

Faculty of Health

Postgraduate Research Handbook

2020/21

Faculty Research Support Team
20/11/2020

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Introduction

This booklet and the accompanying Canvas site are intended for Post Graduate Research students and their supervisors. Each research student is appointed a Lead Supervisor and additional co-supervisors. The purpose of this booklet is to provide a guide that supports the student and their supervisors through the post graduate research degrees processes within the Faculty and University

Starting a research degree can feel disorientating. Unlike a taught course, there are no specific guidelines for written work, no lectures, and no tailored reading lists. Research for a higher degree, however, is an exciting, intellectual and highly valuable experience – it will be a journey unique to you. We hope that this booklet will help you get the most out of your experience as a Post Graduate Research student

In addition to the support you will receive from your supervisors, the University provides additional activities that will assist you in your period of study. The Faculty organises seminars and discussion groups that will provide you with opportunities to think about your research and hosts classes in research methodologies, to support you in developing your study. Further details on these seminars/classes is provided later in this booklet and information is also distributed throughout the year. Please ensure that you access your LJMU email address regularly to ensure that you are kept up to date.

The procedures described in this handbook are designed to ensure you undertake both high quality research and successfully complete your study on time. Here you will find details of the Faculty's policies and Code of Practice for all graduate students and their supervisors. The Handbook also contains the procedures for assessing students' progress and the quality of research.

All Post Graduate students should study the University regulations which may be obtained from the Doctorate Academy website at <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/research/doctoral-academy/current-research-students>

List of Abbreviations

Below is a list of all the abbreviations that are found within this document.

FRDC	Faculty Research Degrees Committee
FT	Full-Time
LJMU	Liverpool John Moores University
NHS	National Health Service
PG	Postgraduate
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PHI	Public Health Institute
NAH	School of Nursing and Allied Health
PSY	School of Psychology
PT	Part-Time
REC	Research Ethics Committee
UKVI	UK Visas and Immigration
URDC	University Research Degrees Committee

Faculty Overview

The Faculty of Health, is home to over 3000 students and is a centre for education and research with a recognised national and international profile. The faculty delivers an innovative, evidence-based portfolio of programmes, internationally renowned research and diverse national and international collaborative projects. The Faculty webpage is available online at <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/faculties/faculty-of-health>.

Important Contacts

FRDC Chair



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PGR Co-ordinators:



Public Health Institute:

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School of Nursing and Allied Health:

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School of Psychology:

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Faculty Research Support Team:

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Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC)

To administer the PGR programmes of study, the Faculty has a Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC). The dates for this academic year's FRDC are listed below. Other special meetings are arranged as necessary. The Committee has a formal role in assuring the quality of research undertaken by postgraduate research students in the Faculty and for monitoring student progression. It is also a forum to support and develop supervisors as academic mentors and enables issues raised by the postgraduate student body to be formally acknowledged and addressed where possible.

Student representation is invited from each school and each of the postgraduate research degree programmes (Masters in Research [MRes], MPhil/PhD, Prof Doc), for agenda items relating to student matters. The FRDC members are members of academic staff who will be Professors, Readers or active researchers. Other members of academic staff may be asked to attend meetings of the Committee as specialist advisors or for special topics as required by the Committee.

Deadline for submission of applications	FRDC Meeting Date
2 September 2020	9 September 2020
19 December 2020	6 January 2021
24 March 2021	31 March 2021
16 June 2021	23 June 2021

LJMU Research Ethics Committee

Liverpool John Moores University is committed to maintaining high ethical standards in the research undertaken by its staff and students. Research ethics ensures the safety, dignity and rights of research participants whilst providing assurance that research is being conducted within an ethical framework as outlined in LJMU Code of Practice for Research

It is a fundamental requirement of LJMU that all projects undertaken by University staff or students receive approval from an appropriate LJMU or Health Research Authority Ethics Committee before any recruitment commences.

You can find online ethics resources on Canvas, LJMU's virtual learning environment. The ethics materials are located in the Researcher Development course, which can be accessed at <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/enroll/8FXP4Y>. It consists of two tests on the principles of research ethics and the Declaration of Helsinki. These need to be completed by all Researchers, and the certificate should be retained as it may be required at a later date by external contacts.

