

Doctoral Programme in Health and Psychology

Doctoral Programme in Health and Psychology

Start
23 Sep 2026

Online
100%

Admission to the welcome area: March 19, 2025

Languages: English, Spanish, Catalan

Official qualification

Apply for the Welcome and Information Service



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Presentation

There is an obvious need for research training in the health and psychology field from a multidisciplinary perspective; with our doctoral programme, we aim to answer this need.

The programme's overall goal is to make sure students develop the competencies required to successfully carry out research in the fields of health and psychology. More specifically, our goal is to train researchers who are capable of asking meaningful research questions and whose solution contributes to improving people's health and well-being. In addition, we want them to be capable of developing research projects that pursue a truly transformational purpose and train them to provide methodical, innovative and searching answers to the questions raised.

Accordingly, our wish is to train motivated, creative, original researchers who wish to advance in solving significant problems in the field of study, and whose solution will impact positively on the population's well-being. The doctoral programme divided into 7 research lines which address the following topics: e-health; psychological aspects and tools; neuroscience and language disorders; nutrition and lifestyles; healthy work environments; community care and health; gender, health and sociocultural models. We have both experience and research projects in all these fields. Different thesis proposals are offered for each of the research lines.

The programme is run by the UOC Doctoral School and is closely linked with the research experience of the faculty and research staff at the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences and the Internet Interdisciplinary Institute.

Competences

The doctoral programme develops the following basic competencies (as per Spain's Royal Decrees RD 99/2011 and RD 576/2023):

- C1. Systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the research skills and methods related to this field.
- C2. Conceiving, designing or creating, putting into practice and adopting a substantial research or creation process.
- C3. Contributing to expanding the frontiers of knowledge through original research.
- C4. Developing a critical analysis and assessment and synthesizing new and complex ideas.
- C5. Communicating with the academic and scientific community and with society in general regarding the student's areas of knowledge, employing the formats and languages habitually used in their international scientific community.
- C6. Fostering scientific, technological, social, artistic or cultural progress in a knowledge-based society, in academic and professional settings.
- C7. Fostering open science and citizen science (in accordance with Article 12 of Spain's Organic Law 2/2023, of 22 March) so as to contribute to the status of scientific knowledge as a common good, with assessment of the doctoral student's performance of interdisciplinary activities relating to the different aspects of open science and citizen science, and the development of skills in both disciplines through microcredentials or similar.

Admission profiles

The PhD programme in Health and Psychology is for students who have a university degree in any of the programme's disciplines and are seeking a deeper understanding of these fields of knowledge and

to make innovative and significant contributions to them through a rigorous approach to their object of study.

Career opportunities

The high-level research training in this PhD programme prepares students for a wide range of professional careers. One, the most traditional, is academic research. Future doctoral degree holders may choose to further their academic career by means of postdoctoral training (highly recommended for the purpose of honing their research skills and acquiring further experience) and/or to apply for academic posts at universities or research centres.

However, they may also find professional opportunities in a wide variety of other, broader fields. To mention just a few examples, they can work in research and innovation units in various types of hospitals or healthcare facilities or in businesses associated with their field of study that have a research and innovation department or that prioritize research, or they can choose a career in consulting. However, these are just examples: there are many openings and opportunities, which also depend on their own capacity for innovation and thorough, hard work.

Official qualification

The UOC's Doctoral Programme of Health and Psychology is a programme that has been approved by the Spanish Universities Council, and its implementation has been authorized by the Government of Catalonia, in accordance with current legislation.

The UOC's doctoral programmes have full academic validity throughout Spain; where such is the intention, they are qualifications to perform regulated professions, in accordance with the regulations applicable in each case.

The certificates for these programmes are issued together with a Diploma Supplement (DS), providing details of what the student studied, their results, the professional competencies obtained and the qualification's level in the Spanish higher education system; the aim of this is to facilitate recognition of the qualification and promote students' and graduates' mobility within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

In other countries, the validity of the official university qualifications issued by the UOC will depend on each specific country's education laws.



Programme quality

The quality of this degree programme is endorsed by the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU), which ensures that rigorous standards, including those demanded by the EHEA, are met.

- [Academic results](#)
- [Satisfaction results](#)

AQU quality seal

[Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency](#).

The UOC, Spain's best online university

We are rated the best online university in Spain by the main university quality rankings.

