

PhD in Midwifery and Women's Health

Programme summary

The Faculty of Health and Human Sciences at Thames Valley University welcomes applications from students who wish to study for a PhD/MPhil research degree in subject areas such as: Nursing, Midwifery, Psychology, Health and Social Science, Microbiology and Biochemistry, Physiology, Complementary Medicine, Public Health, Community Health, and other health and human science related subjects.

Research degrees in Midwifery and Women's Health

The Department of Midwifery has a dynamic group of research students currently working on diverse topics relating to midwifery and childbirth. Recent doctoral topics include: analysis of risk concepts in midwifery; using narratives to explore midwifery knowledge; analysis of models of maternity care; breastfeeding within its cultural context. The student base is international and some students have progressed from our Master's programme in midwifery.

The Department includes a number of research active academic staff able to supervise doctoral work, led by Professor Debra Bick, who has expertise in experimental and quantitative research, and Professor Christine McCourt, who has expertise in qualitative and cultural research and consumer-oriented studies.

Programme outline

The aim of the PhD/MPhil research programme is to enable research students, nationally and internationally, to explore and critically evaluate related issues to extend the knowledge base of their field and, where applicable, to recommend organisational change of policy.

The programme is designed to build on your existing strengths and to bring you to the leading edge of knowledge in your chosen area of research.

The PhD/MPhil research programme consists of the following stages:

Initial stage

Submission of a short outline research proposal and a brief CV to help us to assess the candidate's suitability, the viability of the topic to be investigated, and to allocate a suitable supervisor to the candidate.

Acceptance of candidate

Once the suitability of the candidate and the topic for investigation has been established, s/he is enrolled for the appropriate taught components and pays the appropriate fee. A copy of the University Research Degree Regulations and the Research Student Handbook are sent to the candidate.

MPhil registration

During the initial stages of the research proposal, a student's research supervisor will support and guide them to produce a full research proposal for submission to the University Research Degrees Committee, to upgrade their status from enrolled student to

formal registration as an MPhil research student.

MPhil to PhD upgrade

Following a period of 9 to 18 months, depending on the mode of study, the student will apply for upgrading to PhD status. To gain PhD status the student is expected to submit: a revised research design and plan, an account of preliminary data collected and any preliminary data analyses, two or three draft chapters, and a detailed plan describing how the dissertation is to be completed from that stage.

PhD examination

The final PhD oral examination normally takes place three to six years after the initial acceptance, depending on the mode of study.

Please note:

The ideal method of completing a PhD or MPhil is to be a full-time student at all stages. However, for a variety of reasons this may not be possible. It is possible to mix full and part-time status during the course. The maximum duration for the MPhil is three years (full-time) and four years (part-time). Maximum duration for the PhD is four years (full-time), six years (part-time).

Programme specification

Delivery

Full-time.
The teaching institution is: Brentford Campus - Paragon House, Thames Valley University, Boston Manor Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9GA.

Duration

Full-time students must register at the University for a minimum of 33 months. Part-time students are required to register for minimum of 45 months. Anticipated elapsed time to complete will be three to six years respectively.

Start dates

You can join at any point during the year.

Assessment

To support you towards the award of PhD/MPhil, your progress is monitored regularly both formally and informally. Informally, you can expect your supervisor(s) to meet with you regularly to monitor your progress and discuss any concerns you may have. You will be required, on an annual basis, to write a formal report to the University Research Degrees Committee to highlight your progress and your plans for the future.

Student support

Students who are accepted on the programme are allocated one or two supervisors, plus, in many cases, an external supervisor to support and guide them throughout their research.

In addition to supervision support, all enrolled research students are able to access the postgraduate diploma course of the University's Masters in Research Methods programme, free of charge. This programme is delivered

part-time, and prospective MPhil/PhD students who do not have prior research experience are required to complete the Certificate part of this course in their first year of study.

The Faculty of Health and Human Sciences at Thames Valley University has excellent research links with local health and community services via its system of Learning Communities, in addition to a range of formal and informal subject-based links locally, nationally and internationally.

Entry requirements

The minimum entry requirement is:

- a good first degree (First Class or 2.1), or equivalent qualification in a relevant field.

- MA/MSc qualifications, or relevant postgraduate or research experience.

Candidates with other qualifications are required to discuss their eligibility with a member of staff.

Candidates whose first language is not English will need to meet certain minimum language entry requirements, eg the equivalent of an IELTS score of 7 or higher.

Further information

Additional information

For general enquiries about Research degrees in FHHS please contact:

Helen O'Neil

Senior Research Coordinator
Faculty of Health & Human Sciences
Thames Valley University
Paragon House
Boston Manor Road, Brentford
Twickenham, Middx. TW8 9GA

Tel: +44(0)20 8209 4121

Email: helen.o'neill@tvu.ac.uk.