Useful contacts:

Mandy Williams (LJMU Research Ethics Committee Secretary) – a.f.williams@ljmu.ac.uk; 0151 231 6467
Dr Dave Harriss (LJMU Research Ethics and Governance Manager) – d.harriss@ljmu.ac.uk

NHS Research Ethics and Research Passport

The process for obtaining NHS Ethics and NHS Research Passport are currently being reviewed but once approved will be added to the FHE PGR Canvas site <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/courses/19978>

Researcher Development Programme

Undertaking a research project requires an extensive range of skills and attributes. Some of these you will learn as you go, and develop with support from your Supervisory team, but you can also take advantage of a wealth of Researcher Development opportunities designed specifically for postgraduate researchers.

The Doctoral Academy offer a full range of personal, professional and career development opportunities through the Researcher Development Programme. Further information can be found within the following link <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy/researcher-development>

Entrepreneurial Researcher Sessions

LJMU Library's Research Support team has a programme of events to promote research at LJMU and to help develop your research profile and development. All events are free but booking is required.

For more information or to book a place at an event, click on the link below <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/library/research-support-and-outputs>

If you have any further questions, please email Katherine Stephan on: k.d.stephan@ljmu.ac.uk

Postgraduate/Staff Research Seminars

The Postgraduate Research Seminars series within each School provide postgraduate students and staff within the Faculty of Health with an opportunity to present and discuss their research in an informal and relaxed forum. Dates for the seminars for 2020-2021 are available via the canvas site. Invitations and further information will be sent out via email from the research support team prior to each seminar.

Our research students are encouraged to raise their individual profile as researchers. You may wish to use your Symplectic Profile to record details of any publications you have or your professional activities. Symplectic is the University's research repository and the details you enter here will inform your profile on the University webpages. You can access symplectic at <https://symplectic.ljmu.ac.uk/> and log in using your normal LJMU log in

During your time at LJMU, you will have plenty of opportunities to communicate your research to a wide range of audiences. You are encouraged to present at research group, School and Faculty events, including Faculty Research Days in June. The University also runs the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition which challenges PGRs to present the key message of their research in an engaging way. Winners from the Faculty 3MT heats go on to an LJMU final, with the overall winner being entered for the UK competition.

In addition to the 3MT, The Doctoral Academy holds an annual conference where you will have the chance to present your research to researchers from other Schools and Faculties, and get involved with organising, chairing and judging sessions. The Library also run an annual programme of Research Cafes, informal events where established academics, PhD students and early career researchers can discuss and debate their research ideas.

Faculty Research Conference 2021

The Annual Faculty Research Conference will showcase the research undertaken by faculty academics and research students over the previous year. You will be given the opportunity to present your work via either oral presentation or a poster presentation. Invitations and further information will be emailed to all in the new academic year

3i's

During your time here, you may be keen to gain teaching experience to enhance your employability. If you are going to be teaching or demonstrating within your School, you must first complete the 3is – Information, Ideas and Insights module delivered by the Teaching and Learning Academy, contact TLA3is@ljmu.ac.uk for details.

LJMU also has a researcher development partnership with The Brilliant Club, which offers another route into gaining teaching experience. The Brilliant Club is an award winning charity that recruits, trains and pays Doctoral and Postdoctoral Researchers to deliver programmes of University-style teaching to small tutorial groups of school pupils, in order to increase participation in Higher Education. You can apply all year round through the website www.thebrilliantclub.org

Teaching or Research Support

PGR Students are able to spend a maximum of 6 hours per week providing teaching support or engaging in additional research studies that are outside the remit of your PhD. These activities should be aligned to your professional development needs and as such they must be agreed with your Lead Supervisor. However, any additional activity must not have any detrimental impact on your ability to meet your progression milestones.

Publications

All research students are strongly encouraged to publish the results of their work in collaboration with their Lead Supervisor and supervisory team. The Faculty has recently approved a process of authorship (see Appendix I for further details) which is good practice for all students and staff when publishing their work. If the student has not published from their study within 12 months of completion, the supervisory team have authority to access the data and publish the study findings.

eDoc

eDoc is the University's online platform unique to PGRs.

Your dashboard will assist you to record Supervisory meetings, construct a development portfolio and work to progression milestone deadlines. All PGRs are required to manage their studies via, eDoc. eDoc is the University's progression monitoring system and it supports a shared understanding of the doctoral journey, the policies and regulations that govern it and the common reference to progression stages.

Access to eDoc is linked to your University email account. All our communications with you, including alerts issued via eDoc, will be sent to your University email account. Please ensure that you check this email account on a regular basis, or make arrangements for all communication received via this account to be forwarded to an alternative address. In addition, you are encouraged to use eDoc to produce a Research Training Review and record details of Supervisory meetings.