Programme of study

Study plan

A personalized training plan will be set out for each student, based on prior knowledge and research abilities, particularly in research methodologies, and the student's research interests. This training plan may include the performance of bridging courses. It may also require students' participation in different activities included in the doctoral programme.

The bridging courses are master's degree courses that are related with the doctoral programme, generally with a high degree of specificity, which may help students progress in their research. We recommend that students take them during the first year (first and second semesters). We have an extensive list to cover all students' needs. It is also possible to consider taking other courses (not included in the list) from similar programmes, if they are considered suitable.

In addition, within the training plan, students' may be recommended to take part in different learning activities that are part of the doctoral programme. These are usually short-duration training activities (seminars and workshops), designed by the Doctoral School and which students from different programmes may find useful (although each programme can also have its own activities). These are usually on-site or online activities that are regularly updated to align with the students' identified needs. They may be given by experts in specific subject areas and they can be given at different times during the programme. The difference between seminars and workshops is that the latter have a more practical approach. Many of the programme's learning activities will be given in English.

In particular, the "Research seminar for the Doctoral Programme in Health and Psychology" will be organized at regular intervals. This seminar is intended as an on-site and online meeting space that is held regularly with the aim of sharing doctoral students' work and other topics for cross-disciplinary debate among students belonging to the same cohort and the faculty members involved in giving the doctoral programme.

Within the programme's learning activities, cross-disciplinary mobility activities are also proposed with the goal of enabling students to take part in congresses, dissemination activities and research stays abroad.

Bridging courses

methodological courses

Temporal distribution	Subjects	Credits ECTS	Typology	Language
1st year	<u>Research Design in Social Sciences</u>	5	Optional	English
1st or 2nd semester	<u>Advanced Qualitative Methods in Knowledge Society Research</u>	5	Optional	English
1st or 2nd semester	<u>Advanced Quantitative Methods in Knowledge Society Research</u>	5	Optional	English

Research, transfer and entrepreneurship courses

The UOC also offers research, transfer and entrepreneurship courses in English aimed at **students, researchers** and faculty to foster **research in scientific, academic and business fields**.

Research, transfer and entrepreneurship courses can be recognized as free elective credits on bachelor's degree courses. If you are studying a doctoral degree at any university and have obtained a competitive grant, you can also study it as part of your training resources.

You can check all the courses in the website: <https://www.uoc.edu/en/studies/doctorates/research>

Seminars and workshops

The maximum duration of studies will be four years for full-time students and seven years for part-time students, counted from the date of admission to the programme until the doctoral thesis is presented. This period does not include maternity or paternity leave, or any long-term sick leave deemed necessary by the Academic Committee.

The Academic Committee may authorize the extension of these periods, subject to the legally stipulated maximum periods, in specific circumstances defined for each doctoral programme.

After enrolling in the programme, each doctoral student will be given a personalized activity document. This document specifies all the activities set by the Academic Committee for the doctoral student's development.

By the end of the first year, doctoral students must write a research plan that includes the methodology to be used and objectives to be pursued, as well as the means and timetable for completing the thesis.

The Academic Committee will conduct an annual assessment of each doctoral student's research plan and activity document, which will be considered together with reports from the tutor and thesis supervisor. This research plan must receive a positive assessment for the doctoral student to continue in the programme.

Over the course of the programme, each doctoral student must successfully complete the specific training activity (basic, thematic and methodological seminars) stipulated in his/her personalized pathway. In the first year of the programme, doctoral students must also write a research plan and have it approved.



