RESEARCH DEGREES

Canterbury and Medway
INTRODUCTION

Kent Business School is a research-intensive UK business school that maintains a range of approaches from critical scholarship to advanced analytic methods, with a faculty of over 60 research staff.

The programme
The Kent Business School PhD programme offers several subject areas:
- Accounting
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Management
- Management Science
- Marketing
- Strategy
- Supply Chain Management.

All PhD students undertake original research within their chosen topic. The completed work must be of publishable standard, in the form of scholarly articles or academic books.

Your supervisors
We offer a dynamic research culture with a team of over 60 research-active academic staff. Postgraduate research can be in any subject area where staff have expertise.

Each student is supported by a supervisory team (two members of academic staff) who give guidance about the nature of the research, the standard of work required, and about the relevant literature and sources that should be consulted.

Students meet with supervisors each month to agree upon a schedule of work, and bring written work for comment and discussion. The co-supervisor provides additional input and ensures continuity.

Find out more about the individual research interests of Kent Business School research staff at: www.kent.ac.uk/kbs

Research training
In addition to attending seminars and workshops offered by the Graduate School, all our PhD students attend a Kent Business School research training programme that includes: quantitative and qualitative research methodology; philosophy of management research; and generating theory. The University also offers complementary training and support in a wide variety of topics such as statistics, computing, literature searches and foreign language skills.

Resources
Our PhD students also benefit from a dedicated suite of PhD hot desk rooms. Each student is assigned a laptop for the duration of their studies plus conference funding, research methods training, and full access to the facilities of the Graduate School.

Canterbury and Medway
The Canterbury campus is built on 300 acres of parkland and is a 25-minute walk from the historic city centre. The new high-speed train service takes you direct to London in less than an hour.

Our Medway campus is just 45 minutes from London and 30 minutes from Ebbsfleet International station with Eurostar connections to Brussels and Paris.
**Kent Business School research is wide-ranging with a number of particular strengths in PhD supervision. Our five research groups are listed below.**

**Accounting and Finance**
This group pursues research in a variety of areas including: financial management in the public and profit-seeking sector; environmental and social aspects of accounting; accounting history and international accounting; financial econometrics; corporate finance; asset pricing and security price behaviour. Quantitative finance for capital markets is a recently established research strength for Kent Business School.

**Management Science**
This research group covers a wide range of research areas in operational research, systems thinking and business information systems.

Staff research expertise includes: logistics (facility location, vehicle routing, including reverse and green logistics, network security and supply chain sustainability) with a special emphasis on the innovative design and analysis of heuristics, meta-heuristics, exact optimisation and the hybridisation of the above; DEA; operation management; multi-variate analysis and statistical risk management and data mining; biometrics; multi-methodology and soft OR/systems; business information systems.

**Marketing**
The Marketing group’s strengths include applied consumer behaviour with expertise on social marketing, consumer perceptions of innovations, new product development, social marketing, marketing communications and pricing. Staff in the group also explore questions around the development of sustainable competitive advantage.

**Strategy and International Business**
The Strategy and International Business research group carries out much of its research in co-operation with multinational corporations such as Mercedes Benz, Siemens and Bayer.

The group members’ research interests include the management of multinational enterprises, performance management, ethics and the measurement of ethical value in organisations, professional services firms, social enterprise, and non-market strategies.

Current PhD projects investigate the role of culture for the performance of multinational enterprises, the foreign direct investment in central and Eastern Europe and ‘footloose’ multinationals.

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**People, Management and Organisation**
Particular strengths of this group include the management of small and medium-sized enterprises; gender, diversity and inclusion; strategic human resource management and the role of the HR department; aspects of occupational psychology; the management of professional service firms; organisational change, and international and comparative management.

Group members have expertise in diverse methodologies, including qualitative and ethnographic approaches; quantitative and multi-level data analysis; and the interpretation of large-scale datasets.

“Kent Business School provided me with the ideal environment to pursue a PhD in Management. The supervisory support, scholarship funding and research facilities fully equipped me to not only submit my thesis in three years, but also to publish my work in leading journals and obtain a lectureship right after my doctorate.”

Dr Vikrant Shirodkar
PhD Management
Dr Paola Scaparra, Reader at Kent Business School, supervises Stefano Starita, who is studying for a PhD in Management Science. Here, they discuss what studying at PhD level is like and how the supervisory process works.