Each process associated with your progress is linked to a workflow within eDoc and most require your input or that of your Supervisory team, or FRDC in order to reach their conclusion.

Postgraduate Researcher Responsibilities

What it means to be a PGR at LJMU, the responsibilities of the role, what we expect of you, and what you can expect from Supervisors and Support Staff is outlined in the LJMU Postgraduate Researcher Handbook, pg 16-17, which can be found on the FHE PGR Canvas site <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/courses/19978>

You and Your Supervisors

At the very start of your research degree ensure you know who your Supervisors are and their individual roles in relation to your project. Both you and your Supervisory team have specific responsibilities, and it is important that you understand what these are if your working relationship is to be effective.

More detailed advice can be found in the LJMU Postgraduate Researcher Handbook, pg 18-23, which can be found on the FHE PGR Canvas site <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/courses/19978>

Your Doctoral Journey

A brief guide to the different stages of the Doctoral Researcher's journey can be found in the LJMU Postgraduate Researcher Handbook, pg 29-37, which can be found on the FHE PGR Canvas site <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/courses/19978>. You are encouraged to read this in conjunction with the University's Research Degrees Framework.

Additional Faculty guidance on the Confirmation process can be found on the same canvas site.

When things don't go to plan

Every research student experiences times during their degree when things do not go to plan. Sometimes it is something directly connected with their research or thesis; other times it is more personal. It is important to approach problems positively and you should seek help immediately:

- acknowledge the problem and its real significance
- identify what you need to do to overcome the problem
- report the problem and your proposed solution to your Supervisor and be open to any feedback they may have on this
- put into action the solution agreed with your Supervisor, try to catch up on any time lost, and learn from the experience so that you can avoid similar problems in future

Leave of Absence

You may need to pause your research owing to a change in circumstances. It is important that you inform your Lead Supervisor as soon as you think you may need to take a leave of absence, as they cannot be requested retrospectively. You may request a Leave of Absence for periods between one and twelve months via eDoc.

Changing Mode of Study

Plans and circumstances change, so you may find that you need to change from full to part-time, and vice versa. It is important that you action a change in mode of study as a matter of urgency, as the progression milestones and tuition fees will be recalculated. Below are some helpful things to consider:

- All requests are considered on a case by case basis; it is not always possible to permit a change of mode of study.
- Advice and guidance should be sought from your Lead Supervisor and University support services to understand how a change might affect your individual circumstances, such as Tuition Fees, Scholarship/Studentships, eligibility for tax free stipends and Tier 4 visa requirements.
- PGRs who have enrolled as 'Thesis Pending' may not request a change to their mode of study.
- Requests for retrospective changes will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Changes cannot be backdated to a previous academic year.

Applications to request a change in mode of study should be made via eDoc

Withdrawal and Termination

In the event that you choose to withdraw from your programme of research, you should inform your Supervisors or The Doctoral Academy in the first instance.

A doctoral research programme may be terminated by the University if the Research Degrees Committee finds that a researcher has made unsatisfactory progress, failed to engage with annual monitoring, or to maintain contact with the University or to settle outstanding fees. Provision exists for PGRs to make representations under the Complaints Procedure.

International Students

LJMU has been granted a licence by the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) to teach international students. UKVI has granted LJMU a “Highly Trusted Sponsor” Licence.

In order to maintain our right to teach international students, we are required to comply with the regulations set out by UKVI under the terms of our licence. LJMU is required to report to UKVI on all of our Tier 4 international students with regard to their enrolment; attendance and engagement; absence and completion.

Students are also required to comply with UKVI regulations.

This document outlines the responsibilities of LJMU as well as your responsibilities as a Tier 4 student and it is recommended that you read it carefully specifically where it refers to the following areas:

- Submission of Documents
- Failure to Enrol within the deadline
- Withdrawing or suspending your studies
- Changes in your personal circumstances, updating contact details
- Unauthorised absences and Attendance Monitoring
- Visa Extensions
- Employment
- Changing Immigration Category

Further Information can be found at <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/student/registry-services/further-information-for-international-students/your-visa-responsibilities>.

Please note that all monitoring forms should be sent to the Faculty Research Support team at EHC-RIS-Team@ljmu.ac.uk

Working Hours, Travel and Expenses

Hours of Work and Holidays

Research students must treat their research as a full/part-time occupation, which is demanding both of time and personal commitment. There are no specific hours of work or holiday entitlement, these must be agreed between student and Lead Supervisor. However, it is expected that normally students will work in the Faculty for a substantial part of the “standard” office hours so that they may interact with other students and their Lead Supervisor, and that they will take holidays of modest duration. It cannot be emphasised enough that timely completion of a thesis for a research degree requires the establishment of a satisfactory working pattern at an early stage.

