

Masters and Doctoral Programme in Organisation Consulting



The Ashridge Masters and Doctorate in Organisation Consulting (AMOC/ADOC) is recognised as one of the most innovative and powerful programmes in the field. The programme will build on your existing consulting skills, encouraging self reflection through provocative theory and an innovative approach to learning.

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For further information please contact the programme co-ordinator:
 Tel: +44 (0)1442 841221 | Fax: +44 (0)1442 841260
 Email: acprogrammes@ashridge.org.uk

Introduction

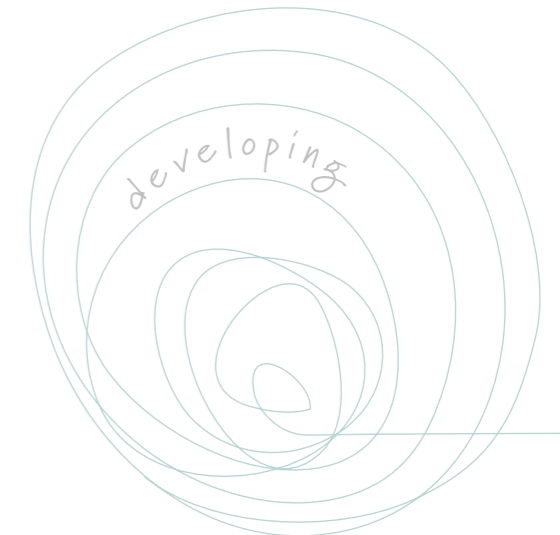
In a world where the demand for managerial qualifications is well served, this programme aims to meet the growing need for a reputable qualification focused on consulting. As organisations face the need to respond to ever more diverse and challenging issues, consultants must learn new ways of working with complex and uncertain situations.

The programme is for professionals who are keen to take their development as 'reflective practitioners' seriously, and for doctoral candidates who seek to make a unique contribution to our understanding and knowledge of consulting. It is designed and delivered by Ashridge Consulting, specialists in organisation development with a global client base. All faculty are practising organisation consultants.

The overall aim of the programme is to:

- Develop participants' understanding of organisations as complex social processes and enhance their ability to handle complex situations
- Develop participants' confidence and effectiveness as reflective practitioners in organisation consulting, and as leaders in their field
- Promulgate organisation consulting as a distinctive and ethical practice
- Promote consulting as a participative act with consequences which may be anticipated but not predicted

- Provide experienced practitioners with a learning forum intended to increase:
 - Their understanding of themselves and the attitudes and beliefs they express through their practice
 - Their effectiveness in working with clients to resolve recurrent problems
- On the doctoral stream – to engage participants in developing their own unique contribution to the field of consulting through a rigorous process of inquiry.

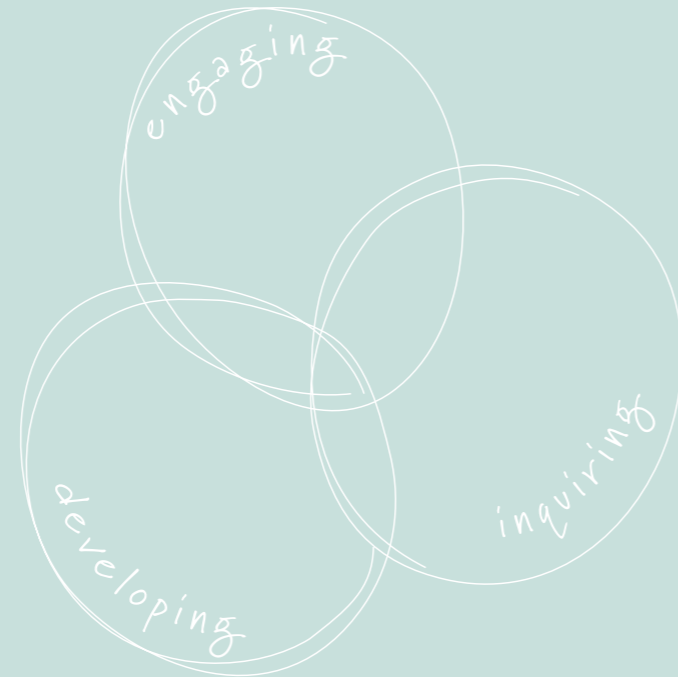


Ashridge Consulting

Ashridge Consulting is an organisation development consultancy with an international client base, specialising in organisation and culture change, strategy engagement, leadership development and talent management. We are part of Ashridge, one of the world's leading business schools.

