



Doctorate in Educational Professional Practice (DProf)



**Empowering minds
Igniting futures
Pioneering excellence**



STRANMILLIS
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

A College of Queen's University Belfast

stran.ac.uk



DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (DProf)

Designed for ambitious and inquisitive education professionals with a vision to make a real and lasting impact on educational practice, the new Doctorate in Educational Professional Practice at Stranmillis provides working professionals with the opportunity to delve into the complex world of educational practice, guided by experienced researchers who understand the reality of contemporary real-world educational settings; and, at the same time, enhancing your career and professional development through making a unique and original contribution to the education sector.

WHY UNDERTAKE A DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Drawing on, and contributing to, professional knowledge and practices, our Doctorate in Educational Professional Practice offers an extraordinary opportunity, and challenge, to reshape your approach to educational practice.

The Doctorate in Educational Professional Practice at Stranmillis has been designed with the active educational professional in mind with many personal and professional benefits.

The DProf:

- allows qualified education professionals to engage in rigorous, high-level part-time study while in current employment
- provides the opportunity to combine professional practice with an area of research you are passionate about
- embeds advanced research methods in applied educational practice and settings in an area of interest.
- makes a significant contribution to educational practice, as well as generating new, practice-based knowledge
- affords you the opportunity of working with world-class academics with a history of generating critical, impactful and solution focused research in their field of enquiry
- enables you to become an expert in your field of practice and may lead to career advancement.

A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY

This innovative new doctoral programme is a unique blend of challenge and opportunity; a transformative journey, where you will explore educational professional practice from multiple angles. Through bringing professional problems, knowledge and existing research together, you will develop the skills to critically analyse, design and, vitally, implement research projects that address critical educational issues and serve as a catalyst for change, leaving a lasting mark on the educational landscape.

Unlock your full potential through our Doctorate in Educational Professional Practice, starting in September 2024. Apply today and start that transformation.

DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (DProf)

The Doctorate in Educational Professional Practice comprises four taught 30 CATs modules over two years, preparing you for doctoral level research and a further period of, generally, three years developing, researching and submitting an original doctoral thesis (420 CATs).





PHASE 1 – TAUGHT ELEMENT

MODULE 1: INTERROGATING EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: SEPTEMBER 2024

This module allows you to develop a critical understanding of professional practice through introducing a range of social and cultural theories, related by virtue of their fundamental concern with practice. This nuanced understanding facilitates the examination of practice and allows you to view your own educational practice as situated, social and relational.

MODULE 2: SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: FEBRUARY 2025

This module considers professional practice at a system level, examining ontological considerations of space and time, and epistemological notions of learning/known processes. It examines how professional practice and educational systems more generally are constructed, shaped and influenced by political, socio-cultural and economic forces and constraints, helping you to reflect on the broader contexts within which your professional practice is situated.

MODULE 3: RESEARCH DESIGN IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE: SEPTEMBER 2025

This module addresses research design, piloting and research ethics as you prepare for Phase Two of the doctoral programme, offering the opportunity to critically explore how to research professional practice in a range of contemporary relevant educational issues, such as educational underachievement, pedagogy, curriculum, early years education and care. The module adopts a case study approach to illustrate effective research design and provide a clear understanding of context in designing research into professional practice in education.

MODULE 4: RESEARCHING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: FEBRUARY 2026

This final pre-thesis module focuses on consolidating your research design for interrogating professional practice and provides a sound methodological foundation for researching at doctoral level, with comprehensive input on action research through a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

PHASE 2 – DOCTORAL RESEARCH THESIS: SEPTEMBER 2026

The doctoral research thesis module provides the opportunity to conduct independent research in education. With the regular guidance and constructive support of an experienced supervisor, you will design and conduct an original piece of research into professional practice in education, choosing from a range of methodological approaches including action research, and grounding your research in an appropriate theoretical framework. This will enable you to complete a comprehensive research thesis, adhering to the highest ethical standards, and rooted in educational professional practice.



WHY CHOOSE STRANMILLIS

Stranmillis has been at the forefront of educational research for over 100 years, driving best and next practice globally in critical areas such as educational underachievement, early years education, inclusion and diversity, emotional health and wellbeing, STEM education, curriculum and pedagogy, and teacher education.

The doctoral programme at Stranmillis is led by Dr Glenda Walsh and Professor Noel Purdy - two highly respected educational researchers, recognised globally for their contribution to educational policy and practice. The course also includes inputs throughout from academics and experts in their specific subject fields.

Dr Glenda Walsh - a former early years teacher, is internationally renowned in the field of play and playful pedagogies with a particular focus on resolving the dilemmas associated with play as learning in practice. She is also interested in the quality debate in early childhood and primary education, with a focus on policy, curriculum and practice. Dr Walsh has led numerous research projects and has taught and examined at doctoral level across the UK and Ireland.

Prof Noel Purdy is Director of Research and Scholarship and Director of the Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement. He taught languages in post-primary schools before embarking on a career in teacher education. He has led two major ministerial government committees: the expert panel on Educational Underachievement in Northern Ireland and the steering committee to review the national Anti-Bullying Strategy in the Republic of Ireland. He has taught and examined at doctoral level across the UK and Ireland.

Scan for more information:



START DATE

First intake September 2024. Second Intake September 2026

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Candidates will normally have a minimum of 2.1 Honours degree (or equivalent qualification acceptable to the University) and a Master's degree in a relevant discipline with a final result of 60% or over (or equivalent qualification acceptable to the University) plus a minimum of three years appropriate professional experience in education or a related field. Previous experience of conducting research, or research methods training in the social sciences, is beneficial.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

For full fee information please visit:

www.stran.ac.uk/courses/fees-and-finance/



**For further information
please contact:**

Registry Department
Stranmillis University College
Stranmillis Road
Belfast
BT9 5DY

T: **028 9038 4470**
E: **registry@stran.ac.uk**