Travel and Equipment Budget (Bench Fees/Running Costs)

If you are in receipt of a fully-funded studentship, you will have available, a modest annual budget which can be used for travel, conference fees, professional development activities or items of direct use in your research.

The process for booking the above along with the PGR Student Conference, Meetings, Travel and Accommodation Form can be found in the PGR Expenses Process section of the FHE PGR Canvas site <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/courses/19978>

Any expenses incurred outside of the above process can be claimed via the Student Bursary Form, also provided.

Having Your Say

Your feedback on your research degree experience is important to us. It helps The Doctoral Academy and the FRDC to identify areas for improvement.

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is the only national survey of research students. We run PRES bi-annually and all research students who have completed at least three months of registration are invited to participate. Your candour is welcome and student feedback in the past has helped to shape many recent changes to postgraduate research at the University.

Schools and Faculties have dedicated research student representatives who sit on research degree committees. If you have any concerns about the research environment or resources available to you, your research student representative will be able to raise matters on your behalf. The Doctoral Academy adopts a consultative process of engaging PGRs in the design of the researcher support programme.

Our aim is to involve PGRs in decision making through a series of regular informal meetings. This enables PGR representatives to comment on all aspects of PGR training requirements and to co- design a calendar of events and opportunities to support your skills development. 'Reps' usually act for one or two academic years.

Problems, Complaints and Appeals

In most instances problems or complaints can be resolved quickly and efficiently with the support, involvement or intervention of your Supervisory team and/ or Department – but we recognise that this will not always be possible. For this reason, the University has official procedures that allow eligible cases to be formally reviewed.

If you are dissatisfied with any element of your research degree programme or supervision, you should discuss any concerns at the time they occur and prior to submission of your thesis for examination. You should discuss any such concerns with your Supervisory team in the first instance. Research students who are dissatisfied with the response of their Supervisory team should take their concerns to the Postgraduate Research Coordinator for their school or the Head of the Department.

You are expected to take the initiative in raising any difficulties you may encounter. If you are having difficulties it is important that you act quickly and discuss the matter with your Supervisory team as it is usually possible to put matters right without you losing valuable research time.

Should you wish, you may also seek independent advice from Liverpool John Moores Students' Union www.jmsu.co.uk PGRs are expected to exhaust all avenues of local, early informal resolution before initiating any formal complaint, review or appeal processes. In the first instance, PGRs should consult and seek the advice of the PGR Coordinator in their School. Although they might not be able to solve the problem directly, he or she might be able to intervene, or at least offer suitable advice about how to proceed or where to go for assistance or advice.

Student Advice and Wellbeing

Student Advice and Wellbeing offers confidential, professional advice and support with any personal, emotional or mental health problems that you may experience whilst at the University.

The Team offer advice, support and information particularly in the areas of finance, disability, study support, accommodation, health, wellbeing and counselling. They run a dedicated PhD Student Support Group, which meets on the first Tuesday of every month, 5.30- 7pm, in the counselling service rooms in the Aquinas Building.

Student Advice and Wellbeing also have international student advisers who can help with any queries about visas and attendance. They can be contacted on internationaladvice@ljmu.ac.uk

Library Services

Library Services offer dynamic research support tailored to your needs, access to subject resources and superb study facilities.

They support the entire research lifecycle. This means offering advice and training on finding resources, data planning and management, copyright, referencing software, as well as publishing support. They support the Open Access agenda, facilitate the university's Data and Publications Repositories in addition to managing the e-Thesis Service.

For further help and advice see:

ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/library/research-support-and-outputs

Library Research Support Team: LST_research_support@ljmu.ac.uk @LJMURearch
ljmuresearchsupport.wordpress.com

Careers

The Careers Service offer tailored advice and training for PGRs.

They run weekly PGR drop-in services at the Careers Zones at Byrom Street on Tuesdays, 1.30-3.30pm and at Aldham Roberts Library on Wednesdays, 1.30-3.30pm, or you can make one-to-one appointments for alternative times by calling 0151 231 3719/2048.

Careers advisers can provide feedback on your CVs and applications and provide interview advice. You will also find a number of careers workshops for PGRs throughout the year run as part of the Researcher Development Programme.