

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the basic requirement for admission to the DBA-ODL programme?

To be considered for admission into the DBA-ODL programme, the applicant is required to possess one of the following qualifications:

- i. A Master's degree (Level 7, MQF) in related fields as accepted by the HEP Senate;
OR
- ii. A Master's degree (Level 7, MQF) in non-related fields as accepted by the HEP Senate, subject to having relevant working experience** and rigorous internal assessment*; OR
- iii. A Master's degree (Level 7, MQF) in non-related fields as accepted by the HEP Senate and **without** relevant working experience**, subject to passing pre-requisite courses***; OR
- iv. 5 years of working experience in a managerial position, which includes involvement in the decision-making process.
- v. Other qualifications equivalent to a Master's degree (Level 7, MQF) recognised by the Malaysian Government; OR
- vi. Applicants must have a business-related field to qualify for the programme. Those without a related field but have working experience must undergo an interview conducted by the Director of Programme together with a Potential Supervisor in the related field (for thesis programmes) while a candidate who does not have the working experience and from a non-related field is required to complete five (5) pre-requisite courses (Managing People, Managing Financial Resources, Understanding Customers, Understanding Environment and Strategic Planning).

Notes:

* Rigorous internal assessment to evaluate the suitability of an applicant for a programme through the statement of purpose, interview and other methods may cover the following criteria:

1. Demonstration of strong business experience and that you have held significant managerial responsibilities.
2. Evidence of any achievements in your professional life, for example, consistently performing at a high level, consistent career progression and any impact that you have had on your organisation.

3. Professional skills that you have developed, for example, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, negotiating and analytical skills.
4. How will you contribute to your class, and what experiences can you bring to the institution?

******Working experience can be cumulative experience even before acquiring the required qualification for a particular level of study.

*******The pre-requisite courses must equip the students with the necessary business knowledge (managing people, managing financial resources, understanding customers, understanding environments and strategic planning) of one level lower than the programme level.

English Language requirement

(a) For direct admission, an international applicant must have obtained:

- a. A minimum score of 550 for the TOEFL Paper-based Test; OR
- b. 60 for Internet-Based Test; OR
- c. Band 6.0 for IELTS;
- d. MUET Band 4.0;
- e. 59 for the Pearson Test of English;
- f. 169 for Cambridge English Qualifications and Tests; OR
- g. 109 for ELS

The validity period of the test is not more than two years.

- i. An international applicant who obtains a score below the required minimum score may be accepted for admission on a conditional basis.
- ii. An international applicant who has obtained a degree from any public university or established private university in Malaysia shall not be subject to the English language proficiency requirement.
- iii. An international applicant for the DBA-ODL programme who has undergone his Master's degree education in the English language medium shall also be

exempted from the language requirement. Application for exemption must be accompanied by supporting documents.

How long does it take to complete the programme?

The duration depends on when you fulfil the following requirements:

- i. Complete 11 subjects (42 credits of coursework); and
- ii. Submit a thesis for examination at the end of the study.

Typically, you will be guided by the following:

- i. Full-time mode ranges from a minimum of 6 semesters (3 years) to a maximum of 10 semesters (5 years).
- ii. Part-time mode ranges from 8 semesters (4 years) to a maximum of 12 semesters (6 years).
- iii. The Senate may exercise its discretion to give an exemption to allow conferment of a DBA-ODL degree to students without fulfilling the minimum duration of the study.

What is the medium of instruction for the programme?

All learning activities are conducted in English. Assignments, Case Studies, Research proposals or Theses must all be written in English.

Can I request a credit transfer?

A student may apply for credit transfer of DBA courses taken at another university/institution recognised by PBS into his current programme at PBS, provided:

- a) The courses are relevant to his programme of study;
- b) The credits to be transferred are for courses equivalent to courses offered at the university, and the grade shall be at least a B or 65%;
- c) The mapped curriculum of the course to be transferred must meet 80% similarity with the course offered at the university;
- d) The maximum number of credits that may be transferred is not more than 30% of the programme's total credit hours

- e) The courses have been undertaken not more than five years before the date of his registration at PBS;
- f) The transfer of credits shall be approved by PBS;
- g) The application for credit transfer is made in the first semester;
- h) The course must be within the same level as the programme;
- i) The student's study status must be in Good Standing.

40% of the credit fee will be charged for the credit transfer. The applicant must register for the course if the application for credit transfer is not approved.

How much is the total fee for the DBA-ODL programme?

The total fee for both local and international students is RM46,000. If you require more than 6 semesters to complete the programme, you will be subject to an administrative fee depending on the duration of your study.

Do I need to pay the full amount at the beginning of the programme?

You are not required to pay the entire amount upon registration for the programme. Fees are payable according to a schedule stated per semester.

How is the programme conducted?

The programme is conducted online, where you will be guided by Self-Instructional Materials (SIM) available at the Putra Learning Management Systems (Putra LMS). Once you are registered for the DBA-ODL programme, you will be given access to the Putra LMS.

What will I find in the SIM?

The SIM contains learning materials for the course in the form of a module or study guide. You will also be guided by the instructions posted by the assigned lecturer from time to time as you progress in your studies. There are also exercises and self-test questions to check your understanding of the subject matter being presented.