Our practice is based on the view that organisations are not 'things' which can be known objectively by detached observers. We see organisations as social processes in which everyone, including consultants, is a participant. Hence we focus on how people interact, the forms which conversations take, the emergent patterns and dynamics, and the interplay of stability and change. We engage with our clients in a process of inquiry, we help leaders articulate and convey their strategic intentions, and we encourage staff to take initiatives to help organisations mobilise their innovative potential. We challenge some of the constraints that tend to inhibit creative experimentation and induce risk aversion, such as routine and habitual ways of working, unexamined rules and assumptions, and excessive power differentials.

Our 'expertise' lies in working **with** the social processes in an organisation rather than in imposing pre-formed methods and solutions **on** the organisation.



Programme outcomes

As a programme participant you will:

- Gain broader perspectives on the phenomenon of organising, and a particular understanding of organisations as complex social processes, and the implications of this perspective for leadership, change and organisation consulting
- Heighten your self awareness as an individual and how you engage with and impact on other individuals in the organisational context, and in your role as an organisation consultant
- Increase your understanding of group dynamics and how you typically engage in such processes in organisations
- Increase your ability to work effectively with group and power dynamics in organisations
- Enhance your sense of personal presence and confidence, enabling you to respond appropriately in uncertain and emergent consulting situations
- Increase your competence in designing consulting processes, and facilitating small and large scale events and activities
- Gain a broader awareness of ethical considerations and how you currently and potentially take account of these in your practice
- Add to your understanding of, and ability to work with, various forms of 'action research/action inquiry', thus developing a rigorous basis to your development of self and praxis
- If you choose to go on to take your Doctorate you will explore your 'ways of knowing' in depth, and will develop a rigorous inquiry methodology as the basis for contributing 'new knowledge' to the practice of organisation consulting.

Your sponsoring organisation will:

- Increase its capacity for innovation and change
- Enhance its capacity to respond to today's conditions of uncertainty and complexity
- Increase its organisational capacity for learning and developing
- Benefit throughout the programme, as you apply your learning to its organisational issues and problems
- Grow its internal consulting and organisation development resource.

"You have to go into this programme with an open mind and look upon it as a personal growth and development opportunity, not just a qualification. It challenged and developed me in ways I least expected, and its effect on my consulting practice is easily as strong today as during the programme two and three years ago. It has benefited my practice immeasurably – my clients are delighted at my insight, my contribution and the emergent changes in me as a person in terms of how I consult. My boss says it is the best Return On Investment she has received in 30 years of management."

Trevor Hall,
Vice-President, HR and Organisation,
Hydro Aluminium Metal

Programme outline

The programme, which is offered on a part-time basis only, is designed so that both Masters and Doctoral participants progress through the first three modules (18 months) together. These are the core modules through which participants explore the informing philosophy and theoretical principles which underpin the programme. Participants, in consultation with faculty, will be able to choose whether to take the Masters (AMOC), or whether to go on to the Doctoral level (ADOC).

