

Master's & Doctoral Study Guide

Advanced study, research methods and scholarly development.

Academic information edition | 2026-2027

Subject and learning information; not an admissions offer.



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

How to read this presentation

A source-grounded academic framework pack; not a published programme prospectus.

01

PUBLIC CATALOGUE

IEU publishes study-level and subject directories; listings alone do not prove an open programme.

02

DESIGN EXAMPLES

The 12 master and 8 doctoral themes in this deck are outlined models, not approved awards.

03

VERIFICATION GATES

Study plan, supervision, delivery, accreditation and admissions require programme-level evidence.

Current IEU admissions guidance states that online intake is not open through the website.

Inside the postgraduate study guide

A complete roadmap from graduate study design to doctoral research practice.

01

01 THE SYSTEM

Academic architecture,
digital learning and
evidence standards.

02

02 MASTER'S

Twelve example portfolio
themes and modular
curriculum designs.

03

03 DOCTORAL

Eight research fields,
research milestones and
supervision design.

04

04 THE CONTROLS

Quality, ethics, admissions
and publication readiness.

All titles, pathways and components are editorial planning models.

Graduate study in perspective

Two types of advanced study, one quality-led academic ecosystem.

01

12

MASTER'S-LEVEL THEMES

Taught, research-focused and applied themes.

02

08

DOCTORAL RESEARCH FIELDS

PhD and DBA thematic possibilities.

03

01

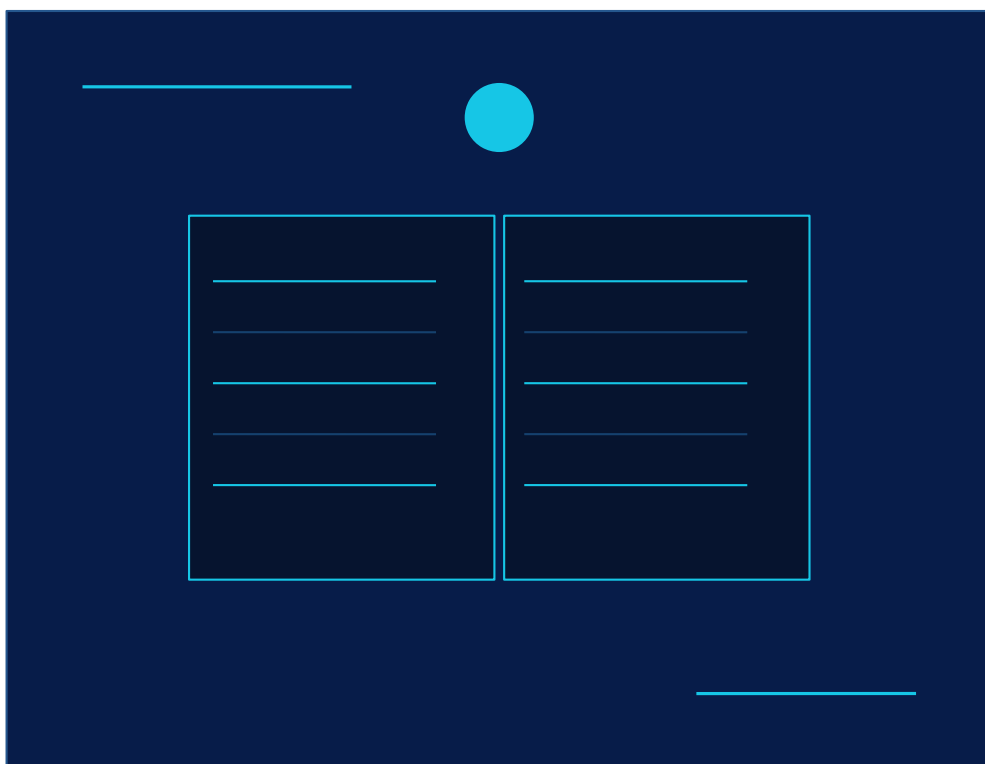
EVIDENCE PRINCIPLE

Only documented programme facts may become an admission offer.

Numbers count editorial themes in this presentation, not enrolled programmes.

Education, research and innovation

Study levels connect to IEU's developing knowledge ecosystem.



ACADEMIC LEARNING

Structured study and critical inquiry.

RESEARCH PRACTICE

Original questions, sound methods and transparent evidence.

RESPONSIBLE IMPACT

Clear boundaries between knowledge exchange and verified services.

Study-level comparison

Taught learning, applied enquiry and original doctoral research have distinct design goals.

Taught Master's	Advanced specialist knowledge with authentic assessment.
Research Master's	Depth in methodology and extended supervised enquiry.
Applied DBA	Original scholarly inquiry grounded in organisational practice.
Research PhD	Original contribution within a defensible research tradition.

Academic breadth across graduate study

The directory contains many fields; individual academic programmes need distinct approval.



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

18 FACULTY AREAS

Fields are grouped into broad academic domains.

144 DEPARTMENTS

Directory organisation; not a staffing count.

890 FIELDS

Subjects of interest; not 890 active courses or degrees.

A graduate learning pathway

An example four-stage academic journey.

01

DISCOVER

Select a researchable or practice-oriented field.

02

DESIGN

Define level, entry profile, outcomes and workload.

03

VALIDATE

Confirm academic authority, assessment and support.

04

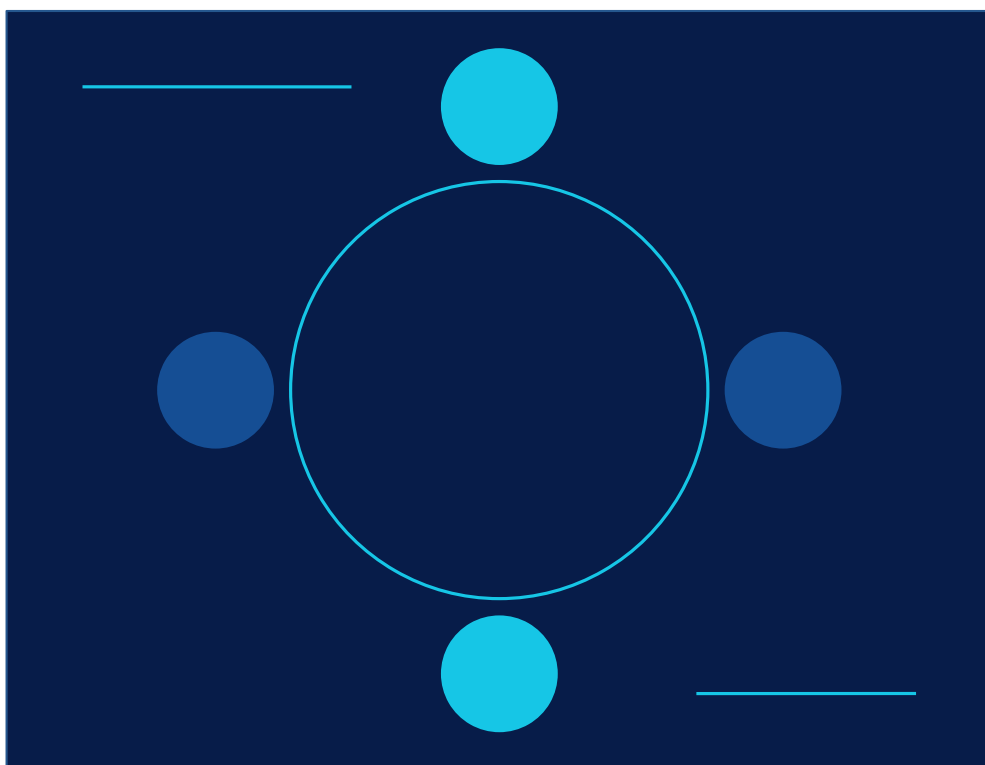
STUDY

Proceed only via the responsible approved enrolment route.

Example pathway design: the responsible awarding body must set and approve actual rules.

For graduate learners and institutions

A portfolio can serve different needs without pretending every model is live.



EARLY-CAREER SPECIALISTS

Build higher-level expertise and method literacy.

EXECUTIVES & MANAGERS

Apply evidence to institutional decision questions.

EMERGING RESEARCHERS

Develop original research questions and scholarly independence.

Six shared graduate capabilities

A outlined common foundation that can be reused across compatible pathways.

01

CRITICAL ENQUIRY

Read evidence, expose assumptions and defend judgements.

02

RESEARCH DESIGN

Select a method that fits the question.

03

DATA LITERACY

Understand measurement, uncertainty and bias.