Research lines

Academic team

Doctoral School Management

Ferran Adelantado Freixer

Program direction

Marco Calabria

Academic Committee

Carmina Castellano Tejedor

Francesc Saigí Rubió

Francesc Xavier Medina Luque

Israel Rodríguez Giralt

Marco Calabria

Margarita Triguero Mas

Milagros Sáinz Ibáñez

Núria Esteve Gibert

Pilar Ficapal Cusi

Tutoring

Gina Llado Jordan

Sarah Berrocoso Cascallana

Supervisors

Adrián Montesano del Campo
Alfonso Igualada Pérez
Alicia Aguilar Martinez
Ana Galvez Mozo
Ana Isabel Jimenez Zarco
Anna Bach Faig
Beni Gómez-Zúñiga
Carme Carrion Ribas
Cristina O'Callaghan Gordo
Daniel López Gómez
Elena Muñoz Marron
Elsa Santamaria López
Eulàlia Hernández Encuentra
Francesc Xavier Medina Luque
Gary Morgan
Gemma Chiva Blanch
Israel Rodríguez Giralt
Julio Meneses
Laura Esquiús de la Zarza
Llorenç Andreu Barrachina
Manuel Armayones Ruiz
Marco Inzitari
Maria Candela Ollé Castellà
Marina Bosque Prous
Marta Massip Salcedo
Mihaela Enache Zegheru
Modesta Pousada Fernandez
Nadia Ahufinger Sanclemente
Núria Esteve Gibert
Pierre Bourdin Kreitz
Pilar Ficapal Cusi
Raquel Viejo Sobera
Ruben Nieto Luna
Salvador Macip Maresma
Sergi Fàbregues Feijóo

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Call for applications

General requirements

To be admitted to the doctoral programme, applicants must meet both the general requirements stipulated by the UOC and the programme's specific requirements.

First of all, students must submit proof of meeting one of the following sets of requirements:

- Hold an official Spanish bachelor's degree (or equivalent) and an official university master's degree (or equivalent), having passed at least 300 ECTS credits in the two degree courses.
- Hold an official Spanish university degree that was issued under a former university education system (a licenciatura, arquitectura or ingeniería degree) and corresponds to level 3 of the MECES (Marco español de cualificaciones para la educación superior) framework.
- Hold an official university degree that was issued in a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) country, entitles the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country, and corresponds to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).
- Hold an official university degree that was issued in a country outside the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), subject to verification that the qualification is equivalent to an official university master's degree and entitles the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country.
- Hold a doctoral degree.
- Hold an official Spanish bachelor's degree that, in conformity with EU law, comprises at least 300 ECTS credits. In this case, the applicant will have to take the necessary bridging courses, unless the specific doctoral programme includes research training credits that are equivalent in value to the research credits obtained in master's degree studies.
- Hold an official university degree for which, prior to obtaining a place through the corresponding examination for access to a specialized medical training programme, candidates had to have passed with a favourable assessment at least two years of training in a programme to obtain the official certificate in one of the health science specializations.
- Hold an official university degree that corresponds to level 3 of the MECES (Marco español de cualificaciones para la educación superior) framework, in accordance with the procedure set forth in Spain's Royal Decree 967/2014, of 21 November, establishing the requirements and procedure for officially recognizing and declaring equivalence with respect to the official university degree programme and academic level and for validating foreign higher education studies, and the procedure for determining correspondence with the MECES levels of the official arquitectura, ingeniería, licenciatura, arquitectura técnica, ingeniería técnica and diplomatura degrees.

Applicants who have not passed the Introduction to Research credits in a university master's degree will need to take the bridging courses determined by each programme, as appropriate.

In the case of applicants who only have an official university bachelor's degree which, in accordance with the rules of EU law, has a duration of 300 ECTS credits, or have not taken and passed a minimum number of Introduction to Research credits in a university master's degree programme, their continuation in the doctoral programme is conditional upon them passing the bridging courses

corresponding to the Introduction to Research module, pathway or courses for the corresponding period of academic training.

According to Decree 822/2021, of September 28, students with a disability equal to 33% or more have a reservation of 5% of the places.

Admission requirements

As well as the general and additional requirements established by the University, the doctoral programme in Health and Psychology establishes the following specific requirements:

- If you're not a citizen of an English-speaking country, **you must provide proof of a level of English equal to or higher than B2** in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).
- If you have attended school or have completed a bachelor's or master's degree (or equivalent qualification with regards to enrolment in the doctorate programme) in English in a country where English is an official language, you will be deemed to have an equivalent level to the one required.
- You may also demonstrate your linguistic competency in English by means of another official certificate that proves you have a level equivalent to or higher than the one required. You can consult this equivalency table to see examples of certificates that correspond to these levels.

Candidates for the doctoral programme who do not reach the required level will be given the opportunity to access the doctoral programme with a B1 level **if they undertake to attain a B2 level before completing the research plan** at the end of the first year. According to regulations, if the student does not attain this level, the research plan cannot be approved.

The UOC's [Centre for Modern Languages](#) offers English courses to attain the minimum level required for admission into the different doctoral programmes.

The UOC offers an online English language proficiency test, which can be accessed via this [link](#), to accredit your knowledge of English. A score of between 72 and 94 accredits a level corresponding to B2 as defined by the CEFR. When taking this test, you must specify the code that corresponds to the UOC (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya): 4418. This code does not exempt the student from paying the corresponding exam cost and fees.

