

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London				
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College				
3	Programme Title(s)	Professional Doctorate Evidence-Based Human Resource Management; (provisional enrolment on MRes Evidence-Based HRM)				
4	Programme Code(s)	RDPEVHRM				
5	UCAS code	N/A				
6	Home Department	Department of Organizational Psychology				
7	Exit Award(s)	MRes Evidence-Based HRM PG Dip Evidence-Based HRM PG Cert Evidence-Based HRM				
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	Four years minimum – Five years maximum				
9	Mode of Study	FT		PT	x	DL
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	7 – MSc Level 8 – Doctorate level				
11	Other teaching depts or institution	None				
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A				
13	<u>QAA Benchmark Statement</u>	Business and Management				

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>This unique doctoral programme focuses on Human Resource Management (HRM) as a core discipline in business and management studies to equip individuals to lift their practice to doctoral level. The programme is of relevance to practitioners working across all areas relevant to human resource practice and scholarship, including management, learning and development, internal and external consultancy and other related fields. Students will gain in-depth understanding of data and evidence and the rigorous application of the Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) framework now endorsed by the Chartered Institute of Professional Development (CIPD – the UK professional body for HR) which has become a key part of the CIPD’s profession map.</p> <p>Training students in EBP is a core mechanisms for enabling them to systematically acquire and understand a substantial but often contradictory and ambiguous body of knowledge, will enable them to conceptualise and apply a range of approaches and techniques across research and practice to further knowledge in HRM. EBP is an approach to practice already well-established across many fields, which emphasizes making better-informed decisions both about problems (or opportunities) and potential solutions or interventions though the use of the best available evidence from multiple sources.</p>

	<p>The Professional Doctorate in EBP HRM enables students to make an advanced contribution to knowledge by developing subject specific knowledge, skills and abilities to evaluate and generate relevant data to undertake independent and practice-relevant research for dissemination to wide audiences including iterative and in depth work-based learning. On completion, students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively to solve complex problems and make decisions, be able to initiate change in organisational contexts and in themselves through EBP approaches and lead, manage and influence others accordingly.</p> <p>Part One of the doctorate is an MRes which comprises two core modules introducing students to EBP, including different approaches and models from diverse professions, as well as critical perspectives on the notion of what constitutes ‘evidence’ as such; and different techniques for evaluating and synthesizing a broad range of evidence. Students are then guided to apply this learning in four content-focused modules which facilitate iterative work-based learning to question and practice the relevance and application of EBP through work-based learning and case studies. The content of all modules will be reviewed and refreshed to ensure contemporary relevance (as well as critique of potential ‘fads’) and cover a range of evidence and data sources and analytics, including growing fields such as artificial intelligence and big data.</p> <p>Part two encompasses preparation for a major systematic review and a major independent study supported by advanced research methods training and individual supervision.</p> <p>There is an interim assessment for upgrade to PhD through a viva process. The final stage is submission of a research thesis and examination thereof through a viva voce. There is an expectation that all students commit to publishing their work in the peer reviewed domain.</p>
15	<p>Entry Criteria</p>
	<p>Students admitted to this programme will hold a Master’s degree in HRM, or a related field and have relevant in-depth professional experience with merit or distinction to ensure that students are able to demonstrate some level of critical thinking and knowledge at entry. All students need to be in relevant employment to apply their learning to the workplace as an integral part of the programme. They will be highly competent in their use of written and spoken English and have good social and communication skills.</p> <p>Selection to the course is through completion of an application form, and a subsequent face to face or telephone interview for applicants to discuss how the programme meets their needs and the programme team to judge their suitability for the course. Applicants will also be asked to complete the equivalent of a work sample by critically evaluating an academic paper.</p>
16	<p>Learning Outcomes</p>

