



**Postgraduate Research Degree Programme
Specification**

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Rose Bruford College

Validated by the University of Chichester

April 2026

Postgraduate Research Degree Programme Specification	1
1. GENERAL INFORMATION	3
2. STATEMENT	4
3. AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME	4
4. RESEARCH, LEARNING, TEACHING, CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT	4
5. CURRICULUM CONTENT	5
6. ASSESSMENT	6
7. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME	7
8. STUDENT INDUCTION, SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT	7
9. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION	8
10. PROGRESSION AND ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS	9
11. MECHANISMS FOR PROGRAMME REVISION	9
12. APPENDIX: DOCTORAL LEVEL ALIGNMENT	10

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Item	Details
Award	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
Programme Title	Research Degree
Duration	Full-time: 3-4 years; Part-time: 6-7 years
Mode of Study	Full-time and Part-time
Teaching Institution	Rose Bruford College
Awarding Institution	University of Chichester
Intermediate Awards	MPhil (exit award)
External Examiners	Appointed per candidate
Relevant QAA Reference Points	QAA Doctoral Degree Characteristics Statement (2020); UK Quality Code for Higher Education

UCAS Code	Name of Final Award	Programme Title	Duration	Mode of study
N/A	PhD	PhD	3-4 Years full time 6-7 years part time	FT and PT
		PhD by previous practice and publication	2 years part time.	PT only

Intermediate Awards

Award	Programme Title	Duration	Mode of study
MPhil	MPhil	2-3	FT
		4-5	PT

2. STATEMENT

Research Degrees at Rose Bruford College enables advanced, original, and independent research in theatre, performance, and related practices. The programme supports both practice based / practice research PhDs and fully written doctoral theses, alongside a route for PhD by Previous Publication and Practice.

The programme is embedded within Rose Bruford College's vibrant research environment and is supported by experienced supervisors, structured doctoral training, and a strong culture of ethical, inclusive, and socially engaged research practice, as detailed in the College's Research Strategy.

3. AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

The PhD programme aims to:

- Support doctoral researchers to produce original research that makes a significant and independent contribution to knowledge and/or professional practice.
- Enable candidates to develop as independent researcher practitioners capable of working across disciplinary, methodological, and practice-based traditions.
- Develop advanced research, analytical, and dissemination skills appropriate to academic, creative, and professional research careers.
- Embed research within an ethical, inclusive, and socially responsible framework.
- Prepare graduates for careers in academia, the creative industries, cultural leadership, and research-intensive professional contexts.

The research degree aims to equip Doctoral Researchers with the knowledge and skills to design and carry out a research project, resulting in a thesis which will provide a contribution to knowledge and contain original work worthy of publication.

4. RESEARCH, LEARNING, TEACHING, CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Doctoral learning is based on independent research, supported by:

- Supervision by an experienced supervisory team.
- Structured doctoral training sessions.
- Peer research culture and cohort engagement.
- Formal progression points and reviews.

Research, Learning, teaching, and assessment are individualised, responsive to the nature of each research project, and aligned with doctoral level expectations.

Learning and teaching are delivered through:

- Monthly supervision meetings (full-time) or bimonthly (part-time)
- Attending a minimum of nine doctoral training sessions, including but not limited to:
 - Research ethics and integrity
 - Practice research methodologies
 - Writing and dissemination
 - Public engagement and impact
- Annual Research Reviews involving independent academic input from beyond supervisory teams.
- Participation in the wider College research culture, including seminars, talks, and research events.

Supervision

Each supervision team is comprised of at least one faculty member who has seen PhD students through to completion. This faculty member may serve as Director of Studies/Primary Supervisor, should their expertise be relevant to the proposed research. This faculty member may also serve as second or third supervisor in an advisory capacity, should their expertise be less close to the proposed research. Third supervisors, where necessary, will be chosen based on what a research project or the College needs – this might be specific area research, sabbatical cover, or training for new faculty. While the make-up of each supervision team may appear slightly different, each will have the appropriate mix of subject expertise and PhD completion experience.

