



## **POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) welcomes postgraduate research (PGR) degree proposals in the areas of art, design, architecture, media and performance, leading to MPhil or PhD qualifications. The MPhil/PhD Award at AUB is validated by the University of the Arts London (UAL).

You will undertake your programme of study at AUB, with some workshops and presentations taking place at UAL as part of your PGR training.

The format of study for a research degree (MPhil/PhD) is very different from a taught degree. As a research student, you will engage in a programme of independent research and/or practice based work. Following discussion with your Director of Studies, you will be assigned one, or sometimes two, second supervisors with whom you will plan your programme of research and with whom you will have regular tutorials to support your study throughout your time as a student.

Your research may combine the practice, theory and /or history of your specialist area and you will be guided in your study to define clearly and persuasively what is original and innovative about your chosen topic and how best to present and disseminate your arguments and findings, whether this is substantially a written thesis or via a combination of practice (for example, exhibition, installation) and text-based critique.

Because of the individual nature of your study, your requirements (for example, for studio space or other specialist resources) will be discussed with your supervisor.

As well as tutorials with your supervisors, you will participate in a programme of research methods training. In your first year of registration, there will be three separate weeks attendance in London at the University of the Arts London Research Network (RNUAL) in September, February and June.

This will be complemented by a separate programme to be attended regularly at AUB.

The MPhil degree is awarded in recognition of a systematic, well-documented and well-argued study, which demonstrates a degree of originality and critical awareness. It should also demonstrate a distinct contribution to scholarship. It is an award in its own right or, alternatively, it may be undertaken as preparation for a PhD.

The PhD is awarded in recognition of a significant contribution to knowledge and understanding. The thesis should contain material which is worthy of publication or public presentation. The doctorate must represent a more substantial individual achievement and demonstrate recognisably greater depth than an MPhil.

Please see UAL's Handbook and Regulations for further information and guidance on research degrees [www.arts.ac.uk/research/research-degrees](http://www.arts.ac.uk/research/research-degrees)

## DURATION OF STUDY

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### Full-time

- PhD: 3 years (Maximum length 4 years)
- MPhil: 2 years (Maximum length 3 years)

### Part-time

- PhD: 5 years (Maximum length 8 years)
- MPhil: 3 years (Maximum length 6 years)

## STUDENTSHIPS AND BURSARIES

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Studentships and bursaries, if available, are advertised in spring each year. Due to the level of interest for these opportunities, it is not normally possible for us to offer feedback in advance of making an application.

## STUDENT LOANS

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If you are from the EU or the UK, you may be eligible to take out a postgraduate doctoral loan of up to £25,000 from the UK government. The loan is paid directly to you and can be used for your course fees and living costs. The loan will be divided equally across each year of your course. Full details, including eligibility criteria and repayment terms, can be found on [www.gov.uk/doctoral-loan](http://www.gov.uk/doctoral-loan)

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

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You will normally be expected to have a Masters Level qualification in an appropriate subject to be considered for registration for MPhil / PhD at AUB.

In some instances, applicants without this requirement may be considered if they can demonstrate appropriate alternative qualifications, professional experience or previous research and an understanding of research methodologies appropriate to their proposed programme of study.

Those for whom English is not a first language will have to pass an International Language Test (IELTS) scoring at least 7.0+ (with a 7.0 in writing).

Applicants should be aware that meeting the University's minimum entry requirements does not guarantee entry. This is only one of the factors taken into account when the University makes its decision.

Many other factors are also important, such as the availability of suitable supervisors and resources; suitability for research degree study at AUB; relevant experience; and references.

## HOW TO APPLY

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The deadline for applications is normally May for entry in September as advertised on our website.

Full-time and part-time applications should be made directly to AUB through our **online application system**.

Although we welcome applications for study towards a research degree throughout the year, the University has one point of entry at the start of each academic year.

We welcome expressions of interest in advance of making a full application. These should be returned by email to the [researchoffice@aub.ac.uk](mailto:researchoffice@aub.ac.uk) to include a brief outline of no more than 1,000 words explaining your area of interest, reason for study and your relevant academic/professional background. This will enable the University to make an initial assessment of whether your topic and experience are appropriate for research degree study at AUB before you make a formal application.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

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Applications are assessed for suitability for research degree study at AUB including the strength of the research proposal and supervisory expertise and capacity.

If considered suitable, the applicant is normally invited for interview.

Selected applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview to discuss their proposal. They may be invited to provide supporting material such as samples of academic writing or examples of their creative practice.