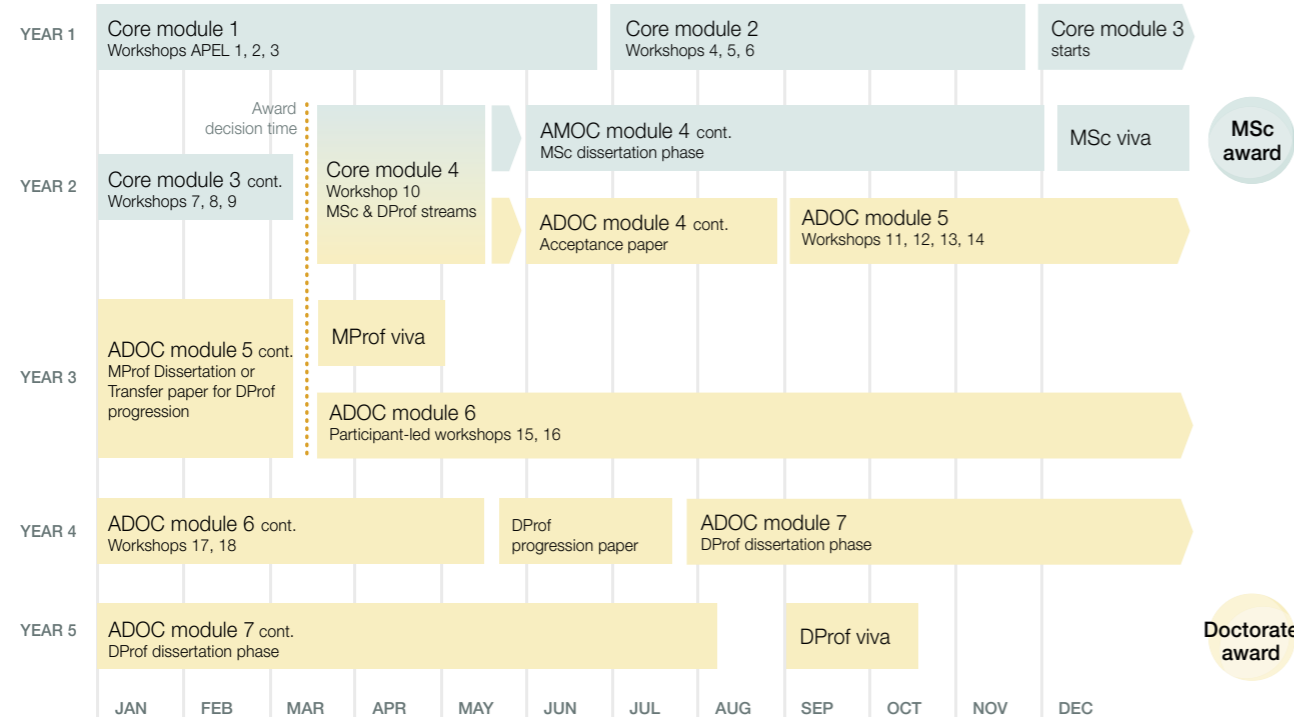
Those completing AMOC will take the last six months of the programme for research and writing up a dissertation (Module 4).

Those choosing to take the Doctorate, or who joined solely for that purpose, will attend the first workshop of Module 4, but will not write a dissertation at this stage. They will complete an acceptance paper in order to move on to the Doctoral stream, which continues for another three and a half years.



Bill Critchley,
Programme Co-director

Programme flow



Core modules

Module 1 provides for reflection on your own experience of organising processes, a design for participating in the forming of a learning organisation, and an introduction to participative inquiry. It also reviews current consulting practice, exploring alternative approaches to the consulting process.

Module 2 explores the programme's informing theories of organisation and change, thus providing an opportunity for you to look at and reflect on your own assumptions and beliefs.

Module 3 offers new and different ways of inquiring into organisations.

Module 4 begins with a conference attended by researchers from other institutions (Workshop 10) which is attended by all participants. Thereafter, the Masters and Doctoral streams diverge. (See page 14 for specific details of the Doctoral stream).

Each module consists of a series of three to four 3-day workshops with different orientations:

- Experiential – focusing on self in the context of an organisation, a group and the programme
- Professional – focusing on consulting capabilities development
- Theoretical – focusing on developing a rich and contemporary framework of processes for organising, learning, changing and consulting, together with participation in a consulting application group (CAG), comprising one-day meetings between workshops. This group provides an opportunity to integrate all the elements of learning into practice.

