# LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Science

# POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH HANDBOOK 2023/24

# Contents

# Welcome to the Faculty of Science

Dear Postgraduate Researchers,

Welcome to the Faculty of Science, located on the Byrom Street Campus of LJMU. This is one of the largest Faculties in the university and has a major concentration of research.  It is important to know the structure and key staff within the Faculty.

Contact details for these staff are listed below:

- **Professor Laura Bishop – Faculty PVC of Science**
  E-Mail: L.C.Bishop@ljmu.ac.uk
- **Professor Bill Baltzopoulos – Associate Dean for Research and Knowledge Exchange**
  Telephone: +44 (0) 151 904-6272; E-Mail: V.Baltzopoulos@ljmu.ac.uk
- **Professor Mark Hollands – Chair of Faculty Research Degrees Committee**
- Telephone: +44 (0) 151 904 6254; E-Mail: M.A.Hollands@ljmu.ac.uk
- **Aly Leigh – Faculty Operations Manager**
- Telephone: +44 (0) 151 231 2242; E-Mail: A.J.Leigh@ljmu.ac.uk

**Faculty RBISU Team**

The Faculty Research and Business Information Support Unit (RBISU) are primarily responsible for providing a quality service for all aspects of postgraduate research administration. Please use the following email addresses to contact members of this team, for queries regarding:

Postgraduate research applications and enrolment: PGRAdmissions@ljmu.ac.uk

Postgraduate researcher (PGR) progress (including registration, annual monitoring, examination) and the PGR Community site: SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk

Stipend issues: SCSStipends@ljmu.ac.uk

Making a claim for expenses: SCSPGRExpenses@ljmu.ac.uk

Advertising your study to recruit participants: SCSResearchParticipants@ljmu.ac.uk

For all other queries, please contact: SCS-BIU@ljmu.ac.uk

## School structures and key staff

The Faculty currently supports Postgraduate Researchers in three Schools; Biological and Environmental Sciences (BES); Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences (PBS) and Sport and Exercise Sciences (SPS) each with its own distinctive identity and containing different research institutes, centres and groups:

Research in the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences

Research in the School of Biological and Environmental Sciences

Research in the School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences

We aim to achieve consistency in the PGR experience across-School and subject areas. Each School has a PGR staff representative as well as PGR student representative who are a primary source of initial support for you and link to your supervisory team and the Faculty Research and Business Information Support Unit. Staff PGR reps are responsible for a local School induction that will support the formal induction you have with the Faculty at an early point, just after enrolment.

Upon enrolment, you should arrange to meet with your Staff Rep to discuss specific School key facilities and support staff as well as documenting office space and IT support. Staff Reps for each School are key members of the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-Group Committee. The FRDSGC are expected to ensure adherence to the University's Regulations for Level 8 awards and have a responsibility for promotion and the development of PGR culture and community.

FRDSGC members for 2023/24 (to be confirmed) are as follows:

**Staff Representatives**

| | |
|---|---|
| Prof Mark Hollands | Chair/ Sport and Exercise Sciences Rep (SPS) |
| Andrew Rowlands | Secretary |
| Dr Lawrence Foweather | Sport and Exercise Sciences (SPS) *alternate* |
| Prof Claudia Mettke-Hofmann | Biological and Environmental Sciences (BES)/ Deputy Chair |
| Prof Peter Falkingham | Biological and Environmental Sciences (BES) |
| Dr Francesca Giuntini | Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences (PBS) *alternate* |

Dr Kenneth Ritchie                  Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences (PBS) *alternate*

Alison Leigh                        Faculty Head of Operations

Lina Pierce                         Research Degrees Manager, Doctoral Academy

**PGR (Student) Representatives\***

Listed on [this page](#) of the PGR Community site (please contact [SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk) if you are having issues with accessing this site).

**\***For details on how to become a PGR Rep, please speak to your School Staff Rep.

The Faculty has the highest number of PGRs in the University and prides itself on its research quality and successes.  Whilst most of your day-to-day activity and support will come locally in your School/Institute this document seeks to lay out general information related to your time as a PGR at LJMU and how the Faculty and University can support your development and growth.  Fundamentally, success is based on hard work and clear communication hence the focus in this handbook is on rules, regulations, codes of conduct and roles & responsibilities for staff and PGRs.  This document is an important resource that you should keep with you throughout your time at LJMU.  It is important for you to know lines of communication, support options, milestones of progress and organisational structures (e.g., the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-Group Committee that oversees student registration and links to the University Research Degrees Committee).

Our PGR are a very vibrant, diverse and important part of our Faculty's student body who make a huge contribution to meeting our Strategic Research goals.  Our PGR are crucial for our research identity and culture, and we continue to seek ways to increase numbers and quality.  Consequently, we wish to get feedback from you on a regular basis to enhance our support and your experience.  Finally, along with the Doctoral Academy within the University we arrange various events and activities for PGRs and we hope that you will participate in and contribute to these. There will be opportunities to acquire a range of skills and experience over and above your research studies which we hope you will take advantage of.

[The Doctoral Academy](#) is located on the first floor of the Aquinas Building, contact details are as follows:

**General Enquiries**: [DoctoralAcademy@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:DoctoralAcademy@ljmu.ac.uk)

**Examination queries:** [PGRExaminations@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:PGRExaminations@ljmu.ac.uk)

**Telephone Enquiries:** (0151) 904 6375

Liverpool is a wonderful, friendly city with a great deal to offer – excellent art galleries, music venues, cinemas, and theatre as well as a myriad of sporting opportunities.  The Faculty is located close to many of these, and right at the heart of what is now known as the city's 'knowledge quarter'.  We hope you will enjoy and make the most of your time in Liverpool at LJMU.

If you have any queries which you feel are not addressed or which you cannot find, please do not hesitate to contact your Director of Studies. I very much hope that you will enjoy your studies with us.

**Prof Mark Hollands**

Chair of FRDSGC, Faculty of Science

# Getting Started

We are very pleased to welcome you to the Faculty of Science at LJMU. Whether you have been with us as an undergraduate or Masters Student, or if you are joining us from elsewhere, the years that lie ahead of you will be both exciting and demanding. We know your decision to join the postgraduate community at LJMU is an important step for you, and our role is to assist you in achieving your academic and personal goals.

Postgraduate research is usually very different from the kind of study you have previously undertaken. We recognise that the first few weeks of a research degree programme can be challenging, and this handbook is designed to assist you in finding your way around the Schools/Institutes, the Faculty, the University as well as navigating the initial stages of your MPhil/PhD programme.

Your overall programme of work will be linked to **eDoc**, an online management system for PGR students. We will provide supporting for using this system. You can access eDoc here.

eDoc quick start guides are available here.

eDoc training workshops are available from the Doctoral Academy. To book onto a workshop, please follow this link.

Should you have any queries, please contact: SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk.

This handbook for MPhil/PhD students and their supervisors contains advice about mandatory procedures as well as information about support and facilities. Please retain this handbook for reference during your course. You will find that you need to refer to it for guidance and explanations throughout your research programme. However, it should be read in conjunction with several documents and guidelines. You should bookmark the following webpages:

- LJMU's Research Degrees Framework (Academic Regulations for Research Degrees Research Degree Policies and Milestones)
- Student Policy and Regulations
- PGR Journey Explained (from confirmation of registration to examination and any changes you might need to make along the way)

In addition to this handbook, and web link references, the Faculty have developed a **PGR Community site** – a 'one stop shop' for all your PGR queries. You can access this community site via this link.