Supervisions will be recorded through a Supervision Record Form submitted to and stored by the College's Programme Administration and/or Research Team. These forms are required to be completed by the student and signed off by supervisor/s within 72 hours of each supervision.

5. CURRICULUM CONTENT

There is no modular curriculum. Instead, the curriculum is defined by:

- The individual research project approved at admission
- Engagement with one or more of Rose Bruford College's research intensities:
 - Politics and Socially Engaged Practice
 - Queer Performance
 - Scenographies and Technologies
 - Acting and Performance.

- Required training in ethics, research methods, professional development, best practice in publication and dissemination, knowledge exchange, intellectual property and research commercialisation;
- Preparation for doctoral milestones (major review, submission, examination)

Typically, students are expected to attend all training sessions in their first year (or pro-rata for part time students), with a minimum requirement for attendance communicated to all students. A student needs to evidence attendance at training during Annual Review processes.

6. ASSESSMENT

Assessment at doctoral level is non-credit bearing and progression based, consisting of:

Formative and Progression Assessments

- Annual Review (Pass and Progress / Resubmit) each academic year (or part time equivalent)
- Major Review, normally taking place at the end of the first year/start of the second year (or part time equivalent), which includes:
 - Written chapter (c.15,000 words) **or**
 - Practice presentation plus contextual writing (5,000 words)
 - A Viva Voce involving independent academic input from beyond supervisory team, but usually from within The College
 - The Major Review will result in outcomes which is either: Pass, Pass with conditions to be met within 3 months, recommended to complete as MPhil as an Exit Award).

Final Assessment

- Doctoral thesis:
 - PhD: Not exceeding 80,000 words (written thesis), **or**
 - PhD by previous publication and practice: Normally between 25,000–40,000 words plus approved practice research submission. The thesis and practice element form an integrated whole, as reflecting the process of investigation.
- Viva Voce

Outcomes follow doctoral conventions (Pass, Minor/Major Corrections, Revise and Resubmit, Resubmission recommended for MPhil). Please note, an MPhil is an exit award involving a written thesis of normally no more than 50,000 words. Please see Regulations/Code of Practice for more information.

7. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

Year 1 (FT) / Years 1–2 (PT)

- Induction
- Monthly doctoral training sessions including training in research design, literature review, methodology, and research ethics and integrity.
- Submit for ethical approval to Research Integrity and Ethics Committee.
- Annual Review.

Major Review

- Submission of significant piece of work and Viva Voce with external panel at the end of your first year/start of your second year, or part-time equivalent (see above).

Years 2–3 (FT) / Years 3–6 (PT)

- Independent research development
- Practice and/or writing
- Dissemination and external engagement
- Annual Reviews

Writing-Up Stage

- Final thesis preparation and submission
- Viva examination

8. STUDENT INDUCTION, SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

Student induction and support take place at both the programme and College level.

At the programme level:

- You receive a Programme Student Handbook at Registration.
- Major Review and Annual Reviews will be introduced with a briefing and have a clear written brief.
- Peer learning and mentoring are intrinsic to the programme's learning and teaching strategy.
- You will receive verbal and written feedback on all submitted work.

At the College level:

- Student counsellors are available to all students via student services.

- A disability advisor is available to all students (students are contacted at admissions stage and invited to disclose any disabilities or learning needs).
- Study support is available, including specialist dyslexia and ESOL support.
- You will be introduced to the Learning Resources Centre at induction and receive both targeted and ongoing research skills and information literacy instruction and support during the remainder of your programme.