Who the programme is for

The programme is designed for experienced practitioners who wish to develop their capability in the process of working effectively and successfully in organisations. They will be currently working in an organisation intervention role, such as change agent, manager of change, facilitator, internal consultant or advisor, external organisation or management consultant.

The criteria for entry will normally be:

- First degree or an equivalent academic award, or, for mature individuals without an academic qualification, evidence of appropriate conceptual and study skills
- At least three years' experience in an organisational intervention role
- Ability to reflect on and learn from their own actions, motivation to participate in a peer learning community, and some awareness of their own emotional and behavioural processes.

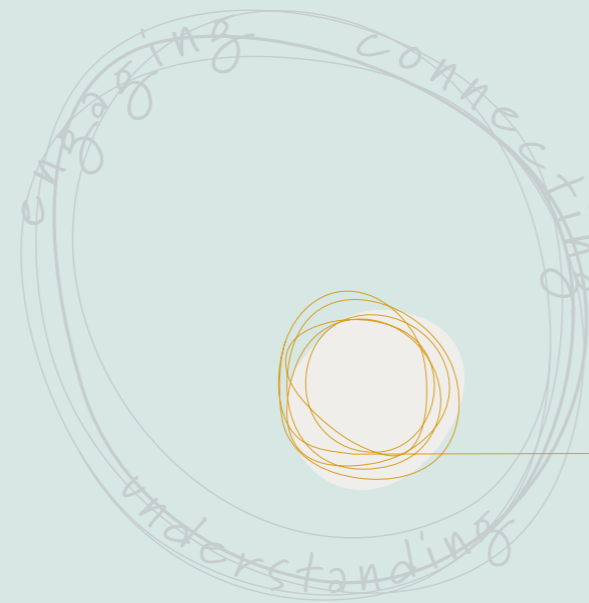
Application process

The application process is designed to enable both you and programme staff to explore and assure a fit between the expectations and demands of the programme and your own needs and capabilities.

It includes:

- Informal presentation on a topic of interest to you
- Group discussion of programme expectations with a tutor
- Interview, group work and networking with other applicants
- An interview with a tutor to assess your experience and readiness to participate in the programme.

Details of the application process, together with the application form for completion by you, and personal recommendation form for completion by two referees, are included with this brochure.



Programme description – AMOC/ADOC core modules

Module 1 – Engaging and inquiring

The purpose of this module is to:

- Enable you to connect fully with the depth and breadth of your experience; to reflect on your achievements, and thereby to develop a realistic sense of your capability and learning potential
- Connect your history and experiences to a newly forming organisation; to gain a sense of yourself as an individual participating in a group with a common purpose of learning; and to develop a sense of the support and possibility provided by a co-created organisation
- Introduce you to the principles of participative inquiry
- Provide a perspective and overview of the learning territory to be covered, and relate this realistically to your current level of capability.

Accreditation of prior experience and learning (APEL)

This is a programme for experienced practitioners, and as such participants will be credited with 30 'credit points' towards a qualification, on providing evidence of the appropriate level of experience and learning. You will already have convinced the faculty during the application process that you come with significant existing skills, knowledge and self-awareness. You will attend a one-and-a-half day briefing workshop where you will be helped to develop a 'storyboard' which contains evidence of your learning so far and will form the first stage of the assessment process. Since this is also the start of the programme, this workshop constitutes the first stage in the process of building the total learning community.

Workshop 1 – Forming organisations

As the programme takes the perspective of organisations as self-organising complex social processes, the workshop will be an analogue of a new and developing organisation with faculty members in a leadership role. The aim of this workshop is to provide you with an experience of participating in the formation and development of the programme organisation. It is an opportunity for you to reflect on your experience of organising processes, how you think about organisations, and on your own style of participating, learning and consulting. During this workshop CAGs will be introduced and formed.