Should you have any queries or suggestions relating to the PGR Community site, please contact: SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk.

Finally, please remember that we are here to provide the support and advice you need first to settle in and then to get the most out of your studies. If anything is unclear, or if you need advice on any points regarding procedures or regulations for your research degree programme, please contact your Lead Supervisor in the first instance.

# Faculty of Science PGR Enrolment / Induction and your student record

## Enrolment/Re-enrolment

If you are a new student to the University, you will have completed online enrolment according to our new self-service system of enrolment.

**All continuing PGR students**: Upon the anniversary of your start date you must complete the on-line enrolment procedure at the start of the academic year. For information see Academic Regulations for Research Degrees.

Continued enrolment is subject to satisfactory progress through the Policy for Reviewing the Progress of Postgraduate Research Students.

We ask you to keep us informed of your up-to-date address, telephone/mobile numbers, and e-mail address. Please keep your contact details up to date by visiting MYLJMU.

Please contact Registry Services if you have any queries relating to your student record and amending personal data etc.

It is also important to check your University email account regularly since you will receive regular email alerts and details of important events.

## Inductions

The compulsory induction sessions for all PGRs involves the following:

- Faculty Induction (information received from SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk).
- School Induction with your Staff PGR Rep or Lead Supervisor (Please refer to your offer letter for details of your school induction).
- Health and Safety Induction (information received from SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk).
- University welcome event organised by the Doctoral Academy.

These events are designed to help all new PGRs familiarise themselves with life as a research student at Liverpool John Moores University and the Faculty. The University welcome event covers many different aspects of life as a research student and provides an opportunity for you to meet your fellow researchers and ask any questions regarding your study.  PGR students will get the chance to meet, hear and ask questions of a variety of service teams that support them (library services) as well as hear about researcher development and funding opportunities, student union activities as well as student advice and well-being resources.

Completion of your student faculty, health and safety and school inductions is mandatory for all newly enrolled students and your programme approval for MPhil or PhD cannot be authorised without evidence of attendance.

Details regarding the University welcome event will be available via this Researcher Development Programme information page.

## Your supervisory team – roles and responsibilities

When you begin your MPhil/PhD with us, you will be allocated a **Lead Supervisor** or **Primary Supervisor** who is an expert in your chosen field of research. This person will likely be known to you through your previous study, your application and/or your visits to school web pages.  Your Lead Supervisor will be the most important person during your time at LJMU and they will be responsible for assisting you with your academic work and for monitoring your progress throughout your programme. For all your academic queries your Lead/Primary Supervisor should be the first point of call.

In addition to your Lead/Primary Supervisor, one or two other academics will form part of your supervisory team. The role of the **co-supervisors** is to support your academic development and to provide additional advice on your research. On occasions a supervisor or an advisor may be sought from another institution and this often occurs when there is a formal external collaborative partner in your research project.

It is essential to know what your supervisors expect of you and what you in turn can expect from your supervisors. It is in everyone's interest to ensure that the relationship works well and, in order to assist in this, supervisory arrangements, including the roles and responsibilities of students and supervisors, at LJMU are governed by the [Policy for the Supervision of Research Degrees](#).

Broadly speaking, you can expect your supervisors to advise you on a range of academic matters and to keep you informed about how far your work meets the standards required by the University. Supervisors will monitor your progress and guide you towards submitting your thesis in the required time, ensuring that you comply with university regulations and requirements regarding the organization and submission of your thesis.

The role of your Supervisors is to assist students in shaping and directing the research, to provide guidance and feedback to improve the quality of the work. They can advise you on the formulation and development of your research and to advise you about work already published in your area. Supervisors will be able to guide you in the use of primary and secondary literature, as well as historical, archive and other source materials. They confirm that the objectives and outcomes of your research project are realistic and to ensure that you are provided with the best possible support to develop your academic potential, inclusive of equipment and resources. They can also advise you on how to acquire skills and techniques necessary for your research (for example specific technical skills associated with laboratory work and / or a programme of related study to develop your broader research skills – such as research methods and statistics/qualitative data analysis).  Supervisors will also discuss the role of conferences and other professional networks within your research area and guide you on publishing in peer-reviewed journals and preparing and submitting papers. Finally, they will comment in detail and in a reasonable time upon the written work that you submit and prepare for your final thesis submission.

The role of the supervisors is to support the research, **not to do it** …

In turn it is your responsibility to keep your supervisors informed at all times about the progress of your work. As a PGR, you are expected to accept responsibility for your own research activity and learning, including attending appropriate training programmes in accordance with University regulations (please see the [Attendance and Engagement Policy for Postgraduate Researchers](#)). You must maintain regular contact with your supervisors and seek permission for any periods of absence from the University aside from normal holidays. You should agree deadlines for the submission of written work and maintain progress in accordance with the deadlines agreed. It is your responsibility to keep a record of all supervisory meetings. **The regulations require a minimum of 10 meetings recorded on eDoc per year (FT), and 5 (PT).**

For further information, please review the [Policy for the Reviewing the Progress of Postgraduate Research Students](#).

The key to success is hard work, clear lines of communication and setting up working practices and expectations at the beginning of your time as a PGR student.  Finally, please find out who are the key staff in your School (Health and Safety Officer, Technical Manager etc.) as you will have a range of other responsibilities and requirements dependent upon the nature of your research (you may need a Health and Safety Briefing specific to your area, you may need a Human Tissue Act Briefing).

If, despite all good intention and effort on all parts, for whatever reason, your relationship breaks down with your supervisor please contact your School Staff PGR representative to help support you.

## Bench Fees

Bench fees are charged in addition to tuition fees and are to cover extra costs incurred during postgraduate research.  Bench fees are payments made to the University for the use of facilities which may include the use of consumables within a lab.

These are some of the main costs that bench fees cover:

- consumables (chemicals, labware & reagents, for example)
- travel to conferences
- conference attendance
- laboratory work
- specialist equipment use
- field work
- computer software/hardware

**How much are bench fees?**

The project costs required can vary significantly, depending on the type of research being conducted. Bench fees can range from zero, to tens of thousands of pounds per annum.

For self-funded students, the amount we expect to be paid will be explicitly stated in your offer letter.

For students in receipt of Funded Studentships (LJMU Scholarships, Faculty/School Scholarships, Match Funded Scholarships), £1600 per year over 3 years (£4800 in total) is awarded or otherwise.

**Funded Students - How to claim expenses**

Purchases:

Students cannot purchase direct from bench fee funds. This must be planned, negotiated, and organised through your Lead Supervisor.  Your Lead Supervisor will be the key signatory with respect to spending and planning your operating costs.

It is likely that yearly bench fees will not roll over financial years (Aug – Jul) so be careful in your financial planning. Bench fees must be spent by 31$^{st}$ July each year.  Please liaise with the Faculty Head of Operations, Aly Leigh (*A.J.Leigh@ljmu.ac.uk*) should you have any queries about expenditure.

The University has determined that bench fees cannot be used to pay for writing up fees and UK visa costs.

Purchases using bench fee funds (e.g. conference fees, travel, consumables) should be made directly by LJMU staff where possible. Please contact SCSPGRExpenses@ljmu.ac.uk with details of your request.