What if I have difficulty using the SIM and understanding the content of the module?

Fear not, because the SIM is presented in a conversational way, so it should be easy for you to understand. It is designed to help you undertake the course without the lecturer's teaching. You may also consult the lecturer assigned to the course during tutorial sessions. There will also be interactive sessions in the form of a forum, where you are expected to participate. The lecturer provides feedback on the questions/comments within 24 hours.

How often are the tutorial sessions held?

There will be 8 tutorial sessions for each course, each lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes. Your schedule will be available in your Putra LMS at the beginning of the semester.

What happens if I miss the online tutorial sessions?

You may watch the recorded session, which will be uploaded after the session ends. However, you are encouraged to join the online learning sessions as you can freely interact with the lecturer and the rest of the students.

How often are the assessments being carried out?

Typically, final exams or assessments occur at the end of the semester. Depending on the lecturers, these could be an open-book test, a take-home exam, or a written assignment.

Every course will be evaluated based on the following:

- a) Continuous assessments (Evaluated throughout the semester) : 70%
- b) Final assessment (**Online at the end of every semester**) : 30%

Final assessments for the DBA-ODL programme do not involve sitting exams. Instead, they are conducted in the form of individual assignments, case studies or take-home exams. Submission of answer scripts must be accompanied by a Turnitin report with a similarity index of below 30%. The assessment marks will be carried over to the final marks. This information is also available on the SIM for the course the student is enrolled in.

What do I do if I cannot take the assessments on the appointed date and time?

Please let us know early so we can make the necessary arrangements. In any event, failure to sit for the final assessment must be supported with relevant proof, such as a letter from the hospital, etc. To graduate, you must pass both continuous and final assessments.

Will there be any other assessments?

A DBA-ODL programme also involves assessments in the form of proposal defense and the oral exam, or the Viva-Voce, when the student submits his full thesis. However, since the student must undergo the compulsory courses in the first three semesters, the lecturer would also assess him to ensure he is ready to continue the research work. The supervisor would also evaluate the student's research progress at the end of every semester.

What will happen if I miss the submission date for the assessment?

Get in touch with your lecturer if you can't meet the given deadline. It is at the lecturer's discretion whether to allow a time extension. It is therefore advisable to speak to your lecturer **before** the deadline and **not after** that.

What is the difference between the DBA-ODL and the PhD programme?

Coursework

The DBA-ODL is a mixed-mode programme requiring you to complete 42 credit hours, while the PhD is a research programme where you need to undergo a research seminar for 1 semester.

Thesis

Both the DBA-ODL and PhD programmes require Thesis writing upon completion of the 11 courses and the Research Seminar, respectively. The minimum number of words for a DBA-ODL thesis is 60,000, while a PhD thesis requires 80,000 words.

Unlike a PhD programme where the students progress with their thesis writing at their own pace, the Doctoral Research (Thesis) for the DBA-ODL programme is very structured, where it is divided into the following four stages:

Doctoral Research Requirements

Doctoral Research- Stage 1	Doctoral Research- Stage 2	Doctoral Research- Stage 3	Doctoral Research - Stage 4
i- Students present their research ideas iii- Students must pass Doctoral Research Stage 1 to be eligible to register for Doctoral Research Stage 2.	i- Students prepare a research proposal ii- Students present their research proposal in a research seminar. iii- Students must pass Doctoral Research Stage 2 to be eligible to register for Doctoral Research Stage 3.	i- Students prepare Chapter 4. ii- Students present their Chapter 4 in a research seminar. iii- Students must pass Doctoral Research Stage 3 to be eligible to register for Doctoral Research Stage 4.	i- Students prepare a complete thesis (Chapters 1-5). ii- Students present their complete thesis in viva voce. iii- Correction of the complete thesis after the viva voce is required.

Publication

In keeping with the culture of research and publication, where knowledge is shared through publication, both DBA and PhD require students to publish their works. The publication requirement for DBA is, however, not as stringent as compared to the requirements of a PhD, as can be seen below.

DBA

You must show proof of having submitted journal articles based on research conducted during your candidature before graduation, based on the following:

- (a) One journal article; or
- (b) One chapter in a book; or
- (c) One book

PhD

The students must show proof of having published or accepted journal articles based on research conducted during their candidature before graduation, based on the following:

- (a) One cited-indexed-journal (CIJ) journal article; and
- (b) One article in any of the following:
 - Journal published by PBS, or a scientific publisher or listed in the Malaysian Journal Management system (MyJurnal)
 - Chapter in books published under the publisher list of Thomson Reuters Web of Science (WoS) or University Publisher or Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, or any publisher recognized and listed under Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council (MAPIM)

What will be written on the certificate or scroll? Will OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING be stated on the certificate and transcript?

You will be awarded a certificate which reads “Doctor of Business Administration”. Open Distance Learning as the mode of delivery of the programme will not be stated on the certificate. This information is only reflected in the transcript.

Will I be able to attend the convocation ceremony?

Yes, definitely! Our DBA-ODL students are very much encouraged to join us in celebrating the success of completing their journey as our students. Moreover, do take the opportunity to finally meet your coursemates and your lecturers face-to-face.