Workshop 2 – Individual inquiry and learning

This workshop will introduce participative inquiry as a methodology to apply to organisation consulting and personal development. You will employ this methodology to investigate both the development of the programme organisation, and your own developmental needs as a member of the organisation. Opportunities to practise facilitation of various learning activities will also be provided.

Workshop 3 – Consulting and designing

This workshop will prompt you to explore rigorously and review your current consulting practice, to clarify the underlying metaphors, values and epistemology of your work, and to share this with other participants. The approaches and assumptions informing the consulting practice within the faculty will be presented, together with opportunities to explore your own design experience.

Programme description continued

Module 2 – Exploring informing theories

This module explores a range of theories broadly located within a social constructionist philosophy. It provides a forum within which you are encouraged to explore your own theories of organisations and consulting, to review your assumptions as they emerge in theoretical conversations and your theories in use as they reflect on your practice with your colleagues. Operating from the view of organisations as dynamic, complex human processes, we will scrutinise established consulting practice and explore alternative approaches to the consulting process. Throughout the module we will utilise the emerging organisation of the programme as an analogue of the issues and processes in client organisations and expect it to represent a rich source of live case material for review.

Using case studies, real client situations, shadow consulting and guided reading, we will explore the interplay of theory and practice and will require you to examine emerging approaches to intervention and participation in organisations.

Workshop 4 – Self and organisations

This workshop is concerned with understanding process in groups and organisations and the interplay between self and other. The learning approach will be primarily experiential and will be based on a relational theory of psychology. It will also be informed by the philosophy and practice of Gestalt with some insights and concepts from the School of Psychodynamics.

Workshop 5 – Complexity and Dialogue

At the heart of the programme is our assumption that organisations are complex networks of relationship and interaction. In this workshop we make a critical assessment of the theories of Complexity and Dialogue that inform that assumption and consider the implications of each for consulting practice. Both place emphasis on the quality of conversation and this workshop will give an extended opportunity to assess how far it is possible to influence thinking in complex environments.

Workshop 6 – Social Construction and Appreciative Inquiry

This workshop will explore the view that our understanding of the world and our participation in it is the consequence of inherited and socially shaped frameworks for making meaning. The challenging implications of this view for our membership of organisations and roles as consultants will be considered. In particular, we will look at Appreciative Inquiry as an approach to consulting practice that has been developed out of these beliefs. The workshop will explore the underlying thinking and methodologies of Appreciative Inquiry and will look at its application through a number of case studies.

Please note: Ashridge has a partnership with the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland Ohio, so this workshop will take place on their campus in the United States. This is part of an exchange arrangement whereby participants from their Masters in Positive Organizational Development programme visit us at Ashridge to participate in a workshop on Complexity, an Open Space conference with AMOC participants and organisational visits.

Module 3 – Integrating

In this module you will begin to integrate your learning about organisations, about the nature of change and about organisation consulting as a profession. It will challenge you to reflect on your role as a facilitator of change, and your relationship to the broader social and ecological contexts within which you live and work. Using the temporary organisation of the programme, you will practise various inquiry and consulting methodologies and examine the congruence of your espoused theories and enacted values, and enhance your consulting skills by participating in the design and facilitation of workshops and CAGs.

Workshop 7 – Emerging theories of organising and change

The main theme of this workshop will be your emerging ways of perceiving and understanding the process of organising and change in organisations. We will draw on your experience of the group as an organising process, as source material; we will invite you to reflect on how it informs your emerging integration of organising theories which you have encountered during your experience of the programme. You will also be asked to review current theories and models of change and consider how your emerging integration is informing your practice.