04

ETHICAL JUDGEMENT

Protect participants, privacy and research integrity.

05

COMMUNICATION

Report methods, limitations and implications.

06

SYSTEMS THINKING

Connect discipline-specific choices to wider outcomes.

Digital-first does not mean fully operational

Digital learning tools can support public exploration; verified LMS delivery is distinct.

- Access the published academic catalogue.
- Explore IEU Digital Campus public resources.
- Use simulations and framework maps for discovery.
- Validate assessment, student identity and records before delivery.
- Separate public learning tools from authenticated academic systems.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Access the published academic catalogue.
- 02 Explore IEU Digital Campus public resources.
- 03 Validate assessment, student identity and records before delivery.

Public IEU Digital Campus is an information gateway, not a confirmed student record system.

Evidence and transparency principles

Claims about graduates, faculty, recognition and impact need demonstrable records.

01

PERSONNEL

Named supervisors and teacher capacity need verification.

02

AWARD

The legally responsible awarding institution must be explicit.

03

ASSESSMENT

Independent academic moderation and appeals need ownership.

04

DELIVERY

Student support, platform and access must work in practice.

Institutional registration and published catalogue information are not themselves academic approval.



INTERNATIONAL
EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

SECTION 01

Master's Study Models

Advanced learning, applied projects and research-informed assessment.



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

What a master's model should clarify

Academic depth needs a specific, inspectable course and assessment structure.

01

PURPOSE

Who the programme serves and which higher-level problem it addresses.

02

OUTCOMES

What a successful graduate can explain, analyse, design or defend.

03

CURRICULUM

How modules build from foundations to integrative work.

04

ASSESSMENT

What authentic evidence demonstrates intended learning.

No model is a credit-bearing programme until validated by the responsible authorised institution.

Learning outcomes and constructive alignment

A course is credible when outcomes, teaching and assessment point in the same direction.

01

KNOW

Evaluate current knowledge and competing explanations.

02

DO

Select methods, develop a solution and test alternatives.

03

JUDGE

Address ethics, uncertainty, transferability and risk.

04

COMMUNICATE

Produce clear, reproducible evidence for real readers.

Assessment criteria and external examination responsibilities must be defined for each actual award.

Six common academic modules — planning codes

Reusable foundation content can reduce duplication when academic compatibility is verified.

01

PG-RES-01

Graduate Research Design & Inquiry

02

PG-DAT-02

Data Literacy, Modelling & Evidence

03

PG-ETH-03

Research Integrity & Ethics

04

PG-COM-04

Advanced Academic Communication

05

PG-PRJ-05

Project Design & Evaluation

06

PG-AI-06

Responsible AI & Digital Research Practice

The PG-* identifiers are newly prepare INTERNAL PLANNING CODES, not authorised course codes.

Master's research methods toolkit

Select evidence before selecting a preferred answer.

- Formulate the research question and identify the claim.
- Compare design options: case, survey, qualitative, mixed methods.
- Build a data collection and analysis plan.
- Consider alternative explanations and research limitations.
- Communicate reproducibly and make responsible use of AI.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 **Formulate the research question and identify the claim.**
- 02 **Compare design options: case, survey, qualitative, mixed methods.**
- 03 **Consider alternative explanations and research limitations.**

Thesis or applied capstone?

Both models require academic judgement and a transparent evaluation rubric.

RESEARCH THESIS

- Original question and scholarly context
- Methodological justification
- Structured argument and evidence
- Limitations and research contribution

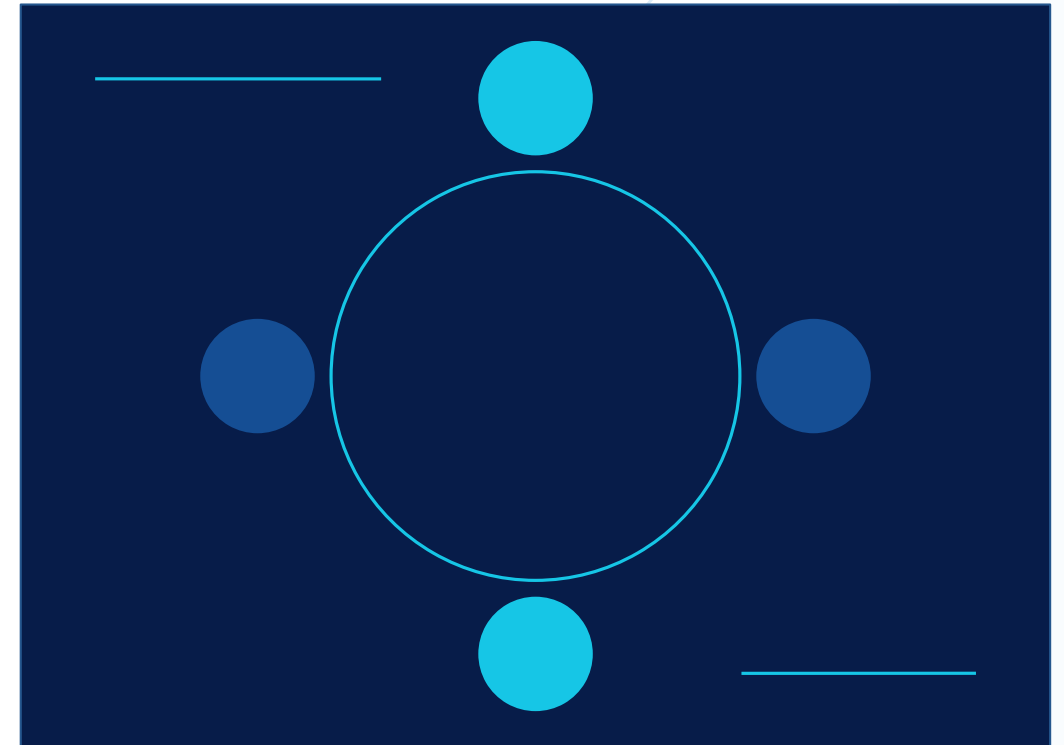
APPLIED CAPSTONE

- Defined organisational or social problem
- Transparent evidence collection
- Evaluated intervention or prototype
- Impact, adoption and risk reflection

Assessment and feedback design

A rigorous postgraduate experience should be assessed in multiple authentic ways.

- Critical analytical essays and literature syntheses.
- Case examinations and policy or strategy briefs.
- Reproducible analytical portfolios and code reviews.
- Applied projects with independently specified rubrics.
- Ethical and inclusive feedback with a documented appeal route.



The student support model

Support architecture must be designed before offering live places.

01

ONBOARD

Academic expectations, workload and responsible research.

02

GUIDE

Published faculty availability, clear course navigation.

03

FEEDBACK

Timely and meaningful responses against criteria.

04

PROTECT

Privacy, accessibility, complaints and appeal procedures.

The public digital campus does not itself prove an authenticated student portal or LMS.

Learning delivery options — pending verification

The format needs to fit the qualification and the learner, not only marketing claims.

01

SELF-PACED CONTENT

Suitable for some preparatory explanations and practice tasks.

02

SYNCHRONOUS SEMINARS

Suitable for reasoning, critique, presentations and debate.

03

SUPERVISED PROJECTS

Required when significant original or applied inquiry is assessed.

04

PHYSICAL / LAB WORK

Needs appropriate resources, permissions and actual capacity.

Do not advertise laboratory, placement or clinical capacity without evidence of access.

Master's study theme atlas

Twelve example topic families selected to demonstrate academic depth and breadth.

M01

Strategic Management & Innovation

M02

Artificial Intelligence & Data Science

M03

Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics

M04

Digital Transformation & Innovation

M05

Finance & Business Analytics

M06

Public Policy & Governance

M07

Educational Leadership & Digital Learning

M08

Public Health & Health Systems

M09

Sustainability & Climate Strategy

M10

International Relations & Diplomacy

M11

Leadership & Organisational Change

M12

Forensic Science & Evidence Systems

12 planning themes | No approved credits or intake implied

MBA — Strategic Management & Innovation

BUSINESS, LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

- Strategic analysis and value creation
- Organisational leadership and change
- Evidence-based business decisions



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MBA — Strategic Management & Innovation | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Strategic Management &
Competitive Advantage

Leadership, Organisations &
Change

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Managerial Finance &
Decision Analysis

Marketing Strategy &
Customer Insights

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Operations, Digital Business &
Innovation

Governance, Risk &
Responsible Management

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Applied Research for
Managers

Strategic Transformation
Capstone

EXAMPLE OUTPUT A board-ready strategic transformation case with a measurable implementation plan.