The interviewing panel will make a recommendation based on whether the project and candidate are appropriate for doctoral level study at AUB and the availability of appropriate supervision and resources.

Recommendations will be considered by the Chair of Research Degrees Committee/Dean of Graduate School and Research. Applications that are approved will be made a conditional or unconditional offer of a place to study.

## ENROLMENT

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Enrolment takes place in September at AUB and prior to the first RNUAL block week in London.

## KEY STAGES OF THE RESEARCH DEGREE PROCESS

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### **Full-time**

Year One: Registration

Year Two: Confirmation (upgrade to PhD)

Year Three: Submission and Examination

## **Part-time**

Year One: Registration

Year Three: Confirmation (upgrade to PhD)

Year Five: Submission and Examination

## **REGISTRATION**

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Once successfully enrolled at AUB, your supervisory team will advise you in developing a full proposal for submission to the University's Research Degrees Committee, so that your research degree can be formally registered with the University of the Arts London. In this submission, you will indicate your intended degree (MPhil/PhD). Research Degrees Committee will also consider the ethical dimensions of your project. If your project is considered more than minimal ethical risk, approval of your registration will also need to be sought from the University of the Arts London Research Ethics Sub-Committee. The application for registration will normally be submitted within two months for full-time students and three months for part-time.

Once these committees have approved your application for registration, you will be officially registered for an unspecified research degree with the intention to complete a programme of study for an MPhil or a PhD. The degree for which you are ultimately examined is confirmed at Confirmation.

Students must not undertake any 'field' research until they have obtained ethical approval.

## **CONFIRMATION**

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After a probationary period (normally 12 to 18 months for full-time and 24 to 36 months for part-time students) your supervisory team will assist you in developing your application to confirm the degree for which you will ultimately be examined.

## **FINAL SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION**

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Your final submission will be a written thesis.

If you are doing a purely theoretical PhD, you must write between 60,000 and 100,000 words.

If a practice-based PhD, you must write between 30,000 and 100,000 and submit a body of work.

Examination is by an oral examination or viva, and is with academics who are normally external to AUB.

## **WORKING AND STUDYING**

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AUB recognises that embarking on a research degree is a significant undertaking in terms of both finance and time. As a full-time student you are expected to commit to an average of 35 hours a week to your research and so it is important to ensure that the number of hours engaged in any form of paid employment is not excessive.

As a part-time student you are expected to commit to an average of 17.5 hours a week to your research. Paid employment may be undertaken within reason and such that it is not detrimental to your studies i.e. normally no more than 23.5 hours paid work per week during term time.

Students requiring a visa in order to study at the University will need to check the terms and conditions relating to their eligibility to work. Please note that it is not possible for overseas students to study on a part-time basis if the student needs a Tier 4 (General) student visa to enter the UK.

## RESEARCH SUPERVISION

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PGR students at AUB are entitled to the following contact hours with their supervisory team:

Full-time students: 20 hours contact hours a year in total

Part-time students: 10 hours contact hours a year in total

It is up to each supervisory team to agree when supervisory meetings take place.

Supervisory meetings do not all have to be face-to-face; some can, with the agreement of the supervisory team, be virtual.

## STUDY TIME

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You are expected to work on your PhD for around 35 hours per week (full-time) and 17 hours a week (part-time) for the duration of your studies. There may be times when you need to spend more time on your research, particularly around key stages such as confirmation and submission.

## ATTENDANCE AT AUB

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You are required to attend Arts University Bournemouth for supervisory meetings.

In the first year of study, you are also required to attend an introductory/enrolment session in September, and an induction day in early October.

You are also expected to attend two PGR day symposia, normally held in December and May; and the AUB Research Conference, normally held between April and June.

Holders of AUB studentships are required to contribute six hours of academic duties per week at AUB (as per the terms and conditions of the award); this would be agreed with your Director of Studies.

You are also expected to attend for key stages of the research degree process i.e. confirmation meeting, mock viva and examination.

## ATTENDANCE AT UAL

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Arts University Bournemouth research degrees are awarded through the University of the Arts London, who also deliver the majority of the research degree training.

In the first year of study, you are required to attend a week of training in September, two days in February, and a further week in June. AUB will meet travel and subsistence costs to attend these weeks in line with the University's rates.

In the second (or third year, if part-time) year of study, you are required to attend one day in February to give a short presentation of your research as part of confirmation (or upgrade to PhD).

UAL also run study days to cover key stages such as registration, confirmation, examination.