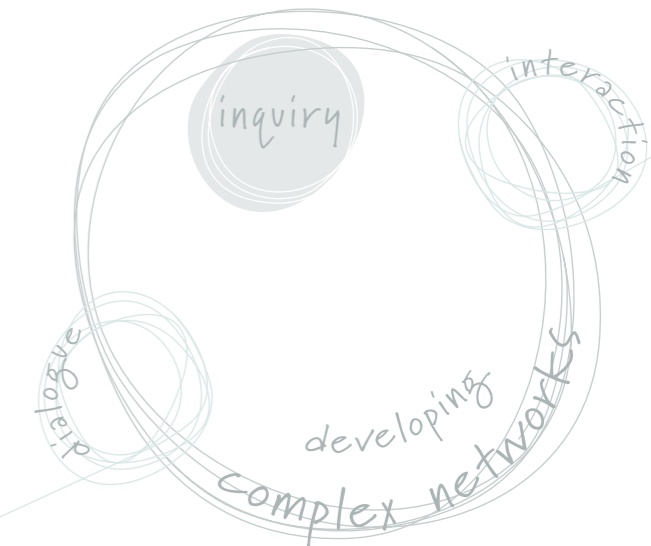
Workshop 8 – Contextual perspectives

In this workshop we deliberately extend the focus of our attention to take in the wider context of an organisation's operation. The overall framework of inquiry will encompass ethical and practical issues associated with corporate globalisation, the relationship of the organisation to its stakeholders and the challenge of ecological sustainability.

Workshop 9 – Emerging consulting praxis

This is the second integrating workshop and focuses on how you are now making sense of yourself as a consulting practitioner. The spirit of the workshop is to offer you an opportunity to integrate the various theoretical frameworks that underpin the AMOC approach to consulting, and to take this integration into your consulting. Opportunities for extensive consulting experimentation and reflection will provide the learning vehicle for this integration.

During this module you will need to decide whether you intend to take the MSc or join the Doctoral stream.



The Masters stream (AMOC)

Module 4 – Dissertation

The final six months are dedicated to developing a dissertation. The dissertation is a culmination and extension of your learning during the programme. It will take the form of a self-directed action research project that represents the development of your practice. During this period, supervisory and peer support is provided by dissertation supervision groups.

Workshop 10 – Action Inquiry

The module is launched with a final workshop which is intended to provide a bridge into the dissertation process. This session will give you an opportunity to present and work with your proposed research question and methodology in a participatory fashion and setting. The workshop includes a conference to which researchers from other business schools are invited to bring their differing perspectives, and provides a lively exchange of ideas and practical support.

Programme process – AMOC

Consulting application groups (CAGs)

CAGs will run throughout the programme with each group consisting of about six members plus a tutor. The purpose of CAGs is to:

- Support the development of your professional and personal capabilities throughout the duration of the programme
- Enable you to clarify your learning purpose and review your learning experience
- Provide a forum for peer review, and peer assessment of some assignments
- Provide an opportunity for sharing, reflecting on, and dealing with issues, concerns or problems arising in the workplace or on the programme
- Link theory and practice by exploring your real-life organisational issues
- Provide opportunities for group facilitation practice, and the development of 'shadow consulting' skills.

