

Distance learning



What is a PhD by Distance Learning?

A PhD by Distance Learning allows you to undertake the majority of your research at an off-campus location. You are therefore able to do the research required for your PhD in a location of your choosing; only making one annual visit to the University.

Why study by distance learning?

The main advantage of studying by distance learning is the opportunity to undertake research supervised by one of our world-renowned academics without having to relocate geographically to the Birmingham region. The flexibility offered by distance learning will allow you to combine study with other commitments, including work and family.

Is the distance learning route for you?

The distance learning route to PhD study is not for everyone. You need to have a very clear idea of your research project and be able to motivate yourself. Undertaking PhD study off campus can sometimes be quite isolating, so the ability to proactively seek out connections from within relevant research communities is important. This route is well-suited to those who have a project associated with their work or particular interests and where resources are available locally to support your research e.g. appropriate archives and data collections.

Can I study by Distance Learning in the UK?

Distance Learning courses can be undertaken from anywhere in the world, including the UK.

However, it is worth noting that supervisory sessions for Distance Learning students will take place via audiovisual communications, such as Skype or Facetime, rather than in person.

While this 21st Century approach has proved effective, for those applicants who would prefer to visit the campus for face-to-face meetings with their supervisor, the traditional part-time study option would be more appropriate.

What is the cost of doing a PhD by Distance Learning?

We charge an annual tuition fee. Fees for the PhD by Distance Learning are the same as our standard on-campus PhD (for the 2012 academic session these were: Home/EU students - £3,828 full-time, £1,914 part-time; International students - £11,730 full-time, £5,865 part-time) but include:

- One return economy flight per year for the required two-week campus visit in September
- Accommodation at the University for the required two-week campus visit in September
- One return economy flight at the end of the study period for the three-day PhD viva examination
- Accommodation at the University for the three-day viva examination

How will I be supported?

You will receive the same level of support and supervision as on-campus students. The only difference is that supervisory sessions will take place via audio and visual communication services such as Skype or Facetime, rather than in person.

When would I start?

We encourage you to start your PhD in the month of September so that you can attend an induction along with other PhD candidates beginning their research at the same time as you. However, other arrangements may be possible with agreement from your supervisor.

How often will I need to be on campus?

Although you may be able to undertake the majority of your study at an off-campus location, you will be fully funded to make one compulsory visit to the University per year of study. This will enable you to meet your supervisory team, undertake intensive research skills training and make a start on your doctoral studies. You will then be invited to attend the University for annual meetings which will give you the opportunity to interact with other doctoral students both socially and academically, undertake

important progress meetings and carry out necessary training. You will also generally be required to be present on campus for your viva voce.

Am I eligible?

Before we can offer you a place it is important that you have agreement from your potential supervisor and that they are satisfied that you will be able to undertake the PhD on an off-campus basis. This may mean that slightly different entry requirements apply, such as English language and more extensive research skills training. Agreements will also need to be reached regarding some of the more practical aspects of undertaking the PhD in this way (for example attendance requirements, suitability of the chosen residency etc). It is important that arrangements are discussed early so that all parties involved know what to expect and to ensure you are able to successfully complete your studies.

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