Funded students can claim expenses, but only if it is not possible for your request to be fulfilled by LJMU purchasing methods (for e.g. taxi bookings). In this event, please contact SCSPGRExpenses@ljmu.ac.uk for further information on how to make your claim.

Travel bookings:

Travel bookings should be made via LJMU travel agents according to LJMU's expenses policy - contact SCSPGRExpenses@ljmu.ac.uk for advice. Please provide travel details and the bench fee code to which the costs will be charged to. For oversea travel, we would always need the approval of the School Director for each occasion.

**Self-Funded Students – How to pay bench fees**

Your Lead Supervisor should have been provided with an account/reference number in order for you to pay your bench fees.

Please use the following link to pay your bench fees:

Online Payments | Liverpool John Moores University (ljmu.ac.uk)

Select 'Pay my fees now' and quote your reference number as provided by your Lead Supervisor.

If your Lead Supervisor does not have a project code/reference number, they will need to request this from the Enterprise and Research sub-section of Finance.

Lead Supervisors, to set up a GaP record and project code, please visit the Finance Dashboard, select the GaP tile, and provide the following information:

- Student Name
- Confirmation of who is funding the Bench Fees (e.g., Student Self-funded, sponsored by an external organisation)
- Copy of 'Application for Credit' form  'Sections 1 & 2' to be completed by whoever is funding the Bench Fees (download/access here:- Copy of Application for Credit July 22)
- A formal agreement document between the Faculty and the funder or self-funded student. This must contain:
    - Total cost
    - Expected start and end dates
    - Agreed payment terms i.e., up front, yearly instalments

## Student Expense Claims

Any necessary expenses (e.g. conference registration payments, travel bookings) should be met directly by LJMU through the appropriate means where possible. Please contact SCSPGRExpenses@ljmu.ac.uk for advice on this.

*N.B. It is your responsibility, along with your lead supervisor, to track your bench fee expenditure over the financial year.*

## Programme Approval

Programme approval is the first 'milestone' you will reach as a PGR. Programme Approval is the process by which a PGR presents a summary of their proposed programme of work for approval by the Faculty Research Degrees Subgroup Committee. The proposed programme of work must make a material and unique contribution to the field, must develop and train the individual as well as being systematic, specific and time-staged and be supported by an appropriately experienced supervisory team.

Full-time students should submit their programme approval within 3 months of initial enrolment and part-time students within 6 months of initial enrolment. Your Lead Supervisor will provide advice on how to fill out your programme approval form. In the Faculty of Science students are required to submit their draft programme approval form to their School staff PGR rep via eDoc in advance of submission to Andrew Rowlands (FRDSGC Secretary) so you can get detailed guidance from these staff as well as your supervisors.

The Faculty mandatory requirements for programme approval include the appointment (as evidenced by your eDoc record) of an appropriately experienced supervisory team, composed of at least two supervisors; your completion of Faculty/School PGR induction events; evidence of completion of online Ethics training; completion of a training plan and a Gantt chart.

The programme approval form asks you to provide a title for your research project along with an outline of its aims and objectives. You are also asked to outline the rationale for the choice of research question, position the research in the context of the published literature, clearly identify the key methodologies required in the conduct of the research, articulate the original contribution of the work and how this is to be achieved. You are also asked to provide a plan of work and a time plan for the completion of the full research programme. Full formal citations of indicative references are expected throughout.

PGRs registered for a research degree longer than 12 months shall be subject to annual review. Full details on progression and review can be found here.

## Ethics

Ethical approval is required for all research projects involving human participants, not simply for clinical trials or other invasive studies. All PGRs who require ethical approval must seek this from the University Ethics committee (not any School or local committee). Even if you have NRES (National Research Ethics Service) or other external ethical approval based on the nature of your work you must also seek University Ethical approval.

If you have any ethics questions speak to your Lead/Primary Supervisor and the Chair of the University Ethics Committee (Dr Dave Harriss: email: D.Harriss@ljmu.ac.uk, 0151 904 6236). There are two types of ethical approval at LJMU:

**Full review:** Completed applications for **full review** and any supporting documents should be submitted to researchethics@ljmu.ac.uk

**Proportionate review:** For studies which present lower levels of risk and/or potential harm to participants. Completed applications for **proportionate review** and any supporting documents should be submitted to EthicsPR@ljmu.ac.uk

A copy of the ethics application form is available here.

The Research Ethics and Governance site contains all the necessary guidance to help you.

All research students submitting applications for ethical review should note the following:

- Applications for full review to the University REC should be submitted electronically to researchethics@ljmu.ac.uk
- Information relating to LJMU REC committee dates can be found here.
- Applications submitted for proportionate review by the University REC should be submitted electronically to ethicsPR@ljmu.ac.uk
- Applicants seeking approval for an amendment to an approved study should complete the study amendment notification form (accessible here) and submit this electronically to researchethics@ljmu.ac.uk

As part of the enrolment and registration process all PGRs (whether you require ethics approval or not) are required to complete an on-line Ethics module via Canvas.

Any questions, please contact Mandy Williams A.F.Williams@ljmu.ac.uk 0151 904 6467.

## ATAS

On 1 November 2007 the Government introduced the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) which applies to international students (non-UK/EU/EEA). For further information to see if you require an ATAS certificate, and for details of how to apply please visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website.

Information and advice can also be obtained from the University's International Office.

## DBS Checks and Research Passport Applications

As a PGR, you may need Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS formerly known as CRB) clearance for research that involves you working unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults. We now use a secure online system enabling you to apply for Enhanced DBS Disclosures electronically. In order to obtain DBS clearance, we need confirmation that a DBS is required. For further information please contact the Placement Learning Support Unit via SciencePLSU@ljmu.ac.uk.

## Research committees (FRDSGC and URDC)

All PGR related issues, milestones and monitoring occurs under the auspices of two committees.  Locally the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-group Committee is chaired by Professor Mark Hollands and is serviced by Andrew Rowlands, Faculty Information and Research Support Officer.  Your PGR staff and student representative meet at this committee, and it is a vital meeting for upwards and downwards communication of any relevant PGR issue.  Your programme approval and monitoring requirements will be considered here. The University Committee is the ultimate arbiter of student examination and attainment and will regularly contact staff and students regarding key milestones.

2023/24 Dates and deadlines for the Faculty Research Degrees Subgroup Committee are as follows:

| Meeting Dates | Deadline for Consideration at Committee |
|---|---|
| Wednesday 4th October 2023 | Monday 25th September 2023 |
| Wednesday 15th November 2023 | Monday 6th November 2023 |
| Wednesday 31st January 2024 | Monday 22nd January 2024 |
| Wednesday 20th March 2024 | Monday 11th March 2024 |
| Wednesday 24th April 2024 | Monday 15th April 2024 |
| Wednesday 12th June 2024 | Monday 3rd June 2024 |

If you intend to submit a draft informally to your PGR Tutor for feedback, this should be done at least a week before the official submission deadline.

## Symplectic records

### How to get your profile published on the LJMU website.
As PGR students you all have a Symplectic Elements account, which can be accessed here using your LJMU username and password.  Symplectic Elements (usually referred to as just 'Symplectic' at LJMU) is the research data management system used here and at many other academic institutions world-wide. A system has been put in place in place for pulling information from your Symplectic accounts directly to LJMU web profile pages (see examples on this page).