MSc Artificial Intelligence & Data Science

COMPUTING, AI, DATA & CYBERSECURITY

- Responsible AI model development
- Data engineering and inference
- Reproducible model evaluation

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Responsible AI model development
- 02 Data engineering and inference
- 03 Reproducible model evaluation

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MSc Artificial Intelligence & Data Science | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Probability, Statistics & Computational Methods

Python for Data Engineering

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Machine Learning Foundations

Data Architecture & Governance

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Deep Learning & Intelligent Systems

AI Evaluation, Explainability & Fairness

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Applied Research Methods for AI

AI Systems Research Project

EXAMPLE OUTPUT A documented AI prototype, model card and evaluation report.

MSc Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics

CYBERSECURITY & RISK SYSTEMS

- Risk-based security architecture
- Ethical investigation and evidence
- Digital resilience and governance

ACADEMIC FOCUS

01 Risk-based security architecture

02 Ethical investigation and evidence

03 Digital resilience and governance

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MSc Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Security Foundations &
Threat Modelling

Networks, Identity & Cloud
Security

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Governance, Risk &
Compliance

Digital Forensic Methods

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Incident Response &
Evidence Handling

Security Testing & Resilience

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Cybersecurity Research
Methods

Cyber Assurance Capstone

EXAMPLE OUTPUT An audited incident-response and cyber-resilience blueprint.

MSc Digital Transformation & Innovation

DIGITAL STRATEGY & INNOVATION

- Digital operating model redesign
- Data-led experimentation
- Change adoption and value measurement

ACADEMIC FOCUS

01 Digital operating model redesign

02 Data-led experimentation

03 Change adoption and value measurement

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MSc Digital Transformation & Innovation | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Digital Business Models

Innovation Design & Service Research

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Enterprise Data Strategy

Process Automation & Systems Thinking

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Technology Governance & Change

Digital Product & Platform Strategy

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Applied Evaluation & Value Realisation

Digital Transformation Capstone

EXAMPLE OUTPUT A phased digital transformation roadmap with pilot evaluation logic.

MSc Finance & Business Analytics

ECONOMICS, ACCOUNTING & FINANCE

- Corporate financial modelling
- Risk, forecasts and evidence
- Analytics for capital decisions



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MSc Finance & Business Analytics | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Corporate Finance & Valuation

Statistical Modelling for Finance

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Accounting Analytics & Reporting

Financial Markets & Risk

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Business Forecasting & Scenario Design

Financial Data, Ethics & Regulation

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Research Methods for Finance

Applied Finance Analytics Project

EXAMPLE OUTPUT A reproducible risk-and-return analysis with documented assumptions.

MA Public Policy & Governance

LAW, GOVERNMENT & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Policy problem framing and evaluation
- Public governance and institutions
- Evidence-to-decision communication

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Policy problem framing and evaluation
- 02 Public governance and institutions
- 03 Evidence-to-decision communication

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MA Public Policy & Governance | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Public Governance & Institutions

Policy Theory & Problem Definition

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Policy Research & Quantitative Evidence

Regulatory Analysis & Consultation

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Implementation & Public Value

Evaluation, Foresight & Impact

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Research Ethics for Public Policy

Comparative Policy Capstone

EXAMPLE OUTPUT A government-oriented policy options paper with an evaluation framework.

MA Educational Leadership & Digital Learning

EDUCATION & LEARNING SCIENCES

- Learning science and inclusive access
- Education leadership and innovation
- Quality in digital course design

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Learning science and inclusive access
- 02 Education leadership and innovation
- 03 Quality in digital course design

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MA Educational Leadership & Digital Learning | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Contemporary Learning Sciences

Leadership & Institutional Improvement

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Curriculum Architecture & Assessment

Online Pedagogy & Accessibility

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Learning Analytics & Evidence

Education Policy & Quality Assurance

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Practitioner Inquiry & Methods

Digital Learning Design Capstone

EXAMPLE OUTPUT An evidence-based curriculum or digital learning improvement plan.

MSc Public Health & Health Systems

NURSING, ALLIED HEALTH & PUBLIC HEALTH

- Epidemiology and health indicators
- Systems, access and health equity
- Evidence appraisal and ethics

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Epidemiology and health indicators
- 02 Systems, access and health equity
- 03 Evidence appraisal and ethics

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MSc Public Health & Health Systems | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Public Health Foundations

Epidemiology & Biostatistics

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Health Systems & Economics

Population Health Data & Equity

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Implementation & Evaluation

Health Research Ethics & Communication

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Research Design for Health Sciences

Public Health Research Project

EXAMPLE OUTPUT A clearly scoped population-health analysis and evidence-to-policy brief.

MSc Sustainability & Climate Strategy

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS & POLICY

- Climate risk and systems thinking
- Sustainable organisations and cities
- Transparent impact assessment



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MSc Sustainability & Climate Strategy | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Climate Systems & Sustainability

Environmental Economics & Policy

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Climate Risk & Scenario Planning

Energy Transition & Circular Economy

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

ESG Evidence & Impact Measurement

Resilient Cities & Infrastructure

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Applied Research in Sustainability

Climate Strategy Capstone

EXAMPLE OUTPUT An adaptation/transition strategy supported by a defensible evidence model.

MA International Relations & Diplomacy

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS & STRATEGIC STUDIES

- Global institutions and diplomacy
- Geopolitical research and foresight
- Conflict, cooperation and ethics

ACADEMIC FOCUS

01 Global institutions and diplomacy

02 Geopolitical research and foresight

03 Conflict, cooperation and ethics

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MA International Relations & Diplomacy | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

International Relations Theory

Diplomacy, Negotiation & Institutions

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Geopolitical Analysis & Global Order

International Law & Global Governance

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Research Methods for International Affairs

Peace, Conflict & Security

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Comparative Regional Policy

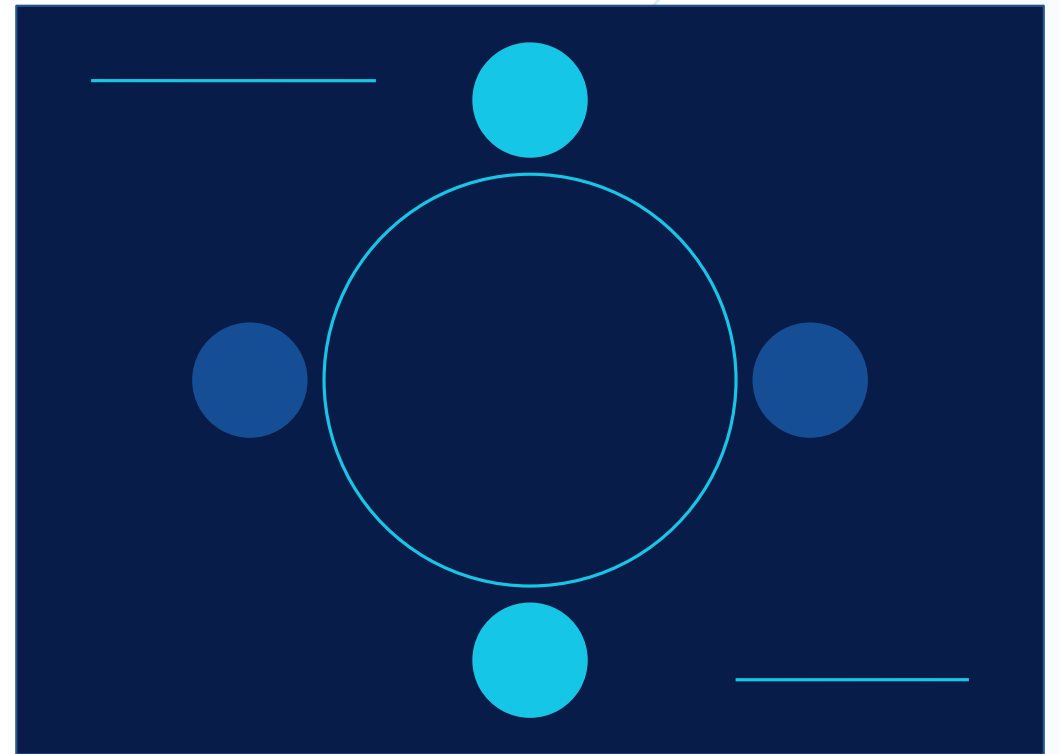
Diplomacy Research Project

EXAMPLE OUTPUT An analytically grounded diplomatic or comparative policy brief.