	<p>This Professional Doctorate in Evidence-Based HRM is a research degree, progressing from MRes to PhD level, that meets the educational objectives outlined in the QAA Descriptors for Qualifications at Doctoral Level (2015). It is aligned to the Centre for Evidence-based Management's Framework for Evidence based practice and informed by the Centre for Personnel and Development's professions map. The programme aims to equip students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a contribution to furthering knowledge and understanding of HRM through advanced scholarship to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in organisations to ensure the latter is underpinned by best possible evidence. • Develop their capacity to make informed judgments on complex issues in HRM to develop practice in core areas of expertise in HRM using the evidence-based practice framework using robust methods for generation, critiquing and synthesizing evidence • Develop knowledge, skills and abilities to design, conduct, evaluate and present applied research which contributes substantially to the development of new techniques, concepts or frameworks, ideas and approaches. This will draw on specialist training in a variety of techniques of data collection and analysis for both quantifiable and non-quantifiable forms of data. • Embrace study in a research active community and engage with the institutions broader programme to support doctoral level study. • Enable students to communicate and disseminate work appropriately tailoring the information to specialist and non-specialist audiences with the aim of impact to practice. The expectation is that both final research projects (systematic review and major study) are of publishable standard for an appropriate peer reviewed outlet. • Foster transferrable skills to encourage life-long learning and the continual engagement of practitioners in reporting and disseminating their work to wider audiences • Increase personal responsibility and reflection on complex issues including inclusion and diversity and ethical and moral frameworks both theoretically and practically to ensure that any work conducted has integrity and adheres to common standards and frames of reference • Engage in work-based learning using newly gleaned academic knowledge to interrogate common practice, come to appropriate conclusions, reflect on learning gleaned and make evidence-based recommendations. • Be able to initiate change in organisations, groups and themselves through EBP approaches, and demonstrate a range of leadership, influencing and management techniques.
17	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</p>
	<p>The programme design, and therefore teaching, learning and assessment, on this programme is structured around the integration and contextualisation of theoretical knowledge into professional practice in HRM. The teaching and learning, for those in the Professional Practice part of the Programme (Part 1, Level 7, years 1 to 2), is further complemented by number of expert academics and practitioners in the field who will facilitate seminars and workshops at</p>

each of the six face-to-face weekends per year. Each of these seminars/workshops will focus on one of the four core practice areas of HRM and will ensure the dissemination of knowledge and the development of students' professional skills and knowledge. The teaching and learning strategy has been designed to reflect both the experience and needs of the cohort and therefore, rather than an authoritative approach to teaching, structured sessions will place the teaching team in the role of facilitators and managers of learning and knowledge, encouraging active discussion, flexibility of approach and peer learning.

As students move into Part 2, (Level 8, years 3 -4) Research Thesis Portfolio, the teaching and learning in Research Methods will again reflect the experience and particular needs of the cohort, building upon previous research methods training, and include a combination of small group workshops on particular methodologies (the contents of which will be prescribed by the cohort and study designs used but include Structural Equation Modelling, Hierarchical Linear Modelling, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and Discourse Analysis) and small group and one-to-one research supervision sessions. Students will also have access to the Research Methods element from the MSc Organizational Psychology course. This use of one-to-one and small group sessions from the beginning of the programme will enable students to build confidence and develop their research skills in a highly supportive manner. To continue to build upon the evidence-based practice built at Stage 1, students will be observed and assessed on their work-based learning.

Assessments will be designed to meet pre-existing professional standards as set by the HCPC, BPS and Doctoral level. Throughout the programme, students will be provided with opportunities for formative assessment. They will be expected to make oral presentations to their peers and to the course team and invited guests, through peer and tutor/expert discussions, submission of draft assessments for comment, and one-to-one sessions with their research supervisors.

The summative assessments are:

Part 1 (Level 7):

- The first of two foundational modules covering the principles of evidence-based practice will be assessed through the conduct and reporting of an evidence-based practice audit of two key HRM practices within the student's organization. The second of these two foundational modules on critical appraisal of evidence will be assessed through the application of critical appraisal techniques to published scientific studies as well as one of the three other sources of evidence deployed in evidence-based practice in HRM.
- The four modules covering four key areas of HRM practice will each be assessed separately through a professional practice case study in which the evidence-based practice framework will be applied to identifying a likely

