

THE NATURE OF DOCTORATENESS

Lunds universitets
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DOCTORATES ARE DIFFERENT ~ *'I am doing MY doctorate.'*

Unlike other degrees, the doctorate displays individual **ownership**:

*What is the topic of **your** doctorate?*

***My** doctorate is developing theory in . . .*

*I enjoyed doing **my** doctorate . . .*

*After **my** doctorate I will . . .*

Doctoral degrees are **personal** because:

The topic is specific to each individual candidate.

A decision determines an individual's choice of topic.

Research is individual and the award is to an individual.

Each doctoral degree contains a personal contribution to knowledge.

The degree is academically **unique** due to:

The absence of a prescribed curriculum.

A highly specific focus of study and methodology.

Individualised method(s) of summative assessment by peers.

Universal recognition of each candidates' achieved scholarly standard.

Source: Trafford, and Leshem, 2008:34-35

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Mastery of the subject; mastery of analytical breadth where methods, techniques, contexts and data are concerned and mastery of depth the contribution itself, judged to be competent and original and of high quality. (UK Council for Graduate Education, 1997: 15)

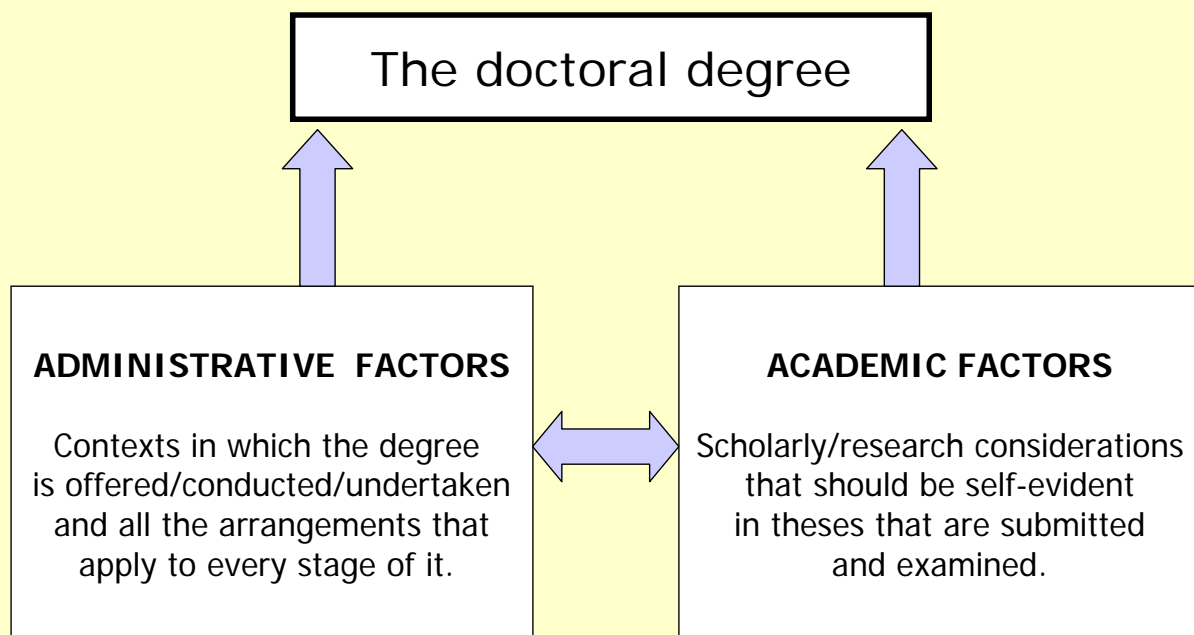
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Doctorateness is a jigsaw puzzle that can only be fully appreciated when all the components are present and fitted together. Thus, doctorateness only becomes truly apparent when your examiners and other readers can recognise synergy within your thesis. (Trafford, and Leshem, 2008: 51-52)