MA Leadership & Organisational Change

HUMAN CAPITAL & ORGANISATIONS

- Ethical leadership and governance
- Organisational behaviour and culture
- Change intervention design



Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MA Leadership & Organisational Change | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Organisational Behaviour & Leadership

Leading Across Cultures

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Change Theory & Organisational Diagnosis

People Analytics & Talent Systems

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Coaching, Negotiation & Influence

Ethics, Governance & Accountability

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Action Research & Evaluation

Leadership Change Capstone

EXAMPLE OUTPUT An evidence-based leadership change intervention and learning plan.

MSc Forensic Science & Evidence Systems

FORENSIC & APPLIED SCIENCE

- Scientific reasoning and validation
- Forensic methods and chain of custody
- Quality, ethics and expert reporting



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

Study architecture | confirm the awarding institution and current programme availability.

MSc Forensic Science & Evidence Systems | Learning map

Four learning blocks; two example modules in each. Credits, entry conditions and award need academic approval.

BLOCK 01

FOUNDATIONS

Forensic Science Principles

Evidence Collection &
Documentation

BLOCK 02

METHODS & SYSTEMS

Analytical Methods &
Instrumentation

Statistical Evaluation of
Evidence

BLOCK 03

ADVANCED APPLICATION

Method Validation & Quality
Systems

Digital Evidence &
Investigation Ethics

BLOCK 04

RESEARCH / CAPSTONE

Applied Research Design

Forensic Validation Research
Project

EXAMPLE OUTPUT An evidence-validation plan and technical reporting portfolio.

Interdisciplinary electives and pathways

A flexible elective bank can strengthen study without inventing automatic cross-credit.

- Responsible AI for leaders and public institutions.
- Applied analytics for policy and organisational decisions.
- Climate strategy, health equity and social impact.
- Academic writing and research reproducibility.
- Innovation design, entrepreneurship and change.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 **Responsible AI for leaders and public institutions.**
- 02 **Applied analytics for policy and organisational decisions.**
- 03 **Academic writing and research reproducibility.**

An applied management capstone

From strategic question to stakeholder-ready evidence.



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

1 THE QUESTION

Identify a measurable strategic performance problem.

2 THE EVIDENCE

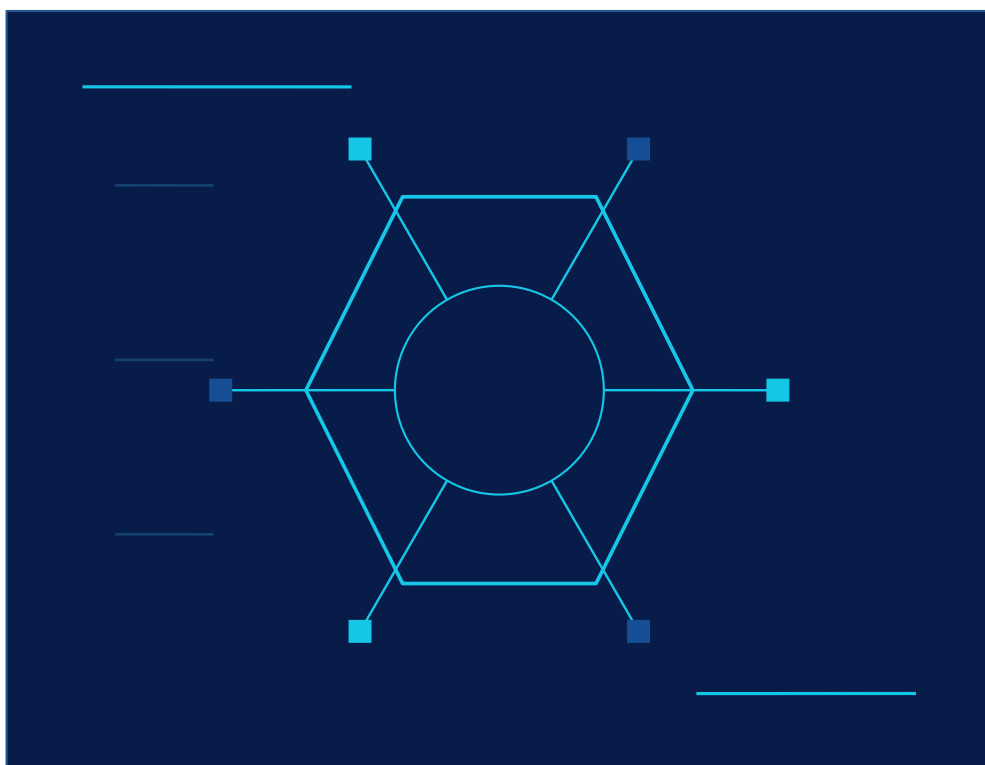
Map assumptions, markets, costs and organisational constraints.

3 THE OUTPUT

Present a feasible intervention and testing plan.

An analytics master's capstone

High-impact project design needs reproducibility, not only an attractive dashboard.



MODEL SPECIFICATION

Document data, assumptions, features and method choice.

EVALUATION

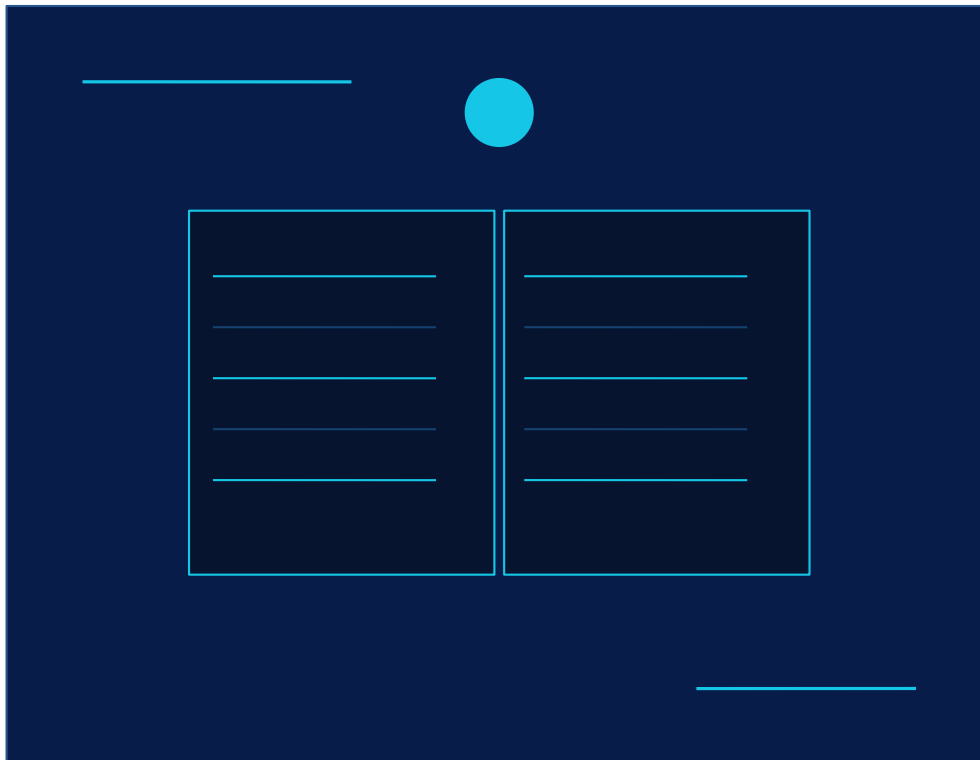
Test error, robustness, fairness and uncertainty.

LIMITATIONS

Explain where the model should not be used.

An education master's capstone

Learning design must be evaluated against real learning outcomes.



DESIGN

Develop a clear intervention and inclusive learning experience.