In order to get your profile page published, please update your Symplectic profile and inform Leah Higgins (L.E.Higgins@ljmu.ac.uk) when you have done so. You can update your profile by selecting the following options: -

- *'Edit your profile' > 'Overview' >* include your biography, PhD project title and supervisor details here.
- *'Education' >* you can itemise your qualifications here.
- *'Publications' >* 'Add a new publication' > then choose the relevant publication type. You can search by DOI & publication title or skip the search and add all the details in manually.
- *'Professional Activities' > 'Add a new professional activity' >* this area is for awards, conference communications etc – please select the most appropriate activity from the drop-down list.

For any other help with Symplectic please see the user guides on the system's help page, or email: SymplecticHelp@ljmu.ac.uk

Before we go any further, let's recap the new starter requirements:

❑ Have you completed your Faculty Induction and confirmed by emailing
SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk? (Information received from SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk)

❑ Have you completed the online Health and Safety Induction and confirmed by returning a copy of the
return slip? (Information received from SCSResearchAdmin@ljmu.ac.uk)

❑ Have you arranged your School Induction with your School PGRAPT?

❑ Have you set up your Symplectic Record?

❑ Have you completed the Online Ethics Module on Canvas?

❑ Have you familiarised yourself with eDoc?

# PGR Faculty Mediator

PGR Faculty Mediators provide a safe and confidential environment for PGRs to raise issues and concerns. They assist the PGR to consider options, provide advice, inform about university resources and procedures, and to be a "thinking partner." They do not keep formal records, perform formal investigations, or advocate for either one party or another, but they advocate for fairness. Areas they cover include, but are not limited to:

- Interactions with members of the supervisory team
- Conflict with other students
- Clarifying expectations if a PGR is in doubt
- Signposting resources or services
- Identifying and discussing options for resolution
- making referrals to formal channels when necessary

The Faculty of Science PGR Mediator is Professor Lynne Boddy. Her contact details are listed below:

- 0151 231 4275
- L.M.Boddy@ljmu.ac.uk

# Guidelines for the completion of a Programme Approval application form in the Faculty of Science

These notes are designed to help you complete Programme Approval application form focus on sections that are often missed or poorly completed. They are intended as guidelines rather than strictly prescriptive requirements. They should help you prepare a crisp, succinct, and readable application. You should seek further advice from your Director of Studies and/or your School staff rep of the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-Group Committee (FRDSGC).

## General

Your application should demonstrate clearly to the Faculty (and University) Research Degrees Committee/Board members that you have a coherent, realistic and well thought out plan for tackling a research project that is appropriate to your degree registration. Remember that most members of the committee are not subject specialists and that you will need to write your proposal accordingly. Your supervisory team will assist you and provide advice.

## Summarise the research, aims and key objectives or questions

This section should define clearly, in a series of statements, what it is you are setting out to do. The aim (or aims) should be global statements which summarise what you plan to achieve and/or the questions you will provide answers to.

The description of aims should be followed by bullet point list of objectives i.e. what you will do to achieve your aims. If you are planning a series of experimental then explicitly link each objective to one or more of your studies (e.g. place "Study *" in brackets at the end of each bullet point)

More elaborate statements referring to rationale, detailed methods, benefits etc. should not be included in this section.

After reading aims and objectives the reader should have a good framework for what the project is attempting to achieve and how you plan to do this. Together, they should provide the focus for your work.

*Explain how your project contributes to (or challenges) existing work in the field (i.e. the originality or significance of your project).*

This section should contain an introduction which contains appropriate background literature review which evaluates the literature and provides the rationale for the study.

- Why is this an important topic to study?
- Provide a brief literature review so the reader gets a feel for the current state of knowledge in this area?
- Identify the gaps in knowledge that your project will attempt to fill.
- Stress the novelty and/or significance of your proposed work. How will knowledge be advanced and why is it important to do so?

## Please provide a brief outline of your proposed plan of work (research proposal)

You should use this section to summarize the methodology you will use your in your programme of research to achieve your aims and objectives. This often consists of a sequential or parallel series of experiments or studies, designed to test or explore particular hypotheses or ideas, relating to your specific declared aims and objectives. These can often be set out as a phased series of studies. Give the minimum necessary detail for each experiment, or phase of the work, so that the reader can visualise what it is you intend doing and why. Demonstrate how each experiment will build on previous work and how each fits into your overall programme. Identify your own milestones.

Give the minimum necessary detail for each experiment, or phase of the work, so that the reader can visualise what it is you intend doing and why. Demonstrate how each experiment will build on previous work and how each fits into your overall programme. Identify your own milestones. The reader will be

looking for evidence that you access have access to the expertise and resources necessary to carry out your work and that you have a clear plan of how you will use these resources.

- • How will you recruit participants and/or obtain the resources needed to meet your objectives? Include anticipated scale of data collection (participant numbers etc.) and justify (e.g. power analyses)
- • What variables will you measure? What methods will you use to process and analyse the data.
- • Will you use established methods (include references where appropriate) or are you developing new methods (explain why necessary and include justification)
- • Clearly map descriptions of methodology to your stated objectives
- • You must provide a timeline or Gantt chart summarizing the predicted time course of key milestone completion

## Researchers who plan to study human participants

LJMU is committed to embedding the values of equity, diversity, inclusion and respect (EDIR) into research. To this end, we encourage researchers to consider how the principles of EDIR are integrated into research at every stage of the process, their research team, study design, data collection and interpretation, and constraints on generalisability. To support EDIR in research, researchers who plan to study human participants should include an EDIR statement which should provide a brief overview that addresses the following areas, tailored as appropriate to reflect the individual study.

Describe how diversity in your study population was considered when planning your recruitment strategy. For instance, how will the study design address balance and diversity in the recruitment of participants based on sex or gender identity (as appropriate), race/ethnicity/culture, socioeconomic status, and representation from other marginalised* groups? If this has not been considered, then please justify why.

Describe how your data collection methods will facilitate inclusivity. For instance, will the study account for participants' accessibility needs, regional geographic differences, education, and socioeconomic status?

Describe how your study will consider equity in the analysis and interpretation of data. For instance, will the study consider gendered and racialised inequities, socioeconomic disadvantage, and inequities in marginalised communities? You might also consider the diversity of research teams and data availability.

* The European Network for social inclusion and health defines marginalisation as the position of individuals, groups or populations outside of 'mainstream society'.

Note: It is not enough to say LJMU's policy will be followed or to simply provide a link to LJMU policy. Applicants must clearly demonstrate how good practice in relation to EDIR will be carefully considered as part of the research process.

## Example statements

"Our study will include all identified cases of SCA in high school student-athletes inclusive of all genders, race/ethnicities, socioeconomic levels, and occurrence in a marginalized community. Although we are researching socioeconomic factors, data collection will be similar in all cases and we will not alter methods based on regional, educational, or socioeconomic differences of the community in which the case occurred. Our study will use the Area Derivation Index to measure socioeconomic disadvantage. The potential influence of gendered and racialized inequities in SCA outcomes will be presented in the discussion of our results."

"The study population will include a spectrum of ages, genders, demographics and comorbidities. In discussing the generalizability of our results and limitations of the findings, we will acknowledge that as members of a private medical insurance scheme, this cohort may exclude individuals of a lower socioeconomic status or from more marginalized communities."

"Our clinical trial will include equal numbers of women and men with femoroacetabular impingement syndrome from Victoria, Australia. Our analysis will explore the effects of sex and gender; however, we acknowledge we do not plan to examine the effects of race/ethnicity or socioeconomic status. We will discuss the influence of sex and gender on our findings in the discussion of our findings."

