



## POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHAT ARE THE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

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You will normally be expected to have an upper second class honours degree (2:1) from a recognised higher education institution.

Also, a Master's 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.

If English is not your first language, you'll need to meet our English language entry requirements by providing one of the following:

A recent AUB approved English Language Test (ELT) – such as an IELTS 7.0 with a 7.0 in writing and with no other component score lower than 6.0, or an equivalent test score. Your qualification needs to have been awarded no more than 2 years prior to your enrolment date.

You can apply before you receive your English Language Test or MA certificate. If you're offered a place, you'll need to show your qualification before enrolment.

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.

### WHAT IS THE LENGTH 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)

## CAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS STUDY PART-TIME?

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International students can study in the U.K. on a full-time basis with a student visa.

International students may choose to study in their home country on a full or part-time basis.

In addition to meeting the standard academic and language eligibility requirements, applicants to the distance learning overseas online mode need to demonstrate that they:

- can successfully conduct their research with the resources available to them at their distance learning place of study;
- have access to appropriate IT facilities, so that they can engage in supervision and training from their distance learning place of study;
- have the necessary time, commitment, and appropriate attitude toward distance learning online study

Students on this mode do not hold Student Visa so cannot enter the UK for the purpose of study or access UAL physical resources or buildings. Distance Learning Students have access to online resources available to all PGR students.

## WHAT AREAS CAN WE SUPERVISE?

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Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) welcomes postgraduate research (PGR) degree proposals in and across the broad areas of: art and architecture; design including fashion and textiles; film and animation; and performance, where we can offer appropriate supervision.

If you are interested in making an application you are invited to consider the supervisory expertise of our research degree supervisors which can be found on the website.

**The MPhil/PhD Award at AUB is validated by the University of the Arts London (UAL).**

## HOW MUCH CONTACT TIME WITH MY RESEARCH SUPERVISORS WILL I RECEIVE?

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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 (10 supervisory meetings)

Part-time students: 10 hours contact hours a year in total (five supervisory meetings)

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.

## WHEN DO I ATTEND 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 a series of induction events in early October. These are delivered online.

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.

### WHEN DO I ATTEND 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. These are delivered online.

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), also online.

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

### WHAT IS A PHD AWARDED FOR?

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A 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.

An 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.

### WHAT IS THE PROGRAMME OF STUDY?

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

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 a solely a written thesis or a combination of practice (for example, exhibition, installation) and written thesis.

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.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY STAGES OF THE RESEARCH DEGREE PROCESS?

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### **Full-time**

Year One: Enrolment/Registration

Year Two: Confirmation (upgrade to PhD)

Year Three: Submission and Examination

### **Part-time**

Year One: Enrolment/Registration

Year Three: Confirmation (upgrade to PhD)

Year Five: Submission and Examination

## ENROLMENT

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

## 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 or 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 80,000 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 led by academics external to AUB.

## HOW DO I MAKE AN APPLICATION?

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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 normally at the end of May.

Full-time and part-time applications should be made directly to AUB through our **online application system**. Applications are assessed for suitability for research degree study at AUB including the strength of the research proposal and supervisory expertise and capacity.

Applicants are normally invited to put forward a draft proposal in advance of making an application to ensure that AUB has expertise to supervise in the proposed area of study.

Draft proposals 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 to include your research proposal, 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. If considered suitable, the applicant is normally invited for interview. Please use the guidance on writing proposals to help you structure your draft.

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.

## WHEN IS THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS?

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

## CAN I ACCESS FUNDING?

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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.

If you are from the EU or the UK, you may be eligible to take out a postgraduate doctoral loan 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)

## HOW MANY HOURS DO I NEED TO SPEND STUDYING FOR A PHD AND CAN I WORK WHILST 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.

You may need to spend more time on your PhD at key stages of progression such as confirmation and submission. 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.

## WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?

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If you have questions about research degree study at AUB, please contact the Research Office:

E: [researchoffice@aub.ac.uk](mailto:researchoffice@aub.ac.uk)

T: 01202 363334

If you have questions about the regulations, 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)