MEASURE

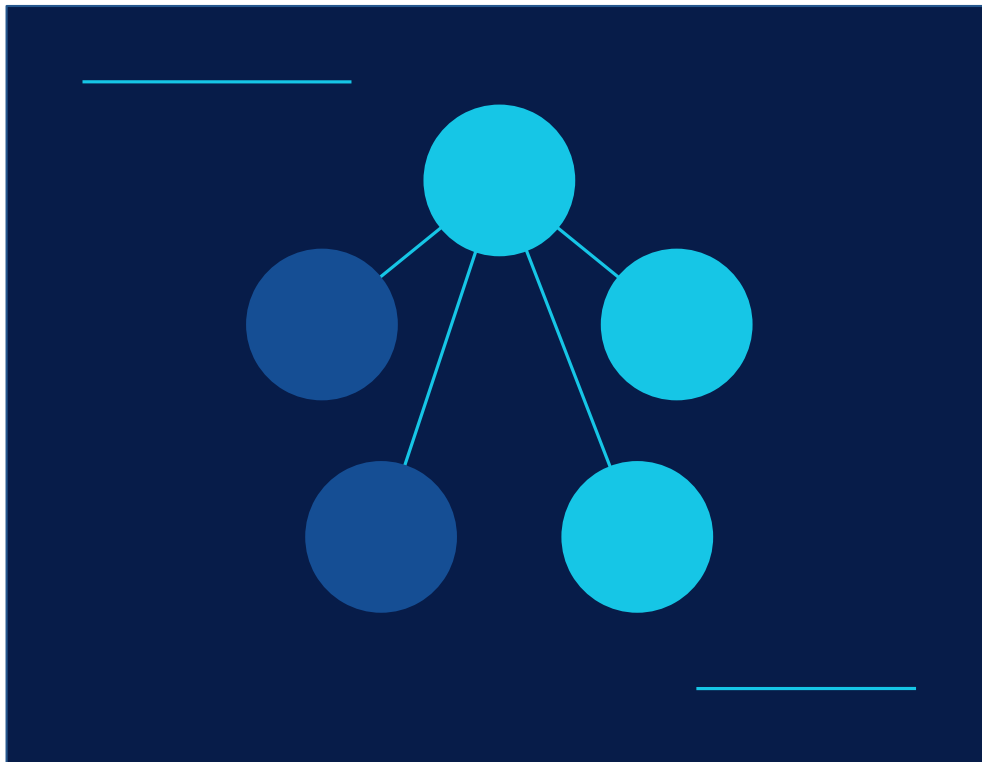
Identify feasible evidence of student learning.

IMPROVE

Test alternatives and report uncertainty responsibly.

A public health research project

Good population evidence does not automatically establish clinical effectiveness.



QUESTION

Specify population, exposure, outcomes and context.

METHOD

Use suitable designs with data protections and limitations.

APPLICATION

Create a decision brief without overstating causal evidence.

Master's assessment quality checks

Review of each model should cover these six evidence questions.

01

RELEVANCE

Are learning outcomes appropriate to the level?

02

ALIGNMENT

Do tasks assess the stated outcomes?

03

AUTHENTICITY

Can independent student contribution be established?

04

FAIRNESS

Are reasonable access and appeal routes available?

05

MODERATION

Can relevant assessors defend criteria and decisions?

06

IMPROVEMENT

Are changes recorded and evaluated with real evidence?

Master's faculty and capacity requirements

No course catalogue can substitute for responsible teaching and supervisory resources.

01

SUBJECT EXPERTISE

Qualified authors, reviewers, tutors and assessors.

02

LEARNING CAPACITY

Workload, contact hours, accessible support and platform readiness.

03

RESEARCH OVERSIGHT

Clear capstone/ethics duties and supervision ratios.

04

RESPONSIBLE AWARD

Defined governance, moderation and student rights.

Actual people, timetables and partnerships must be recorded before external programme commitments.

From outlined model to approved master's

The academic programme publication gateway.

01

CURRICULUM

Validate level, outcomes, content and workload.

02

CAPACITY

Demonstrate staff, facilities and appropriate support.

03

AUTHORITY

Document the competent award and admission decisions.

04

RELEASE

Publish accurate status, fees and applicant terms.

Example pathway design: the responsible awarding body must set and approve actual rules.



INTERNATIONAL
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SECTION 02

Doctoral Research Models

Original inquiry, methodological depth and academic responsibility.



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

Doctoral research theme atlas

Eight outlined research domains, subject to capacity and academic authorisation.

D01

Business Administration & Strategy

D02

Artificial Intelligence & Computing

D03

Education & Learning Sciences

D04

Public Policy & Governance

D05

Psychology & Behavioural Sciences

D06

Public Health & Health Systems

D07

Engineering & Sustainability

D08

International Relations & Security Studies

8 outlined research fields | No supervision or awarding authority implied

The PhD and the DBA

Distinct emphases; both depend on an original, independently examined scholarly contribution.

RESEARCH PhD

- Discipline-led original research
- Advanced methodological independence
- Contribution to scholarly debates
- Research thesis and examination

APPLIED DBA

- Original research into practice problems
- Theory-informed institutional inquiry
- Actionable knowledge with limits
- Applied doctoral thesis and examination

Doctoral study is fundamentally research

The Salzburg principles place original research at the heart of doctoral education.

01

QUESTION

A significant research problem with a defensible gap.

02

INDEPENDENCE

Ownership of argument, design and scholarly choices.

03

EVIDENCE

Methods adequate to the claims and field.

04

CONTRIBUTION

Knowledge that stands up to specialist challenge.

The EUA guidance is an academic reference, not evidence of IEU recognition by EUA.

Example doctoral candidate lifecycle

Phase-based progress; actual duration and enrolment rules remain programme-specific.

01

SCOPING

Identify the research area and potential supervisory fit.

02

PROPOSAL

Set question, theoretical frame and research methods.

03

ENQUIRY

Gain approvals, gather evidence and analyse.

04

EXAMINATION

Submit, defend and complete corrections if required.

Example pathway design: the responsible awarding body must set and approve actual rules.

The doctoral question and research gap

Strong research begins with a credible problem, not a predetermined finding.

- Define the claim, population or phenomenon and context.
- Review what is already known and disputed.
- Distinguish the knowledge gap from a practical inconvenience.
- Match feasible data and methods to the question.
- State the intended theoretical or methodological contribution.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

01 Define the claim, population or phenomenon and context.

02 Review what is already known and disputed.

03 Match feasible data and methods to the question.

Research skills bootcamp — 3 modules

A common non-credit preparatory model for prospective researchers.

01

RDB-01

Originality, research question framing and integrity.

02

RDB-02

Literature synthesis, critical appraisal and framework design.

03

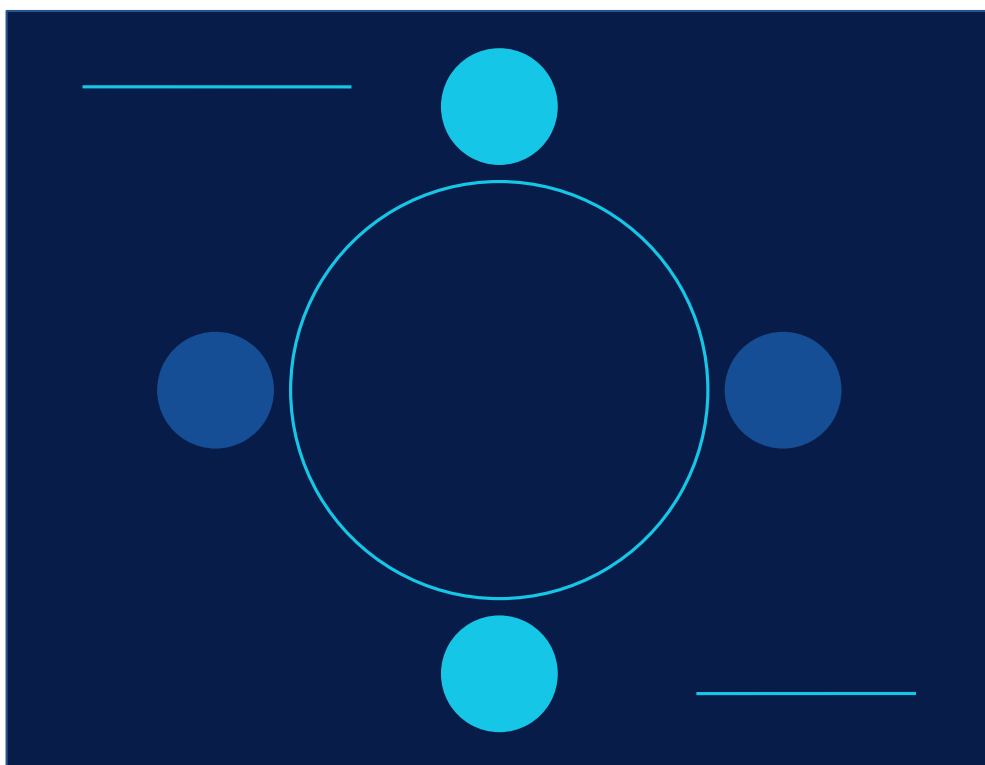
RDB-03

Methods, ethics, evidence quality and protocol development.

