

POSTGRADUATE



DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

Creating Knowledge

Thinking of doing your PhD? Otago is New Zealand's leading postgraduate university, with unrivalled access to world-class research teams and academic leaders. Be actively involved in driving cutting-edge research, as you engage with academic experts in an environment that is both dynamic and challenging.

At Otago we are committed to providing you with all the support and resources you will need to achieve your goals, including access to state-of-the-art equipment and technology, international conference funding, and a large number of postgraduate scholarships and awards.

Above all, we are proud to offer you a world-class PhD qualification that will equip you with the skills and experience you need to be successful anywhere.

“My PhD has been all about the journey as well as the destination. Rather than just chasing a ticket or a piece of paper, I'm gaining research and communication skills while actively participating in the academic community – Otago provides the perfect environment for this.”

NAOMI INGRAM
PhD Graduate



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
www.otago.ac.nz/study/phd



WHY STUDY FOR A PhD?

Studying for a PhD is an opportunity to fully immerse yourself in a subject area of your choosing. PhD candidates become experts in their chosen field, contributing to the sum of knowledge and participating fully in the academic community. The PhD teaches high-level research, writing, critical thinking and communication skills, and as the most recognised of the highest degrees one can earn, is the gateway to research, academic and leadership positions all over the world.

WHAT DOES A PhD INVOLVE?

A PhD is awarded based solely on the submission of a thesis prepared under supervision. There is no course work, although you may sometimes be required to take certain papers in order to acquire specific knowledge or expertise.

The thesis, which is typically around 100,000 words long, should give evidence of the ability to carry out research, demonstrate originality and independence, and make a significant contribution to knowledge. It is expected that some of the work in the thesis would be worthy of publication.

WHO CAN UNDERTAKE A PhD?

You must be a university graduate, and some previous research experience is also essential. Typically, candidates will have completed either a thesis-based master's degree or a bachelor's degree with honours (including a dissertation component). If you do not have these or equivalent qualifications, other research experience (such as peer-reviewed academic publications) may also be considered. Upgrading from a current Otago master's degree is also possible in some circumstances.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE AND WHEN CAN I START?

A diligent PhD candidate would typically be expected to take three years of equivalent full-time study to complete their thesis. Study can begin at any time during the year.

CAN I STUDY MY PhD PART-TIME?

Yes, however the University will only approve your request to study part-time if it is satisfied that you have access to substantial blocks of time to devote to the PhD and sufficient social and intellectual support to make completion of the PhD likely within a reasonable time-frame. Note that due to student visa restrictions, international students cannot usually study part-time.

CAN I STUDY MY PhD AT A DISTANCE?

Some off-campus work is allowed during PhD study, but the value of close supervision and immersion in the academic community means that pure distance study is not usually permitted.

SUPERVISION

At least two supervisors, or one supervisor supported by a departmental advisory panel, are appointed to oversee the work of PhD candidates. All primary supervisors at Otago must have previous supervisory experience, and be recognised as high-calibre researchers. Supervision across different departments is also possible, and can be particularly beneficial if your project involves interdisciplinary study.

Before applying, you should approach departments or possible supervisors in order to ascertain whether they have the expertise to supervise your proposed research. You can search for supervisors by research interest at www.otago.ac.nz/news/expertise. Supervisors play a very important role in PhD study, and so it is vital you choose people with whom you feel you can have a successful working relationship.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The University of Otago offers a large number of PhD scholarships each year, which provide fees and a \$25k per annum living allowance for up to three years. Applications for scholarships are made when applying for admission to the PhD programme. Contact the University's Scholarships Administrators for further information.

INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATES

The New Zealand government entitles international PhD candidates to domestic status, so long as they are based in New Zealand during their studies. Such status allows the payment of subsidised domestic fees and provides access to University postgraduate scholarships.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications for admission can be made at any time throughout the year through the University's online e:Vision student portal. Before formally applying you should familiarise yourself with the PhD Regulations and Handbook for PhD Study (also available on the website), and seek informal acceptance from potential departments and supervisors. Final decisions on applications for admission are made by the Graduate Research Committee on behalf of the University's Senate.

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY CONTACT THE DOCTORAL AND SCHOLARSHIPS OFFICE

Tel 0800 80 80 98
Email phd@otago.ac.nz
www.otago.ac.nz/study/phd

POSTGRADUATE STUDY AT OTAGO
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SCHOLARSHIPS QUERIES
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