend any other websites/articles/publications?**

The way we run the doctoral programme may also interest you - we work as a community of learners, involving participants and tutors. We try to make it possible for participants to take control of their learning and to design the way in which the community works and interacts. We're interested in working with people who like to share their learning and develop learning relationships, and who can look at their own practice as a way of learning about the use of new technologies in the learning process. We think that working in these ways helps each learner 'work out' what learning means for them, and work out what it is they want to research for their thesis. We think you might enjoy it!!

As a community, we're also interested in developing new ways of working in online learning contexts, and in new ways of researching online learning. To get a flavour of what we mean, you might like to have a look at the following book which is about learning through communities:  
[E-Learning Groups and Communities:](#)

## Further Information

If you would like to discuss your application or have further questions please contact Alice Jesmont who will be pleased to help you.

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