Stefano, you gained your BA and MSc in Naples, your home university, why did you choose to study for your PhD at Kent?

A PhD gained in the UK is very worthwhile. My professors in Italy knew about Dr Scaparra’s research, which involves corporate partners such as Ansaldo, an international transportation company, and gave me good feedback about Kent. I wanted to work with real data and gain broader experience so Kent Business School was a good choice for me.

What makes Kent Business School attractive to research students?

Paola: We have a strong international community at Kent. I work with European universities on a variety of projects and there is a wide range of expertise at Kent, and in Kent Business School in particular, where we have five disciplinary groups.

The Management Science group works as a close team and is very supportive of its research students. The University’s Graduate School also offers a wide range of facilities, activities and additional training for research students. First-year PhD students can usually choose to live on campus in Woolf College’s dedicated postgraduate accommodation.

What is the topic of your PhD?

Stefano: Recent terrorist attacks have demonstrated an urgent need for models and algorithmic methodologies to protect critical infrastructures. I am developing models and computation procedures for planning the allocation of security investments in infrastructure systems, such as transportation and IT systems, so as to mitigate the impact of external disruptions.

Paola: Stefano is also looking at how to protect critical infrastructure from natural catastrophes, such as explosions, flooding and earthquakes. We produce a large variety of mathematical models to try to capture all the different scenarios to establish how we might better protect a company’s internal systems.

How would you describe the relationship between a supervisor and a student?

Paola: It is more relaxed than at undergraduate level. I consider my PhD students as junior colleagues, so we work as a team, we share the same passion for a research project. It’s my role as supervisor to provide guidance and support, but I also give students the independence to come up with their own ideas and solutions to problems. The challenge is to achieve a suitable balance between providing the right levels of freedom and structure or direction throughout the PhD programme.

What makes a good supervisor?

Stefano: When I have done some work and send Paola an email, she replies straight away. She knows how to get the best out of me – within two months of starting my PhD, she advised me to attend a conference, which was really good for me because it pushed me to work hard.

Paola: Being a good supervisor is about understanding the needs of the individual student. Some students need extra help but don’t always know about what is available or how to ask for it. It’s an important part of my job to make sure they are aware of all the systems in place for them. I also encourage talented students to apply for awards – for the best student, the best paper and so on. There are a lot of prizes and awards out there but PhD students are often so busy with their thesis they are not aware of what is available. However, this sort of activity is very important for developing an impressive research CV at the start of an academic career.

Is Stefano a good student to supervise?

Paola: He is very hardworking... I have to tell him to stop coming in to work on a Sunday. He’s enthusiastic and proactive, and comes up with...
his own ideas. He’s also very good at multitasking. He is involved in teaching, and is already working on publications.

How have you funded your PhD?

Stefano: I have a Graduate Teaching Assistant scholarship from Kent Business School, which involves around 96 hours of teaching a year and gaining a recognised teaching qualification (ATAP). The scholarship covers my fees as an EU student and living expenses at the same level as the scholarships offered by the Research Councils in the UK.

What’s distinctive about studying at PhD level?

Stefano: A PhD is different from a Master’s programme because it is much more self-directed and you have to develop your independence as a researcher. You get support from your supervisor and research skills training but you also have to be able to work alone for extended periods and stay focused on your goals.

Paola: A PhD student is more likely to follow an academic career. PhD students learn to become expert in their areas by carrying out an in-depth research project over three to four years while developing their teaching skills and learning how to disseminate their research through conference presentations and academic publications.

Any advice for someone thinking about taking a research degree at Kent?

Stefano: Do it! You have to like what you are doing and be determined, but research is the best job, it’s not static, you don’t have to do the same thing all the time. If you’re willing to work, the sacrifice is worth it, well not sacrifice, really, but you work on your own most of the time so sometimes you may feel a bit isolated, but I have a good social life at Kent.

Paola: The world of a PhD student can be quite lonely, so you really have to be passionate about your subject and committed to the project. As you will use your PhD thesis to establish your reputation in your area of expertise, it’s important to choose your topic and your supervisor carefully. You should exploit the expertise and network of your supervisors.