"Our study will be on women football players in Southern Africa. We acknowledge that since our study will focus on Southern African national team level women football players, it will exclude women and girls playing football at grassroots levels and those from other geographical regions of the African continent."

We hope that the conscious and deliberate consideration of these principles in research will help our postgraduate researchers and their teams:

- Foster a more diverse and inclusive research environment/culture
- Engage the talents and energy of diverse people in all areas of research
- Improve the relevance and quality of research generated at LJMU

*Please detail any specific facilities, equipment or funding required for your investigation. You must highlight where you feel these are not available.*

You need to demonstrate that you have the necessary resources available to carry out the proposed programme of work. If access to resources (participants, equipment, consumables etc.) is contingent on external factors then this should be stated and contingency plans offered where appropriate.

## Please select your intended mode of presentation for your final thesis

This will normally be "monograph" i.e. a standard thesis

"Thesis by published papers" is another possible route which may be possible but you should discuss this with your supervisory team and FRDSGC staff rep before selecting this option.

## Additional documents

This section is to allow you primarily to upload a Gantt chart. Remember that you are required to complete your experimental work, analyse your results and write and submit your thesis within a strict time limit. To achieve this you need to be well organised and aware of the time constraints operating. A timetable of tasks to be carried out is thus vitally important. The simplest way to do this is in the form of a GANTT chart or table (Appendix 2) showing the time framework within which each piece of proposed work will be conducted. The duration of each phase of work might also be included in the text. You may also wish to identify milestones, where major sections of work are completed, bottlenecks that might lead to delays and the relative priorities of the different tasks outlined. A sensible amount of time should be allocated for data analysis, thesis writing and preparation, and a target finishing date should be given.

Please do not upload a detailed research proposal in a separate document. This will not be considered by the committee. Provide all requested information in a concise manner in the main application form.

| | Year 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | Year 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | Year 3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Lit. Review | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ethics | | | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Study 1 | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MPhil Transfer | | | | | | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Study 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Study 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Study 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | | | | | | | | |
| Writing Up | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | ▓ | |
| Thesis Submission | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ▓ | ▓ |

# Workload and Organisation of the MPhil/PhD

Your overall programme of work will be managed via eDoc, an online management system for PGR students. We will provide supporting for using this system.

The period officially allotted for your research degree tends to pass by more swiftly than many students expect so that time management quickly becomes an important skill to acquire and exercise. Although your supervisors will advise you on your priorities, the responsibility for managing time efficiently is your own. Your objective must be to make best use of all available time, wherever and under whatever conditions.

To help you in planning your programme at LJMU, we have structured your time at the University around a series of milestones. The primary purpose of these milestones is to help you complete your PhD in a timely and effective manner. This link details the steps to support your study from confirmation of registration to examination. Please also refer to the brief guide to the Doctoral Journey, in the Postgraduate Researcher Handbook.

Most PhD studentships are funded for 3 years, and very few are fully funded for 4 years (normally from international bodies or external grants). You will need to check the funding arrangements for your particular studentship; this will either be given to you at point of admissions, or in your student contract. The aim is to at least submit by the time your funding runs out.

In order to achieve your PhD in time, it is expected that full-time PhD students should devote a minimum of 35 hours per week for 45 weeks per year to research activity. Full-time students are expected to agree any authorised absences from the University, for example field trips, attendance at conferences, holidays etc., in advance with their supervision team. If you are a part-time student you should dedicate a minimum of

12 hours per week over 45 weeks of the year to research activity. All PGRs must inform their supervision team of any unforeseen absences, for example absence through illness, at the earliest opportunity. The MPhil/PhD course is comparable to any other professional obligation and requires the same kind of dedication and professional commitment than as any other vocation.

A student may be permitted to take a leave of absence from their studies for good cause, such as illness, family crisis or bereavement. It is important to seek a formal 'Leave of Absence' where the progress of research has been disrupted by any misfortune (see policy here). In such cases, you should apply for a formal leave of Absence (for a period longer than 4 weeks) via eDoc (see eDoc guides for instructions on how to do this). Where it will be reviewed by FRDC before approval. Please note, any funding will be paused during the leave of absence period. Contact the SCSStipends@ljmu.ac.uk for more information.

Any leave taken over a period less than 4 consecutive weeks, must be recorded on eDoc as short-term leave and authorised locally by your supervisor. Short term leave of absence will not require FRDC approval and will not affect your registration dates.

Full details of the above is available via the following links:

[Academic Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

[Supporting Your Study](#)

For the dates of term for the 2023/24 session see the [Academic Calendar](#).

## Minimum and maximum periods of registration

The University Research Degree Regulations define the minimum and maximum periods of registration (from enrolment to completion) for the following programmes. The normal periods of study starting from initial enrolment for the various research degrees are outlined [here](#).

## Progression, Review and UKVI

PhD candidates require a number of formal reviews during their programme of study. This process will be managed via [eDoc](#).

Review processes are as follows:

**Annual Progress Review**: Prior to annual re-enrolment PGRs will undergo a formal review of their progress conducted by the Supervisory team, to determine their eligibility to continue with their studies. You and your supervisor are jointly responsible for reviewing your work and providing a review report on your progress each year. This review helps to ensure that your training, supervision and support needs are being met, and to identify any difficulties which you or your supervisor might be experiencing.

Your application for Annual Progress Review should be made [via eDoc](#). After you have logged in, go to 'My Record' and on the right-hand side of your home screen click 'Annual Progress Review' then 'Create New Application'. The application will entail the following:

Title of thesis – PGRs will be expected to update their thesis title.

Progress – PGRs will be asked to provide a reflection of their progress to date (in 500 words) and provide key objectives for the next 12 months.

Training and Development – PGRs will reflect on research training undertaken and describe any teaching related activity.

Training Plan – PGRs should update their training plan for the next 12 months.

Concerns – PGRs will be given the opportunity to raise any concerns. Anything raised here will be treated confidentially and will not be seen by Supervisors.

Documents – PGRs can upload any relevant documents to support their submission e.g. updated GANTT chart, updated training plan, thesis chapters, plans for submission, plan for submission of publications, details of any published or accepted papers in the last year (if applicable).

Once the Annual Progress Review is submitted in eDoc, this will then be sent for review. Your Lead Supervisor will arrange an interview with you. The interview panel consists of a minimum of 2 members of the Supervision Team (ideally Lead Supervisor plus one other), although it is recommended that all supervisors attend. After the interview, the supervisors will then submit a summary report and highlight agreed objectives for the next 12 months.

Should your progress be judged as unsatisfactory, your supervisors will create an Action Plan to get you back on track. Prolonged failure to make satisfactory progress will be dealt with by formal process. Further information can be found [here](#).

**Pre-Submission Review**: The Supervisory team shall review the candidate's work prior to submission, providing their view of its readiness for examination.

Full details on Progression and Review can be found via the following links:

[Academic Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

[Policy for Reviewing the Progress of Postgraduate Research Students](#)

**International UKVI Monitoring** - International Students are required to comply with UKVI (see [Student Advice and Wellbeing](#) for advice with visa issues).

Further information on attendance monitoring requirements is available via [this Doctoral Academy page](#).


## Confirmation of Registration

PGRs registered for the Award of PhD are required to undergo a Confirmation of Registration Review (sometimes referred to as Transfer or Upgrade) to confirm that they are demonstrating the potential to successfully complete the award, to remain registered for PhD. This review must take place within 12 months full time, and 24 months part time.