RDB codes and workshops are internal framework labels, not doctoral credits or confirmed courses.

The supervisor–candidate relationship

A transparent framework should define expectations, meeting rhythms and escalation.



SUPERVISOR

Subject guidance, challenge, feedback and integrity support.

CANDIDATE

Own the research, maintain records and report milestones.

INSTITUTION

Provide governance, independent decisions and appeal routes.

A doctoral supervision agreement should define

Use actual approved procedures before admitting researchers.

01

RESPONSIBILITIES

Who advises, who decides and who examines.

02

CADENCE

Meeting expectations and documented progress.

03

RESOURCES

Data, lab access, ethics support and training.

04

RECOURSE

Conflict resolution, change-of-supervisor and appeals.

Research integrity from day one

Principles adapted from the 2023 ALLEA Code of Conduct.

01

RELIABILITY

Sound design, methods, analysis and use of resources.

02

HONESTY

Transparent reporting without deceptive omissions.

03

RESPECT

People, colleagues, environment and research subjects.

04

ACCOUNTABILITY

Responsible stewardship through the research lifecycle.

Using ALLEA principles is a reference to good practice, not an external endorsement.

A disciplined literature review

Build synthesis instead of repeating unexamined summaries.

01

SEARCH

Define scope, databases and transparent search logic.

02

SCREEN

Assess inclusion, relevance and methodological quality.

03

SYNTHESISE

Compare findings, theory and competing explanations.

04

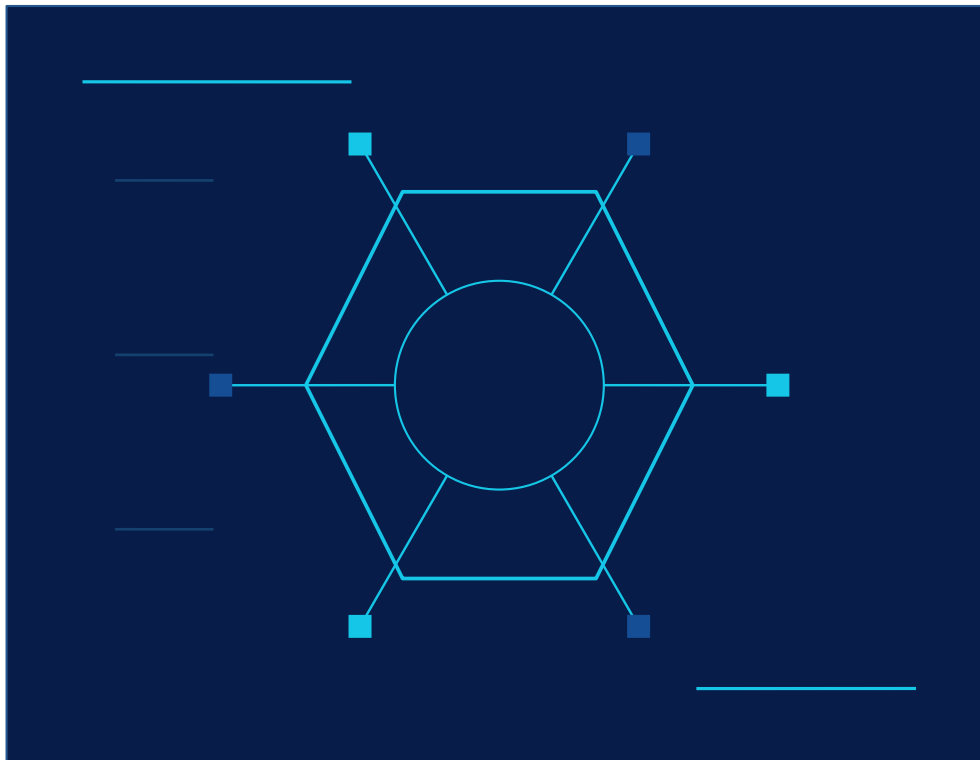
POSITION

Locate the outlined original contribution.

Example pathway design: the responsible awarding body must set and approve actual rules.

Methods are determined by the question

The strongest method is the one that can support the claim.



QUANTITATIVE

Measurement, identification strategy, uncertainty and validity.

QUALITATIVE

Credible sampling, context, reflexivity and analysis.

MIXED METHODS

Intentional integration rather than parallel activity.

Ethics and permissions gateway

Data collection starts only after appropriate approvals.

01

RISK

Identify participant, privacy, security and safety risks.

02

DESIGN

Specify data minimisation, consent and safeguards.

03

REVIEW

Secure approval from the competent body where required.

04

CONTROL

Keep records; report protocol deviations and issues.

Example pathway design: the responsible awarding body must set and approve actual rules.

A research data-management plan should cover

Rights, security and continuity are part of methodological quality.

01

SOURCES

Origin, authority and licence for each dataset.

02

ACCESS

Secure permissions, retention and confidentiality.

03

TRACEABILITY

Version control, metadata and audit trail.

04

SHARING

Publish responsibly subject to privacy and rights.

DBA — Business Administration & Strategy

APPLIED BUSINESS RESEARCH

- Practice-based managerial research
- Researchable organisational problems
- Actionable but critically evaluated contribution



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

DBA — Business Administration & Strategy | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How can governance design improve strategic accountability?
- Why do transformation programmes succeed in some institutions?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Multiple-case research, mixed methods, longitudinal organisational analysis

01

Define an organisational problem and stakeholder frame

02

Systematic evidence review and thematic model

03

Methodological and ethics approval

04

Fieldwork, analysis, critical reflection and thesis

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION Original, defensible applied knowledge with clear limits and practical implications.

PhD — Artificial Intelligence & Computing

COMPUTING & INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS

- Original technical or socio-technical research
- Transparent reproducible experimentation
- Responsible impact assessment

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Original technical or socio-technical research
- 02 Transparent reproducible experimentation
- 03 Responsible impact assessment

RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

PhD — Artificial Intelligence & Computing | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Which design enables robust and explainable AI under shifting data?
- What novel method could reduce unfairness in model decisions?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Experimental design, algorithmic benchmarking, modelling and human-centred evaluation

01

Specify contribution and comparison baseline

02

Develop research design and benchmark plan

03

Ethics/data permissions; preregister where suitable

04

Execute experiments, replicate and defend new findings

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION An original computing contribution supported by reproducible evidence.

PhD — Education & Learning Sciences

EDUCATION RESEARCH

- Theory-led learning inquiry
- Design and evaluation of learning interventions
- Inclusive and ethical participant research

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Theory-led learning inquiry
- 02 Design and evaluation of learning interventions
- 03 Inclusive and ethical participant research

RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

PhD — Education & Learning Sciences | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do hybrid learning patterns affect student participation?
- What assessment design strengthens feedback literacy?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Design-based research, qualitative inquiry, quasi-experimental evaluation

01

Develop theoretical framework and review

02

Choose accessible research design and instruments

03

Institutional/participant consent and fieldwork

04

Analyse mechanisms, limitations and thesis argument

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION Original explanatory or design knowledge in teaching and learning.

PhD — Public Policy & Governance

POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

- Policy theory and institutional analysis
- Causal or comparative evidence
- Public-value and governance implications

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Policy theory and institutional analysis
- 02 Causal or comparative evidence
- 03 Public-value and governance implications

RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

PhD — Public Policy & Governance | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- When do public-sector capability reforms produce measurable results?
- How do oversight designs affect institutional legitimacy?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Comparative cases, causal inference where feasible, interviews and document analysis