	<p>problem/opportunity and potential solutions/intervention in the student's organization using the best available evidence from multiple sources.</p> <p>Students will also have multiple opportunities for formative assessments as part of each content module including peer review, submission and review of case study outlines and action learning sets to encourage and deepen reflection on practice.</p> <p>Part 2 (Level 8):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research planning and preparation portfolio (to include an extended systematic review protocol, research proposal for subsequent in depth piece of research, reflective essay and verbal presentation) • 40 – 50,000 word Research thesis to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background to research area, justification for, and links, between studies - Extended methodology section - Full systematic review - Empirical study - Implications section - Reflective process report • Viva voce examination
18	<p>Programme Description</p>
	<p>This professional doctorate explicitly promotes and trains students in evidence-based practice (EBP). This is an approach to practice already well-established across many fields, which emphasizes making better-informed decisions both about problems (or opportunities) and potential solutions or interventions through the use of the best available evidence from multiple sources. It aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an advanced contribution to HRM through an evidence-based approach to generating and evaluating relevant data and make informed judgments on implications for practice. • Develop knowledge, skills and abilities to design, conduct, evaluate and present applied research in the field of HRM • Embrace study in a research active community • Enable students to communicate effectively with diverse audiences and foster transferrable skills and a lifelong commitment to continuous professional and academic development • Increase the capacity to working in complex environments and with ambiguous data.

<p>Throughout the programme students will undertake work based learning attending dedicated weekend seminars, workshops and masterclasses, each of which include expert briefings and masterclasses from leading academics and practitioners around each of the four key practice areas in HRM, seminars and workshops on evidence-based practice, research methods training to extend the knowledge and skills above that of their previous learning and developing reflective practice; peer-learning and group supervision as well as self-learning as appropriate to a research-focused degree. In addition, students are allocated a personal supervisor to provide ongoing support and guidance, have access to a wide range of taught courses and professional training courses, and networking opportunities offered by the Department of Organizational Psychology. Students will also have access to a virtual learning environment, providing students with access to supplementary materials. The aim is for these different methods to complement one another in a managed fashion with a balance between teaching and learning.</p> <p>In the first part of the doctorate, students will take three 30-credit modules in their first year, namely the two fundamental evidence modules and the first of four content modules focused on assessment and selection. In the second year, students will take a further three modules to work through the employee life cycle. Each of these modules is assessed by a case study which together will form an evidence-based practice portfolio. In the second part (once the first part has been passed), students prepare for independent research through a preparation module which includes research methods training, work up proposals for a systematic review and major study, and then undertake both of these studies to form a final doctoral thesis which is assessed through a viva voce.</p> <p>NB: for the first two modules of the programme all modules have been designated as 'Core' as the expectation is that students pass these to progress to the content-based modules. Students who do not pass all modules but have at least 120 credits (four modules passed) can be awarded the exit award of a postgraduate diploma.</p>
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19	Programme Structure			
<i>Part-Time programme</i>				
<i>Part 1 - Year 1-2</i>				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	BUOB084S7	Evidence-Based Professional Practice Portfolio: The Foundations of Evidence-Based HRM	30	Core
7	BUOB085S7	Evidence-Based Professional Practice Portfolio: Critical Appraisal of Scientific and Other Evidence	30	Core
7	BUOB086S7	Evidence-Based Professional Practice Portfolio: Selection and Assessment	30	Compulsory
7	BUOB087S7	Evidence-Based Professional Practice Portfolio: Learning and Development	30	Compulsory

Year of entry: 2021/22



7	BUOB088S7	Evidence-Based Professional Practice Portfolio in Performance, Talent and Reward Management	30	Compulsory
7	BUOB089S7	Evidence-Based Professional Practice Portfolio in Job Satisfaction, Well-Being and Engagement	30	Compulsory
Part 2 - Year 3-4				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
8	N/A	Evidenced Based HRM: Research Planning and Preparation	N/A	CORE
8	N/A	Evidence-based HRM: Research Thesis	N/A	CORE

Note: the programme starts in January of each year.

Credits are not allocated for the L8 research modules in line with other BBK research programmes

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

²⁰	Programme Director	Professor Almuth McDowall (interim)
²¹	Start Date (<i>term/year</i>)	September 2021
²²	Date approved by Education Committee	Spring 2020
²³	Date approved by Academic Board	Summer 2020
²⁴	Date(s) updated/amended	February 2021