If you apply for a UOC grant, you must accredit a level equal to or higher than B2 from the time of application. For other grants, financial aid or research contracts, please consult the terms and conditions and requirements for each case (level of English and part-time or full-time format).

Admission documents

All candidates who apply to be admitted on a doctoral programme at the UOC should submit the following documents:

- A photocopy of their **DNI, NIE or passport**.
 - A **statement of interest** in which the candidate makes a short presentation of their career and explains the candidate's specific reasons for applying to the programme (their motivations), a description of their research interests, as well as a brief research proposal and the links with the research group.
 - A **letter of endorsement** that appears in the name of research that supports the personal doctoral project, as well as its intention to be your tutor.
 - A **curriculum** that describes the programmes and master's degree or postgraduate courses the candidate has taken that are related to the research interests described in the statement of interest and, if applicable, a description of previous scientific output.
 - **Certificate of the level of English** required by the doctoral programme.
 - **Documents that prove that the candidate meets the admission requirements**, you will find more information on this section within the Office's Secretary Campus.
- Academic certificates corresponding to your education to date, detailing the courses taken and the marks obtained, the dates, the type of course, the number of credits and the average grade in your academic record (if these certificates have not been submitted already as proof of fulfilment of the admission requirements).
 - If the academic certificates are from a foreign institution, you must submit the Declaration of equivalence of average grades issued by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.
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- For any Spanish official university degree certificate, you must provide the record of its entry in the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities' registry of degree certificates, or alternatively provide a copy of the degree certificate and the corresponding transcript or Diploma Supplement.
 - Any master's degree certificate issued in another European Higher Education Area (EHEA) country must entitle the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country and must correspond to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). To support this you must provide a copy of the master's degree certificate and the corresponding Diploma Supplement.
 - For any university qualifications from higher education systems outside of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that have not obtained official recognition in Spain, you must provide a copy of the master's degree certificate and the corresponding transcript, together with certification from the university that the qualification entitles the holder to admission to doctoral studies in that country.

If the certificates and academic records are not written in an official language of Spain or in English, the documentation must be accompanied by a sworn translation into Catalan, Spanish or English.

You will find more information on the corresponding page in the Procedures section of the Virtual Campus > Doctoral programme

admissions documentation.

If you fail to provide this documentation or there are significant inconsistencies between it and the information in your application, your application to the doctoral programme may be rejected.

Once your admission documentation has been checked and your application accepted, your admission to the doctoral programme is subject to your submission of the official academic documents, duly legalized in accordance with the country in which they were issued.

Evaluation criteria

Applications are assessed on a scale with a maximum of 100 points, assigned as follows:

- Up to 15 points for the weighted average of the academic record for a bachelor's degree (or equivalent). The 15 points will be awarded proportionally to the average.
- Up to 20 points for the academic record for a master's degree (or equivalent). The weighted average will be calculated and points will be awarded proportionally.
- Up to 10 points for the candidate's scientific output, according to a qualitative assessment based on the report presented by the candidate.
- Up to 10 points for the cover letter explaining the candidate's motivation for studying on the programme (based on the cover letter and a personal interview, if deemed appropriate).
- Up to 35 points for the candidate's draft work proposal, the suitability of their prior education, their experience and the extent to which their research interests fit in with the programme and its research groups and lines. Points will be awarded based on the documents provided by the candidate (cover letter and research proposal) and a personal interview (if deemed appropriate).
- Up to 10 points for other merits demonstrated by the candidate, such as prizes, patents, grants, research stays at leading centres or previous professional experience in R&I, or other merits that the Academic Committee may deem relevant.

Depending on the number of candidates, those with the highest scores may be interviewed, with special attention to the following: the candidate's motivation, their knowledge of the programme and interest in its lines of research, and the extent to which the interview reflects the documents presented. The interview will be conducted by a professor responsible for the preferred line of research indicated by the candidate in their application and at least one other professor who is a member of the programme's Academic Committee.

Places are assigned by order of merit, from the highest score to the lowest. The number of places available on the doctoral degree programme and the selection criteria for future students will be announced each academic year. Admission decisions are made by the programme's Academic Committee in accordance with the previously established criteria and procedures. Admission may be subject to the completion of bridging courses, as specified in Section 3.4 of the application.

The Committee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the access and admission requirements. It also assesses applicants' suitability in relation to the programme's admission profile by reviewing the submitted documents and conducting personal interviews.