The process determines that you possess a robust grasp of your thesis topic; that you are able to outline a clear methodology and/or delineate a definitive question; set your research in context of the literature and state why it fills a gap; present a clear timeline, chapter headings, with milestones and a completion date.

For your part, you will prepare the following as evidence to demonstrate that your work has PhD potential, and then complete an oral assessment, directed by the review panel whereby you will be expected to defend your submission and plans for the project moving forward. You will be required to submit:

- **Summary Report** (typically no more than 1 side of A4) critically reflecting your progress to date and plans from now to completion.

- **Submission Document** which is normally a draft of work which will ultimately contribute to the final thesis. The content and length of the submission should reflect the normal expectations for your area of research (see below bullet points)
- **Research Training Report** (typically no more than 1 side of A4) critically reflecting on research training undertaken and an updated Training Needs Analysis from now to completion.

PGRs should submit their dossier (see above), and it typically should be in the region of 4,000 – 6,000 words, evidencing work completed in the first year (FT) or first two years (PT). The precise form of material in the submission document, considered as part of the Confirmation, will vary across disciplines, and PGRs should prepare their dossier in consultation with their Lead Supervisor.

In Sciences, generally the submission document will consist of the following components (not necessarily as discrete items):

- A brief but critical review of relevant literature that provides the scientific rational/justification for the thesis aims and objectives stated at the end of this section. This must clearly build on from any work submitted as part of the approval.
- A brief but detailed report of key methods developed and employed (or to be employed) within the thesis. This could include quality control data, pilot development experiences or first sets of data.
- Presentation, analysis and discussion of (at least) the first empirical day sets to be generated by the student.
- PhD plans in detail.

Once the above documents have been submitted, your application will be assessed by a review panel. The review panel will consist of your lead-supervisor, at least 1 co-supervisor and an independent assessor. It is the role of the review panel to determine that you have made satisfactory progress of the work so far; to establish that you are capable of making an original contribution to the field; to determine the appropriateness of the proposed timescale to completion; and to assess the quality of the presentation of the work.

The oral assessment is conducted in as supportive a manner as the context allows and is not intended to provoke undue stress. You should view it as a valuable training experience in which you are given an opportunity to discuss your work and progress in a relaxed and constructive fashion with experts from the School or University. It is expected that the oral assessment will take between 30-60 min.

At Confirmation of Registration, PGRs would normally make a final decision as to whether the PhD will be submitted as a monograph publication (thesis) or as a thesis by published papers.

For further details please visit the Doctoral Academy's PGR Journey Explained page.


## Submission of the thesis


**Pre-submission review**: When preparing for your final submission, you must submit your final draft thesis for review by the supervisory team. You cannot proceed to submission until this pre-submission review has taken place.

**Appointment of Examiners**: Your lead supervisor will organise the examiners for your thesis in liaison with the Doctoral Academy.

**Submission**: As the thesis will likely contain a lot of quantitative research data, the word lengths for Science monograph theses tend to be 20,000 (MPhil) and 40,000 (PhD) and 40,000 for PhD by publication. Word limits may only be exceeded under exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee. We are aware that in many areas mixed methods and qualitative research paradigms are more appropriate and thus there is flexibility up to 80 000 words for specific types of study and theses.

As a minimum, PhD content should include the following sections:

| PhD by monograph: | PhD by Publication: (If chosen at Confirmation of Registration stage) |
|---|---|
| Abstract | Abstract |
| Contents Pages | Contents Pages |
| Introduction | Introduction |
| Literature Review | Literature Review |
| Empirical Chapters | Published Papers (in word format, not journal PDF) |
| Overarching Discussion | Overarching discussion |
| References | References |
| Appendices | Appendices (Include paper PDF) |

You should seek support in writing and formatting your thesis from your supervisors as well as the Doctoral Academy and it is good practice to look at PhD theses from students who have just completed in a similar area.

Further details on the presentation of research theses are available here.

## Examination/Viva voce

The oral examination or viva voce is in effect the culmination of your study period and normally occurs 1-2 months after the submission of your thesis. You will be directly quizzed on your thesis by internal and external experts but if you are well-prepared this can be a valuable learning experience.

As noted above your lead supervisor is responsible for assigning your examiners and setting your exam date.  You will be asked if you want an independent chair to sit alongside your internal examiner (someone who has expert knowledge of your work but was not a member of your supervisory team) and the external examiner (an expert external to LJMU). The Doctoral Academy and Faculty Research Degrees Sub-Group Committee oversees the appointments of examiners and will cross-check to makes sure their knowledge base is relevant and they have appropriate experience and expertise (inexperienced internal examiners can be added to oral examination teams to get experience).  Overall then there are typically at least two, and not normally more than three, examiners, of whom at least one shall be an external examiner (if you are a member of staff you will normally have 2 external examiners). Full details on the examination team and procedures can be found here.

There is no set duration or approach to the exam, but the examiners will write reports and meet before the exam to set the agenda. They are there ostensibly to determine (a) the work is yours, (b) you understand the area, the work and the research process and (c) in the PhD exam there is a demonstrable addition to the body of knowledge. The outcome of the viva will be given to the candidate at the end of the viva after you have been asked to leave the room for a short period of time. Formal written communication normally comes from the Doctoral Academy after a few days. Good examiners have a plan (normally means going sequentially through the thesis), will start with a nice, "icebreaker" type question and will engage you in a deep and academically interesting debate. You will not need to get ALL answers right but clearly you are expected to demonstrate knowledge and expertise. It is also sensible to have a well-developed perspective of knowing when to defend your work strongly and knowing when to accept constructive criticism of how things could have been done differently.

The formal outcomes of the MPhil and PhD viva are contained in Doctoral Academy guidance documents and there is support from the Doctoral Academy in terms of preparation for your viva. You should also talk to previous students and many undertake "mock" viva's with their research team.

After a successful viva and any modifications have been carried out, students are required to submit an electronic version of their thesis to the library and Doctoral Academy and formal notification of completion of studies will then be made. After this it is onto Graduation and ceremonies occur in July and November, every year.

## Completion Year

For PGRs who started their programme from October 2022 onwards:

The expectation is that in their final year, PGRs will move into the 'Completion Year' in which no fee will be charged (please see table on this page for per annum charges). By this year, PGRs are expected to have completed their primary area of research and submit the final thesis for examination and complete the formal examination process.

Per annum charges are based on the maximum duration of the programme outlined in the Registration Periods table on this page.

Early completion will still be liable for the full award rate.

PGRs who do not submit their final thesis for examination within the maximum registration period will need to request an extension to their registration period. Extensions will be granted for a maximum of one year. The fee will be applied if a PGR fails to submit their final thesis for examination within 4 weeks of the extended period of registration.

For PGRs who started their programme before October 2022:

PGR candidates at the end of their minimum period of registration will normally move to Thesis Pending Period providing they have completed their primary area of research and have demonstrated the ability to complete within the required period (see registration periods on page 15). Applications to transfer to thesis pending period can be found on eDoc. Typically, the decision to move to thesis pending will form part of the annual progress review. If a student does not transfer to thesis pending at the end of the minimum registration period (and pay the associated reduced fee) then it will be assumed that the candidate requires further full registration and the corresponding full annual fee will be payable.