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FACTORS INFLUENCING THE NATURE OF THE DOCTORAL DEGREE



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TWO PARADIGMS OF DOCTORATENESS

A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE	SUMMATIVE EVALUATION
(ADMINISTRATIVE FACTORS)	(ACADEMIC FACTORS)
<p>The outcome of doctoral study is determined by the various inputs that influence the journey taken during a candidate's registration.</p>	<p>The scholarly merit and doctoral worthiness of a submitted doctoral thesis is judged by the examiners at the disputation.</p>

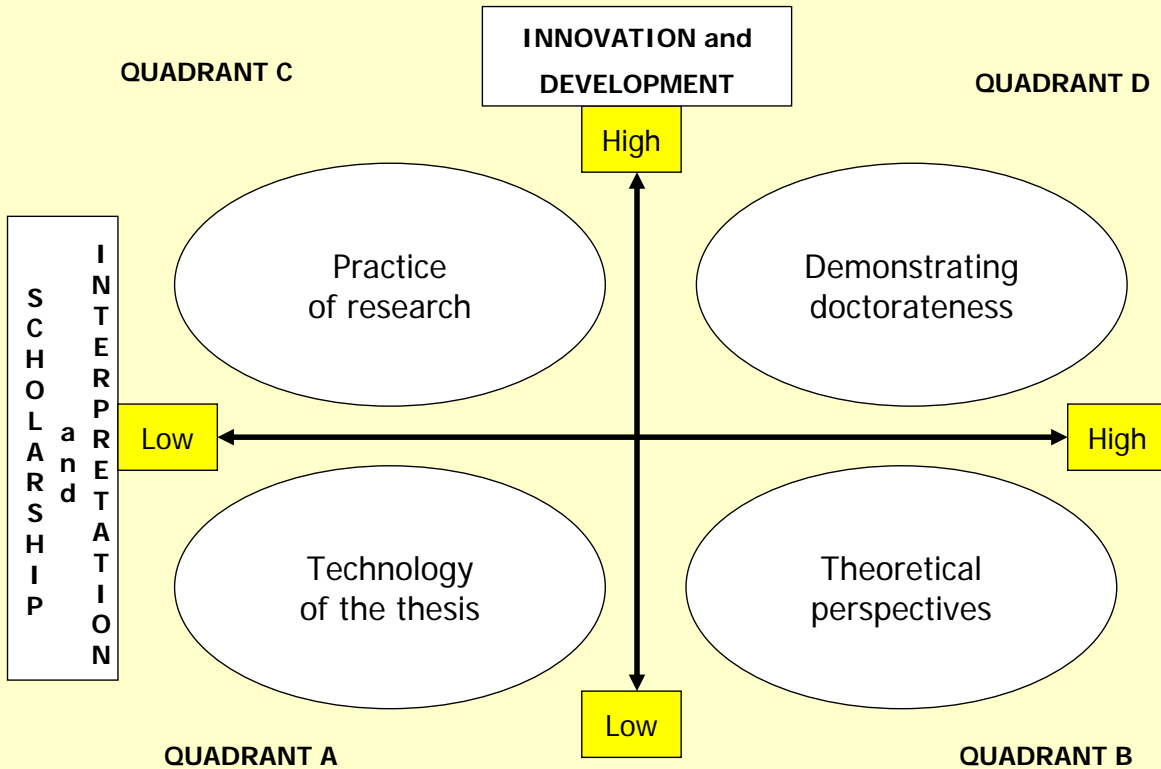
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HIGHER EDUCATION INPUT FACTORS THAT DETERMINE DOCTORATENESS

Career support, plan and opportunities	Mode(s) of entry	FT/PT Mode(s) of study
Summative examination process	SYNERGY AND DOCTORATENESS	Normal expected duration of study
Flexibility of administrative systems		'Taught' components
Formative progression criteria	Research 'training'	Supervisory arrangements

