



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
BUCKINGHAM

**BLEU**

Buckingham Lean Enterprise Unit

**Professional Doctorate  
in Operational Excellence**

Buckingham Lean Enterprise Unit (BLEU) associate members and staff are amongst the leading authorities in the world in their respective areas. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds, disciplines and schools of thought but all share a common philosophy and set of values around Lean, Continuous Improvement and Operational Excellence.

This course has been designed to produce highly trained operations professionals with the skills required to transform operations into a world-class business in all sectors.

The goal of Operational Excellence is to provide superior value to the customer through all business processes.



# “Enhance your executive and professional practice”

The Professional Doctorate in Operational Excellence is a unique part-time professional doctoral degree designed to enhance executive and professional practice. This is done through the application of sound theory and rigorous research into real and complex issues in contemporary business and management within the fields of Lean and Operational Excellence.

The programme provides an opportunity for business and management professionals to understand their own working contexts more critically and to find solutions to key challenges in their working environment by applying rigorous research principles. It is envisaged that students holding a Professional Doctorate will become (and ultimately lead)

communities of practice for their specialist profession.

Through a series of nine residential seminars, this programme provides students with fundamental knowledge about the science of management with a particular focus on research methods (including quantitative and qualitative methods) which are designed around the chosen specialisms.

The Professional Doctorate award is distinct from the PhD award in the following respects:

- There is considerable weight given to the taught component, which comprises an integral and key part of the programme, and the assessment of the taught component contributes directly towards the final award.

- The thesis produced by a Professional Doctorate student will make an original contribution to knowledge within the relevant area or areas of professional practice.
- The Professional Doctorate typically focuses on research ‘in’ organisations rather than research ‘on’ organisations. Participants will investigate the results of the application of concepts and theories in a particular working environment rather than contribute original knowledge in their chosen field.

Employers will benefit from supporting students on the programme by building knowledge for competitive advantage and developing and retaining key talent.



## About the course

### Summary

The Professional Doctorate in Operational Excellence offers the opportunity for those with an enthusiasm for learning to gain a doctoral degree, the highest level of professional qualification available, in support of their professional career.

The Professional Doctorate is structured via a modular workshop basis undertaken over a period of two years, followed by a doctoral research project of 2-4 years. It is designed around four compulsory modules which include nine 2.5 day learning workshops, facilitated by renowned practitioners and researchers who offer analytical perspectives on management philosophy, organisation development and methodology

in the fields of Operational Excellence research.

The Buckingham Professional Doctorate will be able to enhance professional capability and credibility, develop networks, and provide a firm foundation for further career development of graduates.

### Benefits

This programme is a unique research experience for students. It will impact on the career and development of participants as individuals and benefit their organisation. In addition to a valuable learning experience, graduates will acquire a widely respected qualification that clearly demonstrates their intellectual capacity and ability to innovate. The experience will also provide



global and local networking opportunities through exchanging ideas and research experiences with their highly experienced fellow Professional Doctoral participants.

### Teaching methods

The programme consists of

facilitated seminars, practical workshops, case study analysis and traditional lectures. Students will have supervisory support to help in their respective area of study throughout. Supervisors will be experts in the subject area, with a mutual interest in the particular

study. The assessment and feedback are designed to facilitate progression on the programme. Supervisors will monitor and advise on the development of the final research and the Doctorate progression.



# Professional Doctorate structure

## Modules

The Buckingham Professional Doctorate consists of 540 credits of which there are four ‘taught’ modules.

The course is taught over two years (180 credits at level 7), followed by a doctoral research project (360 credits at level 8).

The four taught modules are as below:

**Module 1. Designing Professional Doctoral Research** (20 credits)

**Module 2. Theory & Contemporary Thought in Operational Excellence** (40 credits) *This module will include a factory visit and study tour at Nissan, Sunderland*

**Module 3. Engaging with the Relevant Body of Knowledge** (60 credits)

**Module 4. Methodological Frameworks** (subject specific electives) (60 credits)

This structure is based on the January entry point. Through this structure the learners gain a mastery of the theories and contemporary thought in their specialist areas, the relevant literature and bodies of knowledge and methodology frameworks and demonstrate their competence by applying this knowledge to current business environments.

## Entry Requirements

The Professional Doctorate programme is aimed at senior business professionals looking to take

their careers to the next level, while still being professionally employed. Both educational qualifications and work experience are taken into consideration. The expected educational and work experience required will be as follows:

- A master's degree from a recognised institution comparable and/or equivalent to a British master's degree
- and
- A minimum of five years' management experience at a senior level with practical knowledge of business or public organisations

Applicants without a master's degree may still be eligible based on their professional experience and qualifications. Each application will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Beside the academic

qualification, applicants will be required to demonstrate English language skills appropriate to undertake a postgraduate level programme and comparable to an IELTS score of 7.5.

### Requirements for Award(s)

Students who complete and meet the requirements of all taught modules will be awarded with a **Master in Research Methods** (a minimum of 180 credits at level 7).

Students who complete and pass the taught modules and continue to pass the research project successfully would achieve the **Professional Doctorate** with respective specialism (a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 plus 360 credits at level 8).

For those students who have successfully passed all four modules





Course leaders Pauline Found and John Bicheno pictured with Professor Dan Jones, Honorary Doctorate and Clodagh Glasgow, MSc in Lean graduate and winner of the Barbara Shenfield Award 2015

at level 7 (MRes), but who have chosen not to continue to the full research stage, there is an additional option to write up and submit their research as a dissertation (60 credits) for the award of **Masters in Professional Practice (MProf)**.

To summarise, we are offering three awards:

**Master in Research Methods** (180 Level 7 credits)

**Professional Master of Operational Excellence** (180 taught at Level 7 and a 60 credit Level 7 dissertation)

**Professional Doctorate of Operational Excellence** (180 credits taught at Level 7 and 360 thesis at Level 8)



# Our faculty



## **Pauline Found (Head of Department)**

Pauline is Senior Lecturer in Operations Management and Lean at The University of Buckingham and is co-author of the Shingo Prize winning publication *Staying Lean: Thriving not just surviving*. She was President of The College of Behavior, a college of the International Society of Production and Operations Management (POMS) and was a former Senior Research Fellow at the Lean Enterprise Research Centre at Cardiff University, 2004-2013.



**Pauline Found**  
Professor of Lean  
Operations Management



**John Bicheno**  
Professor of Lean  
Enterprise

## **John Bicheno**

John is Reader in Operations Management at The University of Buckingham and is the Author and co-author of 10 books including *The Lean Toolbox*.

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# Contact details

If you would like to find out more about the BLEU unit at Buckingham, the courses they offer and making an application, please get in touch:

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Information is also available on our website:

[www.buckingham.ac.uk/business/bleu](http://www.buckingham.ac.uk/business/bleu)



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