**IMPORTANT:** Thesis-pending fees will be invoiced to the PGR. Fees will be payable to Registry Services and will be charged according to the offer made at the point of admission.

In exceptional circumstances, PGRs registered for a research degree may apply for an extension to their Thesis Pending Period at the discretion of the Research Degrees Committee, this is referred to as 'overtime'.

# Academic Impropriety

Academic Impropriety is deemed to cover plagiarism, collusion and any other attempts to gain an unfair advantage in preparing a thesis. It is important to understand these definitions, as it is all too easy, when copying material from a textbook or a technical journal, to commit an offence without you realising it.

Plagiarism includes the representation of the work, written or otherwise, of any other person, including another student, or any institution, as the candidate's own. Examples of plagiarism may be as follows:

- The verbatim copying of another's work without acknowledgement.
- The close paraphrasing or another's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement.
- Unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another's work.
- The deliberate and detailed presentation of another's concept as one's own.

Beware of inadvertent plagiarism: If you copy material from a textbook or paper, cut and paste material from the Internet into your own report or thesis that is plagiarism. By all means use acknowledged quotations, but use you own words for the main body of your work.

Collusion includes the unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person in the preparation and production of work, which is presented as the student's own.

There are detailed procedures laid down in the university assessment regulations for dealing with cases of plagiarism or collusion. Procedures for the Investigation of Alleged Misconduct in Research, including plagiarism, are detailed [here](#).

The Doctoral Academy has a policy that students can use TURNITIN via canvas to develop their writing skills and avoid issue of plagiarism and collusion.  Speak to your Director of Study initially if you have concerns in this regard.

# Postgraduate Research Student Skills Training and Development Framework

## Postgraduate opportunities and events (Researcher Development Programme (RDP))

RDP and PGR Events are open to ALL level 8 postgraduate research students.

Liverpool John Moores University recognises the importance of skills development for postgraduate researchers and promotes it as an essential part of their research programme. The Doctoral Academy aims to create an environment in which PGR, early career researchers (active or aspiring) excel and reach their full potential, by providing a full range of personal, professional and career development opportunities through the Researcher Development Programme.

The Doctoral Academy publishes details of Researcher Development Opportunities for MPhil/PhD students via their Research Development site and a monthly Research Development E-Digest using the PGR mailing

lists. For details of forthcoming training and development opportunities for research staff and students please see the [Doctoral Academy's Researcher Development site](#).

Attending and speaking at conferences are increasingly seen as essential activities for PGR students. As well as conferences organised locally by the University, you will probably want to attend others in your own specialisation. You may also want to look at relevant journals as these also carry advertisements for conferences in their field, as well as closely liaising with supervisors.

In addition to the RDP, you can connect with other doctoral researchers through a number of events throughout the year, an annual [PGR Festival](#). The University's [Travel Fund](#) can help you gain experience of presenting at academic conferences, and through the University's partnership with [The Brilliant Club](#), you also have the opportunity to gain valuable teaching experience. Late stage researchers can also apply to take part in one of our residential [Thesis Boot Camps](#).

The Faculty runs a Three Minute Thesis competition, which is an excellent opportunity for you to develop your communication skills. This event is held annually with the opportunity for winners to progress onto the [University competition](#).

Information regarding such events will be circulated via email throughout the year and available on the [PGR Community Site](#).

The University has a limited fund available for help with expenses and these are managed by the Doctoral Academy: if you are presenting a paper at a conference you can apply for help, subject to certain conditions. Eligible PGR students who are presenting oral papers at national and international conferences up to 31st July (in the current financial year) can apply for limited funding (awards typically range from £175 to £350). Calls for PGR Travel Funding are made three times per year via [this link](#).

## Opportunities to develop teaching and assessment skills (3is)

For students who wish to develop broader academic skills related to teaching and assessment whilst a PGR student at LJMU, the University is committed to providing PGRs with appropriate teaching and professional development opportunities, consistent with its responsibilities to support research students and to maintain teaching quality and academic standards. The Appendix details our Code of Practice for PGRs who teach and the programme called "3is" is set up to support our PGR students.

The 3is is an initial teacher practice programme comprising a series of half day workshops that focus on key subjects/issues facing postgraduate researchers (PGRs), graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and those LJMU staff for whom teaching is a small part of their role.

Completion of this programme is mandatory for any PGRs prior to commencing teaching. LJMU staff who have a small teaching remit are also welcome to complete the programme. For further information on the 3Is course, please follow [this link](#).

If you would like to enrol on the programme or for further information, please email [TLA3is@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:TLA3is@ljmu.ac.uk).

**NB:** Demonstrating hours will **not** be granted to PGRs in their completion year or overtime.

**NB:** PGRs undertaking any demonstrating hours must also complete the [online GDPR training module](#).

# Other Business

## Student Advice and Wellbeing

At LJMU, we have a dedicated Student Advice and Wellbeing Team (SAW) to provide direction, advice and guidance to our students. The team can help with money matters, counselling, mental health and wellbeing, disability issues, international advice and sexual violence support amongst many other areas.

If you should need to contact this team, their details are available at the following link:

Student Advice and Wellbeing Team

## Student Groups

### PhD Student Group

Being a PGR student can be demanding, and stressful. Very often you are working alone, managing your own timetable, and workload. The LJMU PhD Student Group is an opportunity to meet other PGR's, to connect and share your experiences of the PhD journey. Facilitated by a member of the LJMU Counselling Team the group provides a supportive space for you to share experiences, and exchange knowledge. The meetings are informal, the aim being to cultivate mutual support, and connection. The group meets monthly on the first Thursday of the month 5.30-6.30pm. Both in person and online. For further information please contact counselling@ljmu.ac.uk.

### Additional Groups

LJMU offer additional groups that you can get involved in such as 'Reading for Wellbeing' and 'Writing for Wellbeing' which can be booked through the SAW Events page.

Further information can be found on the LJMU webpage at the following link:

Student Groups

## Student Support

As an LJMU student you have access to a wealth of support services designed to help you make the most out of your time at university. We have also compiled a list of links to sources of help. These may be found at the following links:

Student Support

Student Engagement

Health and Wellbeing

Student Union

Student Opportunities

Registry Services – e.g. for Council tax exemption certificates.

## Tuition fees, funded studentships and stipends

You will have received confirmation of your funding at point of admission. Please refer to your offer letter for details.

If you have any questions relating to your funding, please contact your lead supervisor.

Tuition fees are paid on an annual basis. **N.B.** Full Time and Part Time fees for all students on PGR programmes are fixed for the duration of their programme in the year that the student starts the course.

For funded studentships, bench fees and stipends are granted annually while you are an active student within your funded period (usually 3 years). (Stipends will not be paid during a period of absence). Bench fees must be spent within each financial year. Please liaise with lead supervisor to plan spending.

If you exceed your registration period, will need to request an extension and a re-registration fee may be payable if you do not submit your final thesis for examination within 4 weeks of this extended period of registration. Please refer to your offer letter and this page for full details.

**In order to receive your stipend annually, please note the following important information: -**

- Your stipend payment will only be processed *once you have enrolled*.
- Your first bursary payment *will always be after enrolment* depending on the date of enrolment and payroll deadline dates.
- You will be asked to read and confirm vie email to SCSStipends@ljmu.ac.uk that you agreed to the Finance Guidance Notes.  You will then receive an email to your LJMU email account from Student Payments requesting you to visit My Services and enter your bank details to complete the process.
- You will need to renew your stipend on an annual basis by following the above process every 12 months.  Please schedule this task into your diary to complete no later than one month and no earlier than two months prior to your re-enrolment date.  If we do not receive this confirmation, your stipend will not be processed.
- You are also responsible for informing SCSStipends@ljmu.ac.uk if your circumstances change and you no longer meet the criteria set out in the Finance Guidance Notes at any point in the year.