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FUNCTIONAL EMPHASIS OF EXAMINERS' QUESTIONS

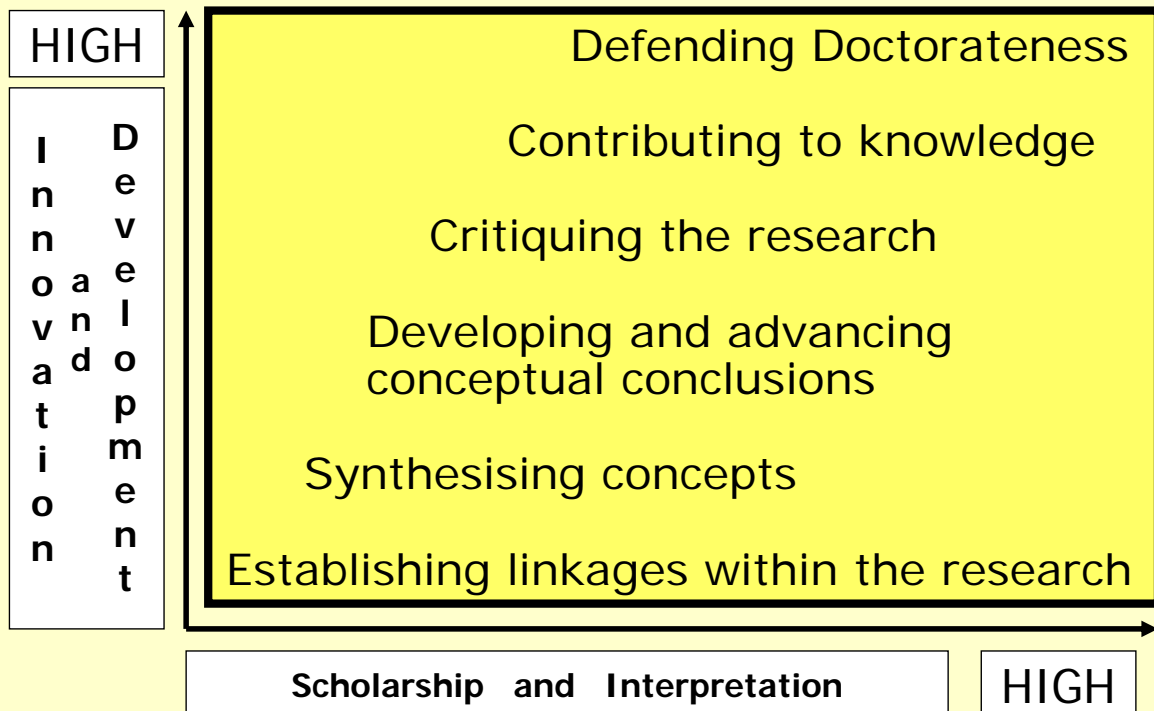


Source: Trafford and Leshem, 2008: 19-21

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QUESTIONS IN DOCTORAL DEFENCES: QUADRANT D



Source: Trafford, and Leshem, 2002

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PREDICTABLE (CLUSTERED) QUESTIONS BY EXAMINERS

- 1 Why did you choose this topic for your doctoral study?
- 2 How did you arrive at your conceptual framework?
- 3 How did you arrive at your research design?
- 4 How would you justify your choice of methodology?

- 5 Why did you decide to use X&Y as your main research instruments?
- 6 How did you select your respondents / materials?
- 7 How did you arrive at your conceptual conclusions?
- 8 How generalisable are your conclusions ~ and why?

- 9 What is your contribution to knowledge?
- 10 We would like you to critique your thesis for us.
- 11 What are you going to do after you gain your doctorate?
- 12 What else you would like to tell us about your thesis?

