



MONARCH SWITZERLAND · SEPTEMBER 2026

Doctoral Programs Key Points

Essential information for
prospective doctoral candidates.

Research preparation · Degree pathways
Study format · Tuition · Admissions



BEFORE YOU APPLY

You bring the experience. We develop the researcher.

Monarch's research-based doctoral programs are oriented toward experienced working professionals in management, administration, leadership, business, and related fields. Candidates bring academic preparation, meaningful professional experience, subject knowledge, intellectual curiosity, and a willingness to develop as independent researchers.

The doctoral process supports the transition from professional and managerial thinking to formal doctoral research. Research skills, the preparation and refinement of the research proposal, and completion of the dissertation are integrated into the doctoral journey. Prior completion of an MPhil or another research-focused degree is not required, subject to individual academic review.

Scope of this guide

The research-focused guidance describes academic and applied doctoral study within Monarch's research pathways. The Doctor of Management is an executive doctorate for senior executives with 20+ years of experience, centred on an experience-based manuscript, managerial storytelling, and illustrative connections to management scholarship. Its expectations differ from the research process outlined here.

The Doctor of Professional Studies is offered separately through MMI; consult its program page for the applicable requirements.

[Explore the Study Pathways Guide →](#)

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KEY POINTS 1–5

Research preparation

1. Direct-to-research programs

Monarch's research-based doctoral programs are direct-to-research programs focused on the development and completion of an original doctoral research project. Research preparation and proposal development form part of the doctoral journey.

2. No domain-specific coursework

Candidates in these research-based doctoral programs do not complete traditional subject-based or domain-specific courses. The program begins with research preparation and then moves into the dissertation stage.

3. A prior research degree is not required

Candidates are not required to hold an MPhil or another research-focused degree before applying. Applicants may bring professionally oriented qualifications such as an MBA, MComm, MSc, BComm, or a similar qualification, together with relevant experience. Academic eligibility and pathway suitability are assessed individually; possession of a particular qualification does not guarantee doctoral admission.

4. Research preparation is included

Candidates begin with Research Skills 1 and Research Skills 2, followed by the Research Proposal Perfecting module. These stages support the development of the research knowledge and skills needed for independent doctoral inquiry.

5. A completed research proposal is not required to apply

The formal research proposal is developed and refined after admission under faculty guidance. A completed research proposal is therefore not required during the application phase.



KEY POINTS 6–10

Research focus and degree pathways

6. Individualized research focus

Candidates develop their own research focus within the domain of the selected doctoral program rather than selecting from predetermined dissertation topics. Research domains within management, administration, leadership, business, and the social sciences may be considered, subject to alignment with the selected program and supervisory suitability.

7. Master-in-Passing award

The MPhil is awarded as the Master-in-Passing upon successful completion of the doctoral degree. It recognizes the master-level academic and research work embedded within the doctoral pathway and does not require separate enrolment or additional work. It is not an exit award. The framework also applies to approved dual doctoral degree pathways. [Read the Master-in-Passing framework →](#)

8. Three approved dual doctoral degree pathways

The approved combinations are PhD–DBA, PhD–DOL, and PhD–DSS. These pathways connect complementary theoretical, applied, or interdisciplinary objectives within an academically governed structure. They are not automatic: each requires individual review and approval, with the academic requirements and distinction of each award preserved. No other combinations are currently approved.

9. Academic and applied doctorates have different orientations

PhD programs emphasize original scholarly contribution and theoretical or analytical inquiry. The DSS provides a distinct academic doctoral pathway for interdisciplinary social science inquiry. Applied doctorates emphasize professionally relevant research and practical contribution grounded in scholarship.

10. Rolling admissions and monthly starts

Applications are accepted and reviewed throughout the year. Programs operate with rolling admissions, allowing applicants to select a starting month following completion of the admissions and enrolment process.



KEY POINTS 11–14

Study format and professional commitments

11. Designed for working professionals

The academic model is structured for internationally based candidates who wish to remain professionally active while completing their studies. Candidates are not required to relocate to Switzerland.

12. Online study and defence requirements

All current Monarch doctoral programs may be completed fully online, including the doctoral defence. No relocation is required. Candidates may select an in-person doctoral defence when offered by Monarch. Workshop attendance is not a prerequisite for online defence.

13. Doctoral workshops in Switzerland

Onsite doctoral workshops provide opportunities for research review, faculty interaction, scholarly discussion, and networking. Workshop attendance is optional. Workshop attendance is not a prerequisite for online defence. Consult Monarch for current workshop dates and arrangements.

14. Approximately 15 hours per week

Candidates should generally anticipate dedicating approximately 15 hours per week to reading, research development, writing, and related doctoral activities. This is a planning guide: the effort required varies with the research stage and the candidate's preparation and circumstances.



Tuition and admissions requirements

15. Standard and extended tuition pathways

The standard and extended pathways combine different periodic tuition rates with different minimum registration periods. These periods establish the earliest eligibility for graduation, subject to completion of all academic requirements; they are not guaranteed completion times or tuition caps. Tuition remains payable at the applicable rate throughout active registration, including time beyond the minimum period. [Review tuition and minimum registration periods](#) →

16. Quarterly billing and monthly arrangements

Tuition is normally invoiced quarterly in advance. Candidates may request a monthly payment arrangement after paying the first quarterly period. Periodic tuition payments are made in advance and are non-refundable. Candidates may withdraw at any time, with withdrawal taking effect at the end of the current paid billing period. There is no commitment to pay tuition for the full minimum registration period if a candidate withdraws before completion. The Tuition Policy provides the full payment and registration conditions.

17. No GMAT, GRE, IELTS or TOEFL required

Monarch Switzerland does not require these standardized aptitude or language examinations for doctoral admission. Admissions decisions are based on a holistic review of prior academic performance, professional experience, and suitability for the intended program.



KEY POINTS 18–20

Admissions and tuition support

18. Approximately one month for admissions

The complete admissions process typically requires approximately one month, assuming all required documentation has been received. This is an indicative timeline rather than a guaranteed decision date.

19. Tuition funding and scholarship opportunities

Candidates are responsible for arranging their tuition funding. From 1 October 2026, the Dean's Scholarship Award offers 20% of eligible tuition based on financial need, and the Women's Scholarship Award offers 10% in recognition of motivation, dedication, and potential. Each award is assessed separately after academic acceptance, through its own application form linked to the applicant's Application ID. Eligible applicants may seek both awards; where both are approved, they provide 30% of the same eligible tuition amount. Awards cover eligible doctoral and master's-level academic programs across MGRI and MBS; MMI programs and executive education are outside their scope. [Review scholarship eligibility and conditions →](#)

20. Applications are non-binding

Prospective candidates may submit an application for academic review without an obligation to enrol. Following review, successful applicants receive formal admission information for consideration.

[Submit a non-binding application →](#)

[Applicant Resources →](#)



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