Calendar

1 December 2025: Start of the application period for admission to the doctoral programmes.

31 January 2026: End of the call for applications for access and admission to doctoral programmes.

4 March 2026: Publication of the provisional lists of submitted applications. The lists will be published on the [Doctoral School website](#).

5 March to 11 March 2026: Period for appeals of submitted applications (documentation subject to amendment).

17 March 2026: Publication of the final lists of submitted applications. The lists will be published on the [Doctoral School website](#).

11 May 2026: Publication of the provisional resolution on the accepted online and granted candidates (Interuniversity programmes).

12 May to 22 May 2026: Period for appeals of the selection of online and granted candidates (Interuniversity programmes).

29 May 2025: Publication of the final resolution on the candidates admitted to the doctoral programmes and those who are granted (Interuniversity programmes). The lists will be published on the [Doctoral School website](#).

July 2026: Start of the enrolment period 2026-27.

September 2026: Start of the academic year 2026-27.

Request access

1 Apply for the Welcome and Information Service

Apply for the Welcome and Information Service is a free, no-obligation procedure that provides you with a user name and password that will allow you to enter the UOC's Virtual Campus, from where you will be able to:

1. Contact experts who will help you settle any doubts you may have about applying.
2. Consult the Campus Secretary's Office for information about the programme of studies, enrolment prices, documentation, etc.

Access requirements

Before requesting access, check that you meet the requirements for the programme you want to be admitted to.

Access form

On the access form, you must give your personal details and the educational level you have attained.

Access Documentation

You will find a list of the documentation you need when you request access and can consult the Campus Secretary's Office.

Discounts

If you are eligible for any of the discounts stated in the Price Decree, you will have to submit the appropriate documentation, following the instructions given by the virtual Secretary's Office.

2 Access the Campus and contact the researcher

Virtual campus

After you have requested access, you will receive a user name and password that will allow you to access the Virtual Campus, where you will find all the information and resources you may need.

Researcher

You will find the information to contact the lead researcher in the "research lines" section. The researcher can provide support for preparing your application and will be your sponsor, if he or she agrees. Once you have been admitted to the programme, he or she will advise and guide you in choosing courses, in accordance with your prior academic background, your interests and the amount of time you have.

Virtual Secretary's Office

There is a *Procedure* on the Campus where you can consult and manage all academic matters, such as viewing the programme of studies, payment options or the discounts available.

3 Apply for admission

You can complete the admission form the virtual campus **Procedures / Doctoral programme admission documentation**, where you will have to give your academic details, whether you want to apply for a grant and the research line you are interested in.

You must submit an enrolment proposal after having chosen the courses you want to follow during the semester, which your tutor will analyse so that you can complete enrolment with his or her counselling. It is a step prior to completing enrolment.

4 Send the digital documentation

Having completed the previous step, you must attach the documentation in the same section. You can see which documentation you must attach in the corresponding section within **Procedures / Doctoral programme admission documentation**.

When you have completed all the steps, the doctoral programme's academic committee will assess the applications that have been submitted.

If you pass the first phase of the admission process, you will receive notification confirming that you have entered the second phase and a telephone interview will be scheduled.

If you pass the second phase of the admission process, you will receive notification to confirm that you have been admitted. You will have a maximum of one month (counting from the admission notification) to confirm your acceptance of the place on the doctoral programme; if this confirmation from you is not received, you will not be admitted to the programme.

It is at this point that you will be able to complete enrolment, choosing your preferred payment option from among those available. If you are eligible for any of the [discounts](#) stated in the Price Decree, you will have to submit the appropriate documentation, following the instructions given by the virtual Secretary's Office.

Remember that once you have enrolled, you will have ten days to send the admission documentation.

The Government of Catalonia establishes the public prices for credits and other academic services charged by public universities in Catalonia and the UOC. You can consult the prices in [Decree 125/2023](#), of June 28th.

The fees will be those applicable when enrolment is completed. Subject to annual revisions.

Price and enrolment Fees

Price per credit	32,28€/cr*
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Price per learning resources credit	15,16€/cr*
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Biannual Fees

Fee for supervision, tutorship and continuous assessment of the doctoral thesis	200,56€
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Fee for the management of your record	54,54€
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Fee for learning support services	101,47€
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Fees

Fee for requesting your certificate	218,15€
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Fee for oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis	156,87€
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Fee for requesting your record	54,54€
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