Source: Trafford and Leshem 2002

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COMPONENTS OF DOCTORATENESS AS SCHOLARSHIP

Contribution to knowledge	Stated gap in knowledge	Explicit research questions	Conceptual framework
Conceptual conclusions	SYNERGY AND DOCTORATENESS		Explicit research design
Research questions answered			Appropriate methodology
Coherent argument	Engagement with theory	Clear/concise presentation	'Correct' fieldwork

Source: Trafford, and Leshem, 2008:38

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FEATURES OF DOCTORATENESS

It is a pluralist concept.

It embodies both doing and achieving a doctorate.

It combines research process and research technique.

It distinguishes doctoral degrees from other academic awards.

It is displayed via text, structure, content and presentation of theses.

Its components are simple, obvious components of 'good' research.

Explicitly, it represents the criteria for assessing a doctoral thesis.

Implicitly, it enables quality in research to be appreciated.

Its generic features apply across the disciplines.

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COMMUNICATING THE ESSENTIALS IN YOUR RESEARCH

WHY do you want to investigate it?

WHAT do you want to discover?

HOW do you intend to investigate the topic?

WHEN was the time-frame for the investigation?

WHERE was the topic located and investigated?

WHO were the respondents?

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RESEARCH AS COMMUNICATION

The act of undertaking research
contains the intention to share something
from it with others.

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REMEMBER YOUR READERS' EXPECTATIONS OF YOUR TEXT

The primary readers of doctoral theses
are supervisors and examiners who expect
that the text will:

- use the lexicon of the discipline/profession;
- comply with accepted protocols;
- be scholarly, direct and easy to read;
- be clearly presented and well-written.

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FAMILIARITY WITH YOUR LEXICON

All disciplines and topics have their own lexicon of words, terms or phrases with specific meanings. Using the lexicon correctly in your thesis tells readers that you share their lexicon. Lexicons are expressed through words and meanings which also symbolize belonging and identity.

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DISPLAYING YOUR SCHOLARSHIP THROUGH WORDS

Since a thesis is a scholarly work, then:

- the text must demonstrate scholarship;
- all research decisions must be justified;
- description must give way to analysis;
- arguments must be developed explicitly;
- the text must flow logically and clearly;
- readers should not be ambushed textually!

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FRAMEWORKS FRAMEWORKS FRAMEWORKS

Visualising how a thesis might develop and be structured provides a shape for the entire text. Use of an ARCHITECTURE provides an overview for the thesis. CONCEPTUALISING doctoral scholarship provides a framework for the arguments and demonstration of high quality thinking. AUDITING the thesis provides a check on its textual and academic coherence.

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FAMILIARITY WITH THE CORPUS

'The literature' refers to a specific body of knowledge known as 'the corpus.' It also includes published works and other materials that are accepted by its respective users as essential sources. Being familiar with the corpus and its boundaries, plus appreciating its relationships to other potential corpus areas, are pre-requisites for doctoral writers.

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IMPLICATIONS FROM THE NOTION OF DOCTORATENESS

Administrators address the issue either implicitly or explicitly through regulations, procedures and processes. These conditions contextualise 'doing a doctorate' and provide a framework for everyone to recognise and in which to work.

Examiners incorporate the notion in their assessment of doctoral theses and in how they engage in their disputation of a thesis with a candidate. It represents how examiners view the higher level thinking about that typifies doctoral research.

Supervisors use the notion to guide candidates through their doctoral journey and as a form of audit before a thesis is submitted for examination. It represents both a theoretical and a practical framework for effective doctoral supervision.

Candidates use the notion as a conceptual framework as they plan, undertake and review their research in order to demonstrate that doctorateness is evident in their thesis so that examiners ~ and other readers ~ recognise its scholarly merit.

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DOCTORATENESS AS A GENRE OF SCHOLARSHIP

Doctoral study, and its associated high quality scholarly outcomes, is accepted as a particular category of research and academic endeavour. Thus:

- 1 What are the characteristics that exemplify the doctoral degree?
- 2 What must-have components should a thesis contain for it to be considered as displaying 'doctoral-worthiness'?

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