Tutorial support

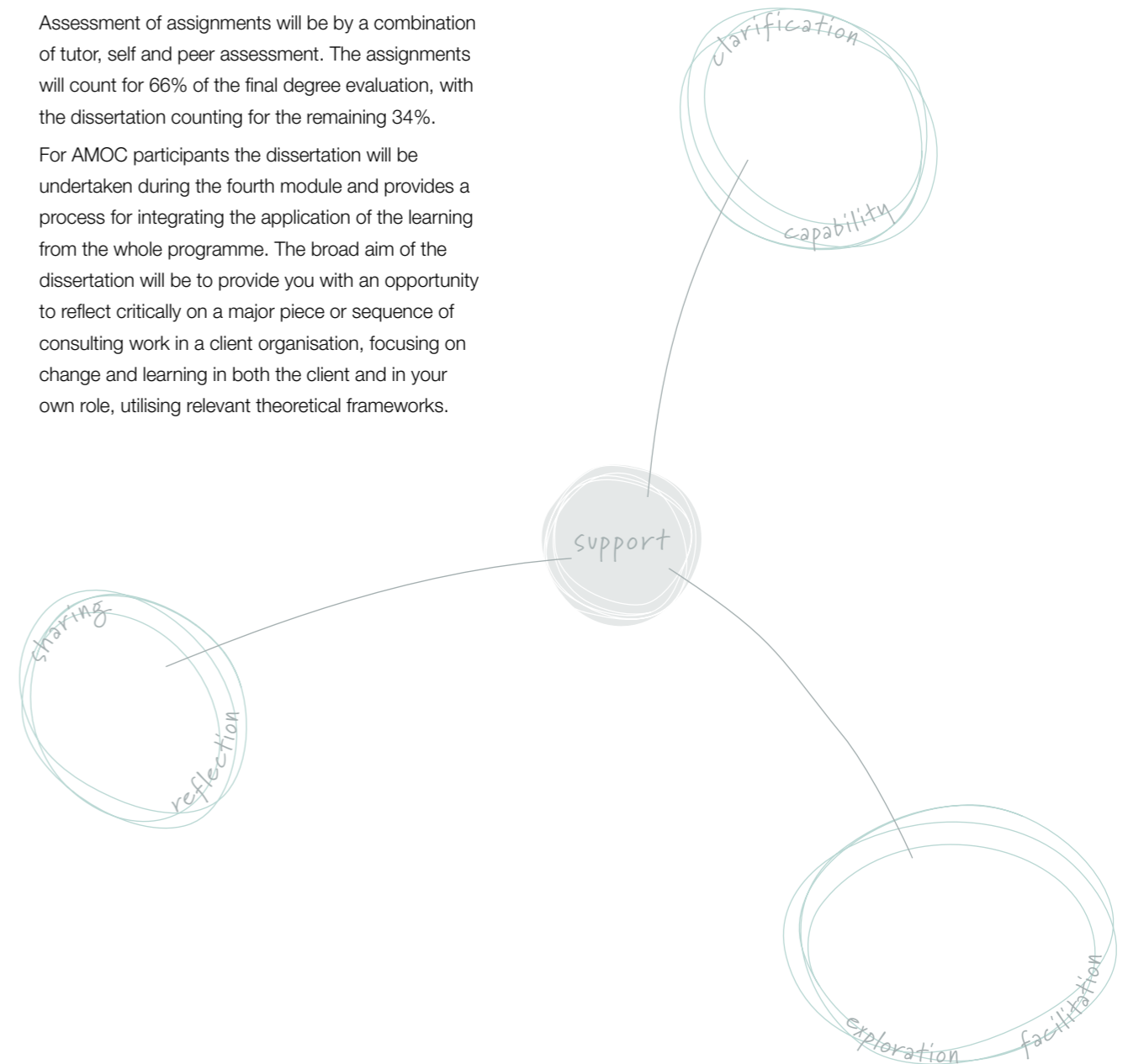
You will have access to an individual tutor who will provide you with support and supervision in exploring theoretical perspectives and developing theoretical integration.

Assessment

You will be expected to complete a series of assignments as the programme progresses. Detailed guidance on assessment requirements and criteria are given in the Participant Handbook, and opportunities to discuss these with your personal tutor will be available.

Assessment of assignments will be by a combination of tutor, self and peer assessment. The assignments will count for 66% of the final degree evaluation, with the dissertation counting for the remaining 34%.

For AMOC participants the dissertation will be undertaken during the fourth module and provides a process for integrating the application of the learning from the whole programme. The broad aim of the dissertation will be to provide you with an opportunity to reflect critically on a major piece or sequence of consulting work in a client organisation, focusing on change and learning in both the client and in your own role, utilising relevant theoretical frameworks.



The Doctoral stream (ADOC)

Application process

In the course of Module 3, described on page 11, you will need to decide whether you will complete the Masters' dissertation for the MSc award, or seek to proceed to Doctoral level. Should you decide to proceed with the Doctorate, you will be expected to engage with your tutor and a member of the Doctorate faculty in a conversation about your readiness to do so. AMOC alumni will need to apply separately, and will be interviewed by members of the Doctorate faculty.