Networking is so important for an academic career and you must start establishing those connections as soon as you can. The fellow researchers you meet at conferences, workshops and seminars are all possible collaborators on future projects. That’s why I keep my links with American and Italian universities. The network you develop as a PhD student will also help when it comes to finding jobs in the future; you meet people who can open doors for your career. You learn so much working with different people on different projects. It’s the most enjoyable part of the process.
APPLYING TO KENT

Entry requirements
Applicants must hold a minimum 2.1 honours degree and a Master’s degree with Merit, and have a good standard of written and spoken English (see below).

All scholarship candidates must usually hold a first-class honours degree (if still completing their Master’s programme) or a Master’s degree with Distinction. All candidates must be interviewed before they can be accepted on to the programme.

English language
Candidates must provide an IELTS certificate with a minimum score of 7.0 including 6.5 in reading, 6.5 in writing, 6.0 in listening and 6.0 in speaking or an acceptable equivalent (TOEFL internet-based or Pearson Test of English Academic). Applicants for quantitative subjects with very strong mathematical abilities may be admitted with a minimum score of 6.5. For more information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgrad/apply/entry.html

Tuition fees
For the most up-to-date information on tuition fees, visit www.kent.ac.uk/finance-student/fees

Come and visit us
We are pleased to welcome individual visitors to Kent Business School at Canterbury or Medway by appointment. Please contact us by phone or email (see right).

How to apply
Applicants should apply online at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/apply

If you do not hold a Master’s degree with Distinction (or a first-class honours degree if you haven’t completed your Master’s programme), you will be asked to pay an application fee of £100 (deductible from your first year’s fees).

Further information
Please contact the Research and PhD Co-ordinator at Kent Business School:
T: +44 (0)1227 827726
E: phdinfo@kent.ac.uk

Terms and conditions: the University reserves the right to make variations to the content and delivery of courses and other services, or to discontinue courses and other services, if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary. If the University discontinues any course, it will endeavour to provide a suitable alternative. To register for a programme of study, all students must agree to abide by the University Regulations (available online at: www.kent.ac.uk/regulations).

Data protection: for administrative, academic and health and safety reasons, the University needs to process information about its students. Full registration as a student of the University is subject to your consent to process such information.
Kent: the UK’s European university
Kent is known as the UK’s European university. Our two main UK campuses, Canterbury and Medway, are located in the south-east of England, close to London, and we also have study locations in Brussels, Athens, Paris and Rome.

We have a diverse, cosmopolitan population with 149 nationalities represented. We also have strong links with universities in Europe, and from Kent, you are around two hours away from Paris and Brussels by train.

World-leading research
A great deal of the University of Kent’s research has been ranked as world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour, according to the Government’s most recent Research Assessment Exercise. Kent staff were found to be engaged in research of international and world-class standing.

Strong academic community
Kent’s postgraduate students are part of a thriving intellectual community that includes staff and students from all our locations. In addition to lectures, seminars and one-to-one supervisions, you benefit from a rich and stimulating research culture. We have also invested in Woolf College, a modern facility on the Canterbury campus dedicated to postgraduates, which combines accommodation with academic and social space.

A global outlook
Kent has a great international reputation, attracting academic staff and students from around the world. Our academic schools are engaged in collaborative research with universities worldwide and we offer a range of opportunities to study abroad and an approach that is truly global.

The Graduate School
As a postgraduate student, you also have the support of the Graduate School, which promotes your academic interests, coordinates transferable skills training programmes and facilitates cross-disciplinary interaction and social networking.

Funding
Kent provides a variety of financial support opportunities for postgraduate students. These range from research studentships, location-specific funding, sport and music scholarships, and funding specifically for overseas fee-paying students. For further information, see www.kent.ac.uk/pgfunding

Enhanced career prospects
At Kent, we want you to be in a good position to face the demands of a tough economic environment. During your studies, you acquire a high level of academic knowledge and specialist practical skills. We also help you to develop key transferable skills that are essential within the competitive world of work.

Further information
For information about applying to Kent, or to order a copy of the Graduate Prospectus, please contact: Recruitment and Admissions Office, The Registry, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NZ, UK T: +44 (0)1227 827727 F: +44 (0)1227 827077

The University also holds Open Days and postgraduate recruitment events throughout the year. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/opendays

Location
Canterbury and Medway.

Faculty
Faculty of Social Sciences.

School
Kent Business School.

Contact
Research Office, Kent Business School, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7PE, UK T: +44 (0)1227 827726 E: phdinfo@kent.ac.uk

Applications
Online at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
COME AND VISIT US

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