**NB:** To receive the stipend, the student must not be in receipt of substantial sums of paid work during the term time, Research Councils and LJMU Teaching and Learning Academy rules permit up to 6 hours per week for demonstrating, teaching or similar paid work. Please check full list of eligibility criteria on student bursary claim form issued to you at the beginning of your programme.

**Finally – we hope you have a fascinating, exciting and challenging PGR experience at LJMU.**  We are here to help and support you throughout the process so please contact us if we can help in any way.

Welcome and happy studying,

**Prof Mark Hollands**

# Appendices

## Library Services

Library Services are responsible for the university library, drop in IT and study provision.

**Student Zone**

The ground floor of each library is known as the Student Support Zone. A Welcome Hub acts as the reception area where staff will answer general, IT and circulation enquiries and make appointments for you to see a range of specialist staff from areas including welfare, careers, employability, library subject support and specialist computing support.

**Library and Study provision**

The rest of the library spaces house the library collections, a range of quiet and silent study spaces and group study rooms. PCs and study spaces and group study rooms may be booked in advance via the Library Services website.

**IT Support**

Library Services provide IT Support to students and staff.  The libraries are equipped with PCs, laptops, printers, photocopiers and scanners. Library staff offer support at the Hub desk, or while roving around the building. Each library has a large format printer for printing up to A0 size.  There is a small charge for printing.

**Research Support**

If you require subject specific support, one of our Academic Liaison Librarians can show you how to search effectively for information in your subject area, how to reference and much more.

Our Research Support Team can offer assistance with; Open Access publishing, eTheses, using endnote and database searching.

**Referral services to Student Advice and Wellbeing and Graduate Development Centre Services**

Where appropriate staff will refer the student to the specialist support services available in the university, this may be for help and advice on finance, housing, study support, special needs support or advice on careers and world of work skills.  Appointments can be booked from all enquiry points.

**Library service hours**

Both the Avril Robarts and Aldham Robarts libraries are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week during semesters. Please see this page for opening hours.

**Key Contacts**

You can talk to Library Services staff and make bookings and appointments even when you are off campus by calling 0151 231 3179. This service is available 24/7, all year round.

## Information Technology and Computer Resources

Network Applications: A wide and varied range of applications are available to LJMU computer users from the industry standard Microsoft Office applications to a range of subject software applications. These are available via any PC connected to the network.

Off Campus Applications: In addition to this, a growing number of applications are available via the Off Campus Applications service. Requiring nothing more than an internet connection and a web browser, users are able to connect to applications such as Microsoft Office and SPSS, whilst also being able to read their email through Microsoft Outlook and connect to personal file store.

Free home use software: Staff and students are able to install a limited number of applications for installation on their own PC. Usually available to download, they are full unlimited versions, as used within the university. Further information is available from this Software for Staff and Students page.

IT help pages can be accessed here.

There are a range of places outside of student PGR office to access IT facilities in the Faculty and nearby library/Student Zone areas:

- Upstairs and Downstairs Social space in Byrom Street Café/Social Zone
- Tom Reilly Building, Byrom Street: IT Suite 146a and 146b (1st floor)
- James Parsons Building, Byrom Street: IT Suite 318 and 321B (3rd floor)
- Cherie Booth Building, Byrom Street: IT Suite 146b (1st floor)
- IT facilities and IT support in the Avril Robarts Library (Tithebarn Street) and Aldham Robarts Library (Mount Pleasant): On-line PC booking available here.

# Health and Safety

It is important that you fully understand your responsibilities concerning health and safety. It is essential that you fully comply with all the requirements and act responsibly in order to ensure your own safety and the safety of others.

**Fire Precautions and Regulations**

Make sure you familiarise yourself with the building you work in and know where the nearest exits are from your building. Check with the Health and safety Officer where the assembly point is for your building.

If you discover a fire, it is important that you follow the correct emergency procedure:

- Operate the nearest fire alarm
- Dial 2222 and ask for the fire service
- Leave the building and go to the assembly place
- DO NOT use lifts.
- DO NOT re-enter the building until you are instructed to do so by the Fire Evacuation Coordinator/ Wardens or Fire Emergency & Rescue Service. The silencing of the alarm is NOT an indication to re-enter building.

DO NOT PLACE YOURSELF OR OTHERS IN DANGER.

The fire procedure must be followed in every case without exception, regardless of how small the fire is, and in all instances, members of staff, students and visitors are required to evacuate the building in the event of the alarm sounding during a lecture or practical session.

**Security**

Faculty buildings are protected by a combination of locks, electronic alarms, swipe-card restricted access and security video surveillance cameras. All research students should follow good practice in terms of personal and building security. In extreme emergency the security services should be contacted on 2222; this line is open 24 hours a day.

Please do not leave personal belongings unattended in classrooms or corridors. If you see a suspicious package or observe anyone behaving in a threatening or suspicious manner, report the matter to security on 2222.

**No Smoking Policy**

In order to provide a healthy working environment for all members of the University, smoking in not permitted in any University building.

**Accident Reporting**

The University has a legal responsibility to report accidents that occur on the premises.  Accidents are extremely rare but, should you have the misfortune to suffer one, please report it to a one of the First Aiders who hold Accident Report Forms.  Please report the accident at your earliest opportunity as prompt action may prevent others from being hurt.

## Writing With Your Supervisor

Increasingly, PhD researchers are expected to have published from their research during their PhD studies. This is an excellent opportunity for you to discuss where your work sits in the field with your supervisors. Supervisors can provide valuable critical guidance and support, especially for those PhD researchers wishing to pursue an academic career.

PhD researchers who wish to pursue academic careers benefit considerably from having published papers (or having papers in stages of publication) by the completion of their PhD. This is especially so in competitive job markets such as in the UK. Co-authoring may happen at any point during the PhD process. Many PhD researchers find it helpful to plan papers around workshops and conferences. The progress meetings may also provide useful deadlines and an opportunity to discuss publishing plans.

Supervisors and PhD researchers may wish to discuss early on in the writing process issues such as author order, percentage inputs to a paper, and how any revisions will be handled. This will vary across students and supervisors, but a good rule of thumb is that the person doing the bulk of writing and having the idea for the paper is lead author. Often this will be the student if it is related to their PhD data.

The Doctoral Academy hold many workshops providing advice and support for publishing and supervisors can play a critical role in encouraging PhD researchers to attend these events. Sections can support the writing process by holding smaller subject-based workshops for PhD researchers prior to conferences, providing advice on writing, publishing and reviewing early drafts of papers.

## Useful Contacts and Links

Key LJMU Contacts (General Switchboard: 0151 231 2121)

Student Homepage (includes links to all student support services)

Library Services

Student Advice and Wellbeing

Academic Achievement Team (for help with study skills)

Referencing and Endnote

LJMU's Research Degrees Framework (Academic Regulations for Research Degrees Research Degree Policies and Milestones)

Code of Practice for Postgraduate Researchers Engaged in Teaching

Researcher Development Opportunities

Registry Services (online enrolment)

International Office

Ethical Approval