01

Define policy question and theory of change

02

Map institutions, data and causal assumptions

03

Secure ethics and governance access

04

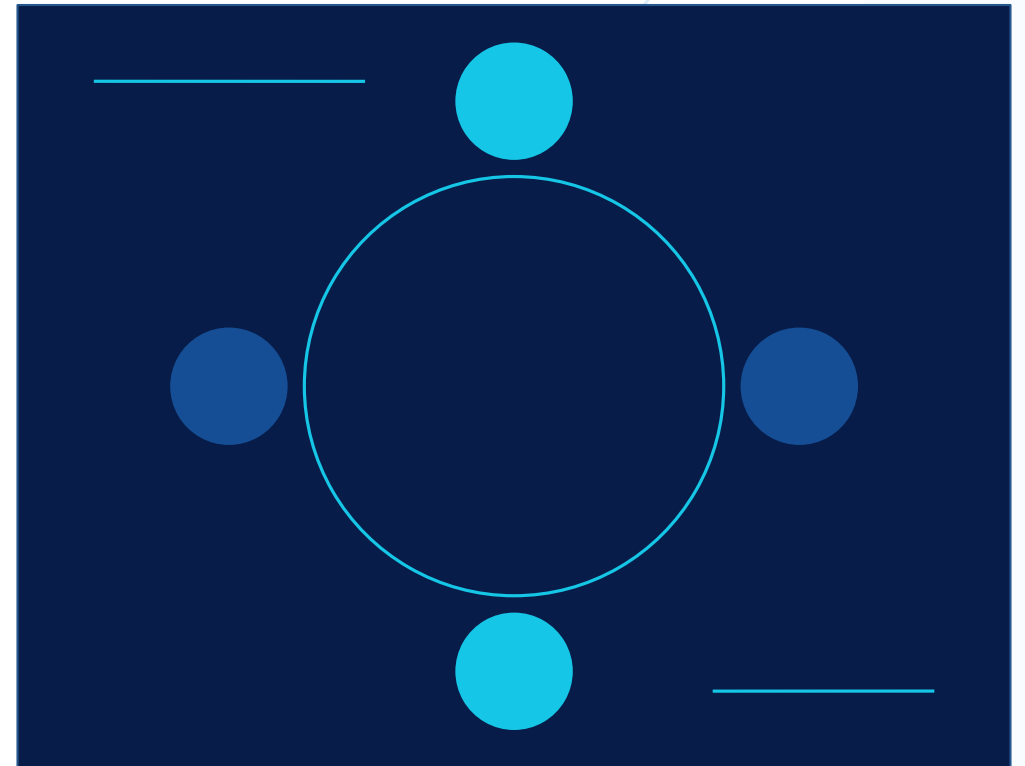
Triangulate evidence, analyse and defend interpretation

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION A novel and credible account of policy mechanisms and effects.

PhD — Psychology & Behavioural Sciences

BEHAVIOURAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

- Psychological theory and measurement
- Reliability, validity and replicability
- Ethical participation and data safeguards



RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

PhD — Psychology & Behavioural Sciences | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Which behavioural mechanisms shape technology adoption?
- How reliable are digital measures of cognitive effort?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Validated measurement, experiments, longitudinal mixed methods

01

Define constructs and justify measurement

02

Develop hypotheses and study protocol

03

Ethics review, sampling and data security

04

Analyse models, alternative explanations and replication

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION Original psychological insight with measurement and inference discipline.

PhD — Public Health & Health Systems

POPULATION AND SYSTEMS RESEARCH

- Population health research questions
- Equity-aware quantitative and mixed methods
- Responsible use of health data

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Population health research questions
- 02 Equity-aware quantitative and mixed methods
- 03 Responsible use of health data

RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

PhD — Public Health & Health Systems | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How can health access gaps be evaluated across regions?
- Which implementation mechanisms improve service continuity?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Epidemiological methods, mixed-methods services research, implementation science

01

Scope population and health-system question

02

Review evidence and develop analysis plan

03

Obtain ethics, data protection and access approvals

04

Evaluate findings and discuss policy implications

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION Original health-systems knowledge with transparent methods and safeguards.

PhD — Engineering & Sustainability

APPLIED ENGINEERING RESEARCH

- Novel engineering systems and models
- Simulation, validation and lifecycle impacts
- Interdisciplinary sustainability evaluation



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

PhD — Engineering & Sustainability | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Can optimisation reduce lifecycle impacts of critical infrastructure?
- What model predicts resilience under compound hazards?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Simulation, optimisation, experimental validation and lifecycle assessment

01

Formulate technical problem and research novelty

02

Build model, data collection and validation plan

03

Secure lab, safety and data permissions

04

Test, challenge assumptions and demonstrate contribution

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION An original validated engineering method or system-level insight.

PhD — International Relations & Security Studies

INTERNATIONAL & SECURITY RESEARCH

- Theory-guided geopolitical analysis
- Security evidence and methodological limits
- Conflict-sensitive research ethics

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Theory-guided geopolitical analysis
- 02 Security evidence and methodological limits
- 03 Conflict-sensitive research ethics

RESEARCH FIELD ONLY • Doctoral admission, supervisor capacity and award authority require verification

PhD — International Relations & Security Studies | Research pathway

A staged original-research workflow, not an approved duration, doctorate or supervisor appointment.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do regional institutions adapt to emerging hybrid threats?
- What mechanisms enable more resilient cross-border cooperation?

DESIGN OPTIONS

Historical comparative analysis, scenario testing, qualitative case research

01

Build research problem and thematic lens

02

Map actors, case selection and source reliability

03

Ethics/safety assessment for sensitive topics

04

Triangulate evidence and defend analytical originality

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION A theoretically grounded explanation of international-security processes.

Thesis architecture — academic example

A compelling dissertation makes every inference traceable.

- Introduction: precise question and research contribution.
- Critical literature review: theory, debates and research gap.
- Methodology: design, ethics, sampling and analysis.
- Findings: evidence with clear limitations.
- Discussion: contribution, counterarguments and implications.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Introduction: precise question and research contribution.
- 02 Critical literature review: theory, debates and research gap.
- 03 Findings: evidence with clear limitations.

Preparing for independent doctoral examination

A viva or equivalent assessment should test scholarship, not rehearse marketing.

01

ARGUMENT

Defend the research question and outlined contribution.

02

METHOD

Justify validity, inference and ethics decisions.

03

CRITIQUE

Engage alternative interpretations and limitations.

04

RECORD

Document examiners, decisions, corrections and appeals.

Responsible use of generative AI in research

Tools can support workflow, but accountability remains with the researcher.

- Document where AI-assisted tools affect research content.
- Validate every source, quotation, reference and analytical result.
- Protect confidential and participant data.
- Follow journal, funder and programme rules about disclosure.
- Do not present generated data as empirical observations.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Document where AI-assisted tools affect research content.
- 02 Validate every source, quotation, reference and analytical result.
- 03 Follow journal, funder and programme rules about disclosure.

Publishing a doctoral contribution responsibly

Publication is a scholarly process rather than an automatic consequence of study.

01

AUTHORS

Clear contribution and acknowledgement decisions.

02

EVIDENCE

Methods, datasets, permissions and reproducible claims.

03

PEER REVIEW

Journal and repository processes kept distinct.

04

CORRECTIONS

Post-publication stewardship and transparent updates.

A DOI, repository upload or working paper does not on its own imply peer review.

Research centres as academic contexts

IEU publishes research-centre themes; research activity requires actual project evidence.



THEMATIC EDUCATION IMAGERY

RESEARCH THEMES

Potential doctoral questions informed by public research agendas.

EVIDENCE INFRASTRUCTURE

Methodology, data rights and ethics permissions.

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Only scoped and verified collaborations described publicly.

Doctoral quality and candidate protection

A functioning school needs more than a description of research topics.

01

CANDIDATE RIGHTS

Transparent conditions and routes for concerns.

02

SUPERVISION

Qualification, availability and conflict controls.

03

EXAMINATION

Independent assessors, consistent decisions and records.

04

REVIEW

Periodic progress evaluation and corrective action.