Supervisor support

Annual training place is a requirement for all College supervisors and prospective supervisors. This includes training for those new to supervision and refresher training for experienced supervisors. The workshops cover both the procedural and pedagogical elements involved in each stage of the PhD process, from orientation to examination. In addition to this, four short interim events for supervisors are scheduled throughout the year, tailored to the challenges in the lifecycle of the PhD (such as first steps, negotiating the upgrade, and writing-up stage).

All academic staff have a research mentor and PhD supervision is fully integrated into that programme. The Programme Director for Research Degrees will also be available to support and advise all supervisors on the programme.

9. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION

Applicants are normally expected to have:

- A Master's degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline and/or
- Significant professional/practice experience (especially for PhD by Previous Publication and Practice)
- A viable research proposal aligned with staff expertise
- Evidence of capacity for doctoral level study and independent research

Students whose first language is not English will also be required to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of English, this will normally be average IELTS score of 7.0 (or equivalent as described in the College's Admissions Policy).

All applicants are interviewed.

Requirements for Non-UK/EU Applicants

All research, teaching and assessment is carried out in English and consequently competence in written and spoken English is a requirement. See further information on [International students - Rose Bruford](#).

To comply with UK immigration legislation, successful non-UK/EU candidates will be required to be in receipt of a Student visa (or such documentation required by the UK Government in force at the time), before they can commence their studies.

Transferring from another programme

Applications from research students wishing to transfer to the College with or without their supervisor from another institution are permitted subject to the satisfactory provision of the following from the previous institution:

- an official release together with details of the duration of the research student's previous research study;
- a brief progress report approved by an appropriate officer or committee at the previous institution;
- confirmation as to whether the research student has transferred/upgraded from MPhil to PhD or not (if relevant); and
- details of that process, if it has taken place.

The College reserves the right to re-assess the research student's English language proficiency to ensure English language requirements are met and will interview the student.

Applications relating to research students wishing to transfer to the College independently of their previous supervisor and institution are subject to the satisfactory provision of the information described above and should normally include:

- two academic references relating to recent previous study (required of all postgraduate applicants);
- copies of regular progress reports (preferably annual reports) from the previous institution as far as possible;
- For any research student accepted for transfer, normally a minimum of 12 months between the date of transfer and submission of the thesis is required.

10. PROGRESSION AND ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

The programme operates in accordance with:

- Rose Bruford College Research Degree Regulations
- Code of Practice for Research Degrees
- University of Chichester doctoral regulations

11. MECHANISMS FOR PROGRAMME REVISION

The programme is reviewed through:

- Annual Monitoring
- Research Degrees Committee oversight
- Formal student representation within Research Degrees Committee
- Research Ethics and Integrity Committee oversight of ethics processes
- Research Committee and Academic Board reporting

- External examiner feedback
- Student representation and feedback

12. APPENDIX: DOCTORAL LEVEL ALIGNMENT

The programme is aligned with:

- QAA Characteristics of Doctoral Degrees
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- UKRI expectations for doctoral provision

Following the QAA Characteristics of Doctoral Degrees, the programme facilitates:

- Original contribution to knowledge

The programme requires candidates to produce a thesis or practice-based submission that makes an original and significant contribution to knowledge and/or professional practice, examined through viva voce.

- Conceptual understanding and critical evaluation

Doctoral candidates demonstrate advanced conceptual understanding through literature review, methodological design, annual review, transfer assessment, and final thesis.

- Research design and methodological rigour

Candidates design, justify, and implement research methodologies appropriate to their field, including practice research paradigms, with ethical approval and review.

- Autonomy and independence

The programme emphasises independent research supported by supervision, progressing towards full scholarly autonomy by submission.

- Ethical and responsible research

All research is conducted within Rose Bruford College's Research Integrity and Ethics framework with mandatory training and approval processes.

- Communication and dissemination

Candidates develop advanced skills in written, oral, and practice-based dissemination through thesis writing, presentations, conferences, and viva examination.

- Professional researcher development

Doctoral training, annual review, and engagement with the research environment support the development of professional research identity and career readiness.

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