INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AWARDING BODY (IQAB)

Programme Specification

Level 8 Professional Doctorate Framework

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & PROGRAMME ARCHITECTURE

Qualification Framework: RQF / EQF Level 8 (Doctoral)
Total Credits: 360 UK Credits (180 ECTS)
Total Qualification Time: 3,600 Hours
Standard Duration: 3 Years (Executive Hybrid)
Medium of Instruction: English
Awarding Body: International Qualifications Awarding Body (IQAB)

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This Programme Specification defines the academic architecture, entry standards, curriculum structure, and assessment methodology for the Level 8 Professional Doctorate Framework. Designed for senior executives, industry leaders, and strategic consultants, the framework bridges academic rigor with high-impact applied organizational research.

2. DOCTORAL QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

Focuses on applied executive strategy, corporate governance, strategic risk management, and solving complex, multi-faceted organizational challenges.

Doctor of Management (DMgt)

Focuses on advanced operational systems, enterprise ecosystems, global supply chain resilience, and organizational architecture optimization.

Doctor of Leadership & Management (DLM)

Focuses on transformational leadership paradigms, executive psychology, organizational culture transformation, and change dynamics.

3. ENTRY & ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- **Academic Qualifications:** A Master's degree (RQF Level 7 / EQF Level 7) in Business, Management, Leadership, or a related discipline from a recognized degree-awarding institution.
- **Executive Experience:** Minimum of 5 to 7 years in senior executive management, operational leadership, or board-level advisory roles.
- **English Proficiency:** IELTS Academic score of 7.0 overall (with no band below 6.5) or equivalent proof of English medium instruction.
- **Research Proposal:** Submission of an initial 2,000–3,000 word doctoral research concept paper detailing the practical research focus and strategic value.

4. CURRICULUM STRUCTURE (STAGE 1: 120 CREDITS)

Stage 1 comprises four mandatory 30-credit taught modules structured to provide deep methodological grounding and theoretical mastery prior to thesis execution.

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (UK / ECTS)
IQAB-801	Epistemology, Philosophy & Advanced Business Research Design	30 / 15 ECTS
IQAB-802	Strategic Leadership, Governance & Global Ecosystems	30 / 15 ECTS
IQAB-803	Advanced Data Analytics, Evidence-Based Management & AI in Decision Making	30 / 15 ECTS
IQAB-804	Organizational Transformation, Change Dynamics & Praxis	30 / 15 ECTS

5. DOCTORAL RESEARCH THESIS (STAGE 2: 240 CREDITS)

IQAB-805: Empirical Dissertation & Defence (240 RQF Credits)

In Stage 2, candidates undertake an original empirical investigation resulting in a 60,000–80,000 word doctoral thesis. The process includes structured supervisory support, annual doctoral colloquia presentations, formal research proposal defense, and a final oral examination (viva voce) evaluated by independent academic and industry examiners.

6. DELIVERY MODEL & ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- **Flexible Executive Delivery:** Executive hybrid framework combining synchronous interactive doctoral seminars, masterclasses, and self-directed research.
- **Supervisory Panel:** Dual supervision model pairing each doctoral candidate with an Academic Principal Supervisor and a Industry Practice Advisor.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** 24/7 access to global research databases, statistical toolkits (SPSS, R, NVivo), and the IQAB Virtual Learning Environment.

7. ASSESSMENT & RQF LEVEL 8 DESCRIPTORS

Assessments across Stage 1 and Stage 2 evaluate high-level critical synthesis, scholarly rigor, original contribution to professional practice, and executive impact. Candidates must demonstrate the ability to conceptualize and execute independent research that advances executive management practice.