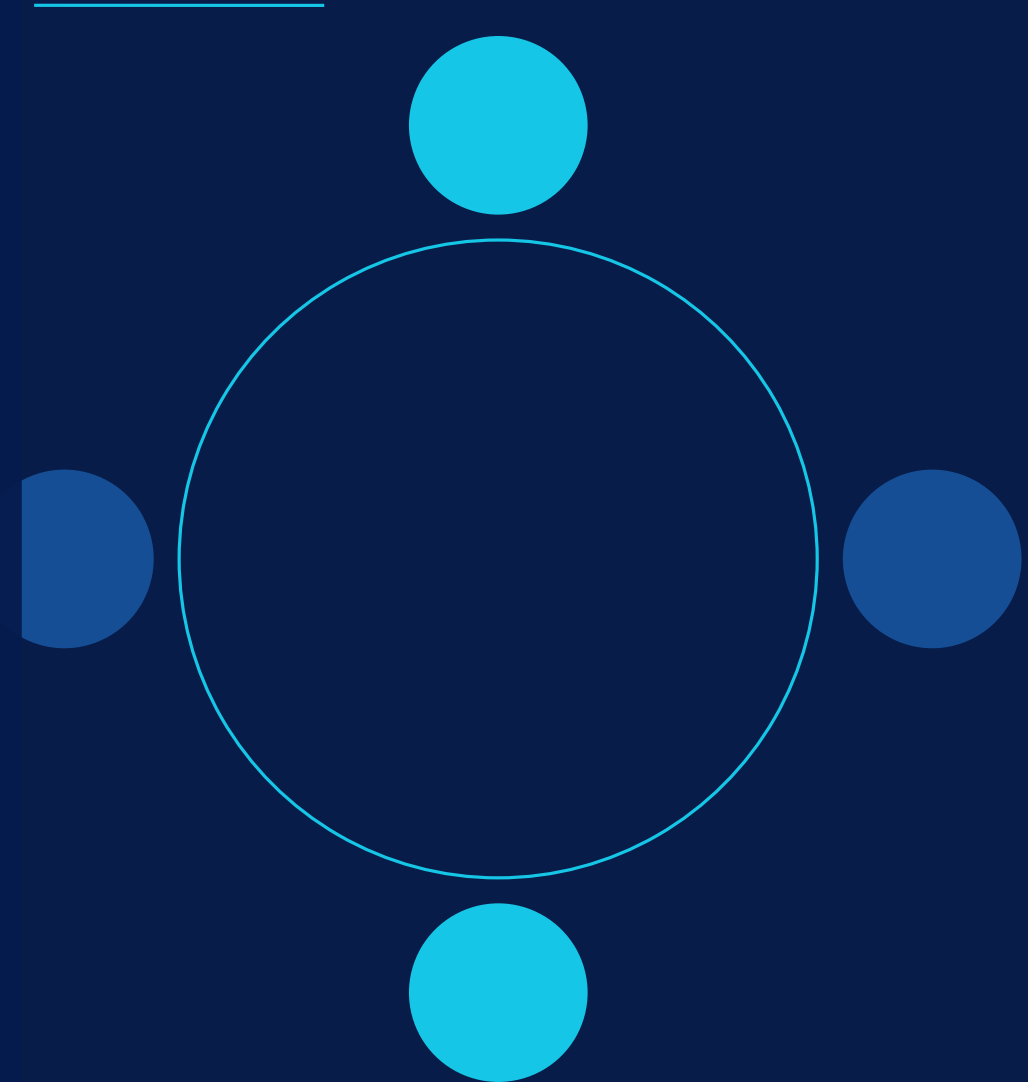


INTERNATIONAL
EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

SECTION 03

Academic Integrity & Release Readiness

Turning aspirational models into credible, verified public
programme information.



Institutional relationships: clarify every role

A signed academic relationship must address specifics, not just a shared brand.

01

WHO AWARDS?

Exact responsible, legally authorised institution and qualification.

02

WHO TEACHES?

Verified staff, delivery format, locations and quality rights.

03

WHO ASSESSES?

Examination, moderation, supervisor and student appeal rules.

04

WHO PROTECTS?

Contracts, tuition, refunds, records, complaint handling.

An unverified partner name or publicly listed curriculum is not evidence of degree-awarding rights.

Academic awarding powers are programme-specific

Do not collapse distinct facts into the single word accreditation.

01

REGISTRATION

A legal company or website identity is not an academic licence.

02

PROGRAMME APPROVAL

Formal approval of learning outcomes, staff and evaluation.

03

AWARD AUTHORITY

Document who is legally empowered to issue the qualification.

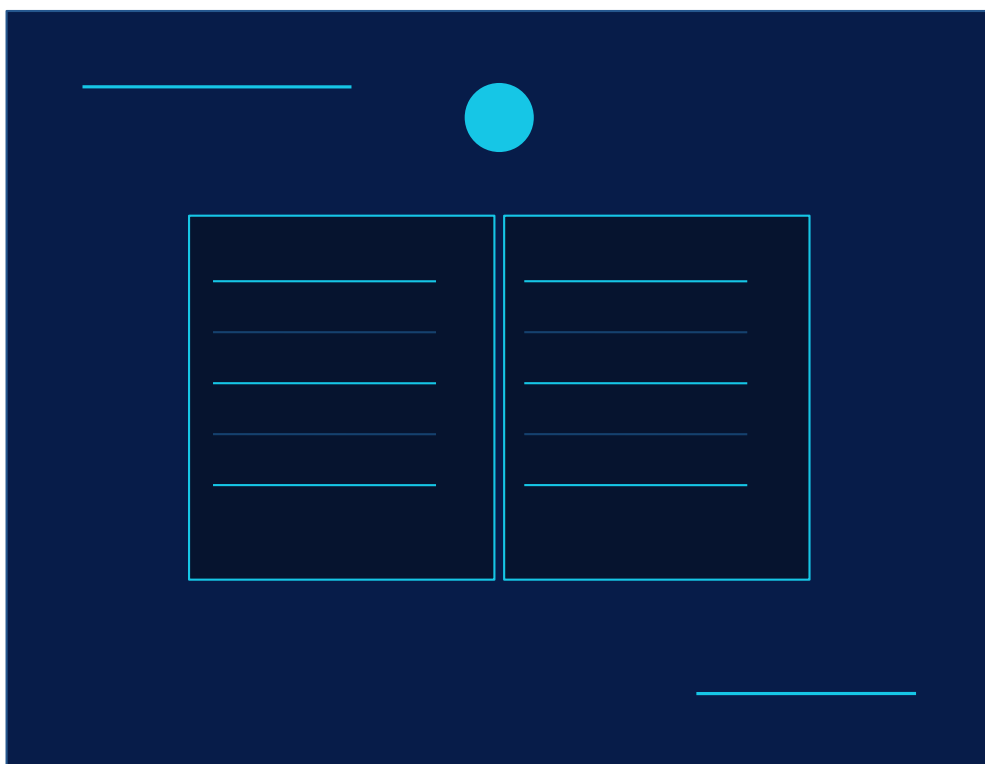
04

EXTERNAL QA

External review or membership is different from statutory authority.

Admissions and applicant journey

Explore the academic directory while application channels remain unverified.



EXPLORE

Use the published postgraduate catalogue to review a specific theme.

VERIFY

Ask for the exact award, issuer, status, conditions and price.

APPLY WHEN OPEN

Only use a confirmed programme-specific secure application route.

Tuition, refunds and student protection

Price presentation must be accurate and tied to a real offer.

01

FULL COST

Identify total tuition for the exact programme.

02

INCLUSIONS

Disclose additional assessment, placement or platform charges.

03

PAYMENT

Publish agreed dates and responsible receiving entity.

04

REFUNDS

State enforceable rules and student support channels.

Internal tuition matrices and partnership assumptions are not approved applicant price lists.

Minimum dossier for each outlined programme

Ten-minute executive review should expose missing proof, not hide it.

01

IDENTITY & AWARD

Qualification name, status, issuer and jurisdiction.

02

ACADEMIC FILE

Outcomes, credit rules, course specifications, assessments.

03

DELIVERY FILE

Named team, LMS, lab/placements where needed.

04

STUDENT TERMS

Admissions, fees, complaints and teach-out.

05

QUALITY FILE

Moderation, periodic review, evidence and improvement.

06

RELEASE LOG

Approvals, source links, version and date.

Where to find the current source of truth

IEU public links used to ground the framework presentation.

Master's catalogue

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/programs/postgraduate/masters/>

Doctoral catalogue

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/programs/postgraduate/doctorate/>

All programmes

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/programs/>

Academic faculty areas

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/faculties/>

Research themes

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/research/>

Quality assurance

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/quality-assurance/>

External academic reference frameworks

Selected sources inform design standards, without conferring recognition.

European ESG

<https://www.enqa.eu/esg-standards-and-guidelines-for-quality-assurance-in-the-european-higher-education-area/>

ALLEA Integrity Code 2023

<https://allea.org/portfolio-item/european-code-of-conduct-2023/>

EUA Doctoral Principles

<https://www.eua.eu/publications/positions/doctoral-education-taking-salzburg-forward-implementation-and-new-challenges.html>

EUA Doctoral Survey 2025

<https://www.eua.eu/publications/reports/doctoral-education-in-europe-today-enhanced-structures-and-practices-for-the-european-knowledge-society.html>

Admissions status

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/admissions/>

Fees guidance

<https://www.ie.edu.eu/fees/>



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**Explore deeper.
Question better.
Create knowledge.**

Master's + Doctoral academic exploration

www.ie.edu.eu/programs/

ACADEMIC FOCUS

- 01 Explore deeper. Question better.
Create knowledge.
- 02 Master's + Doctoral academic
exploration
- 03 Review postgraduate study themes