Programme description

The Doctorate programme seeks to establish an active community of consulting practitioners who, individually and collaboratively, contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of organisation consulting. Together with faculty, they will engage in the systematic development of knowing, through a further series of workshops and master classes, supported by consulting/research supervision groups. This programme requires a further three and a half years study, subsequent to completion of Module 3.

The programme is validated by Middlesex University. The Doctoral stream is subject to academic approval that is currently underway.

Module 4 – Acceptance paper

This module forms the transition between the MSc and the first level of the professional doctorate qualification (MProf). Participants who seek to continue beyond MSc level will be expected to transfer to MProf level in the first instance, with the option to exit with an MProf, or continue on the Doctoral route. For participants proceeding beyond the MSc, Module 4 is dedicated to developing a broad outline of their inquiry, its topic, methodology, and anticipated field of theory in which they expect to ground their inquiry.

Workshop 10 – Action inquiry

This module is launched with a workshop which is intended to provide a transition into the next phase of learning. The session, attended by both MSc and Doctoral candidates, will give you the opportunity to present and work with your proposed research question and methodology in a participatory fashion and setting. The workshop includes a conference to which researchers from other business schools are invited to bring their differing perspectives, and provides a lively exchange of ideas and practical support. On the third day of this workshop, Doctoral candidates will form supervision groups with their Doctoral supervisors.

Following the workshop, you will work, with the support of your supervision group and supervisor, to produce an acceptance paper.

Module 5 – Developing inquiries and presenting experience

This module consists of four 3-day workshops designed to combine group inquiries with particular aspects of consulting through relevant methodologies. The third day of each workshop is dedicated to reviewing your written work and overall progress in your supervision group.

The overall intention of this module is to equip you with sufficient understanding of your area of inquiry, of its content and of your intended research methodology to support progress to the Doctoral level.

The responsibility for design of the first workshop rests with ADOC faculty. The subsequent three workshops will be designed by selected participants and faculty, according to their focus of interest, to provide a combination of methodological and content insight.

At the end of this module participants continuing on the Doctoral stream will be expected to produce a transfer paper.

Participants choosing to exit with an MProf qualification will present their MProf dissertation at this stage and have a final viva.

Module 6 – Formulating and testing propositions

Module 6 consists of four participant-led workshops. The aims of this module are to develop emerging propositions about the practice of consulting which have the potential to contribute new knowledge to the field. These emerging propositions will be presented in the course of the workshops to test them with peers.

By the end of the module, you will be expected to produce a 'progression paper', which clearly documents your research process, outlines the qualities with which you claim to have undertaken your research and the impact it has had on your consulting practice to date.

Module 7 – Writing up and practical implications

In this module you will write up your experience, your inquiry process and method, your proposition, and its implications for your practice. You will work largely on your own, with regular meetings with your supervisor to assess progress. At this stage supervision groups will meet depending on individuals' preferences and progress. When the supervisor and participant agree that the paper is ready, it will go forward to a viva.

Programme process – ADOC

Supervision groups

The supervision groups will run at least until Module 7, after which they become optional. These groups will provide you with support and challenge in your inquiries. You will use this opportunity to explore your topics, methodological and epistemological issues, theoretical grounding and presentational form. Together with the large group gatherings at the workshops, it is intended that these smaller supervision groups will contribute to making this Doctorate programme a less lonely journey than is often traditionally the case.

Tutorial support

You will have access to an individual tutor who will provide support and supervision in epistemological and methodological issues and in ensuring that your inquiry develops towards a unique contribution to the field of consulting.

Assessment

Main assessment points and methods have been outlined above.



Ashridge is located 50 kilometres north-west of London, near Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire, within easy reach of London's four international airports: Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton and Stansted; and the main railway and motorway networks.

A detailed map and directions can be downloaded from www.ashridge.org.uk/map