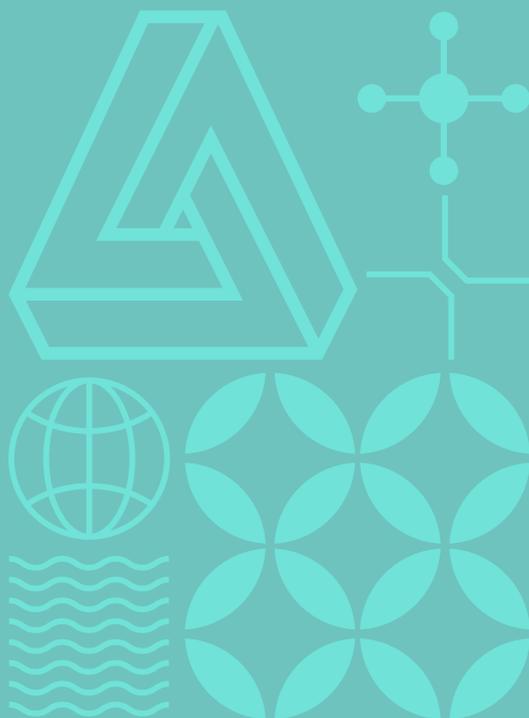
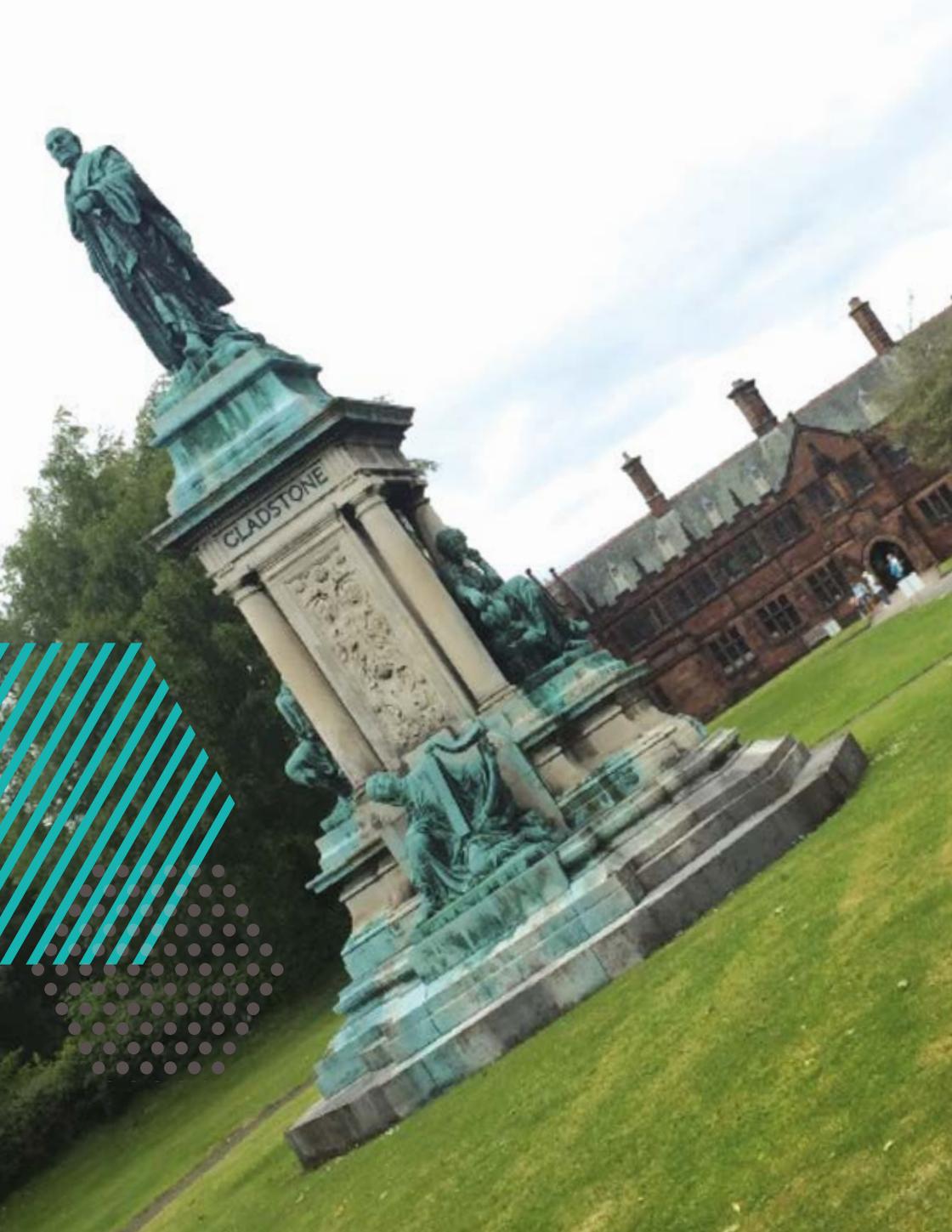


POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHER HANDBOOK 2022-23



LIVERPOOL
JOHN MOORES
UNIVERSITY



Contents

WELCOME FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR	4
WELCOME TO THE DOCTORAL ACADEMY	6
YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE PLAN	8
RESEARCH PROFILE - COMMUNICATING AND SHARING YOUR RESEARCH	10
eDoc	13
UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH DEGREES	14
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHER RESPONSIBILITIES YOU AND YOUR SUPERVISORS	16
Your Supervisory team	19
How often should we meet?	19
Supervisory meetings	20
Maintaining effective relations	21
Absence or change of Supervisor	22
Other important contacts	22
RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT	24
Researcher Development Programme (RDP)	24
Teaching	25
RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (RDF)	26
YOUR DOCTORAL JOURNEY	28
UNDERSTANDING YOUR DOCTORAL JOURNEY	30
How long will it take?	30
Attendance requirements	31
Enrolment	31
Induction	32
Programme approval	32
First progress review	33
Confirmation	33
Progress review	34
Thesis pending	35
Going into overtime	35
Theses presentation and submission	35
Examiners and viva voce	36
Conferral of award and graduation	38
When things don't go to plan	39
Leave of absence	39
Changing your mode of study	40
Withdrawal and termination	40
HAVE YOUR SAY	41
PROBLEMS, COMPLAINTS, AND APPEALS	42
STUDENT ADVICE AND WELLBEING	44
RESEARCH ETHICS ONLINE TRAINING MODULE	45
LIBRARY SERVICES	46
CAREERS	46

Welcome from the

VICE CHANCELLOR

Welcome to postgraduate research at Liverpool John Moores University. I am pleased to welcome you on the start of your research journey and to introduce this guide to your programme.

There are regulations, policies and procedures that you will need to understand as a postgraduate researcher, and this handbook sets out the main features of your postgraduate research degree.

It aims to make clear what you should expect during your study in terms of supervision, support and assessment. Of equal importance, it also sets out what the University and those responsible for your study should expect of you. These mutual responsibilities and expectations are intended to provide a framework within which you can flourish on your research degree.

You can look forward to outstanding support for your professional and personal development as researchers at Liverpool John Moores University. In the most recent Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES 2021) LJMU was ranked eighth out of all participating institutions for satisfaction with support.

I hope you will take advantage of our excellent Researcher Development Programme and related support.

I wish you an enjoyable and successful career as a researcher at LJMU. Good luck.

Mark Power

Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive



Welcome to the

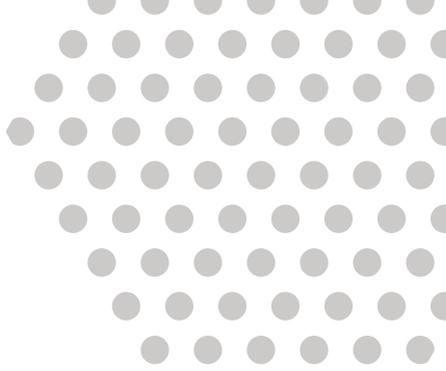
DOCTORAL ACADEMY

All postgraduates studying for a research degree at Liverpool John Moores University are members of the Doctoral Academy. Our team of experts will be here to support you on your research journey. We know that studying for a doctoral qualification is a unique experience. However, we also know that you will benefit from your interactions with the wider postgraduate research community. Our job is to kindle this shared sense of purpose.

The Doctoral Academy co-ordinates a range of events to support your development as a Researcher and we very much hope that you will take up opportunities to share experiences, extend networks, generate collaborations and discover new perspectives on your research.

We often say that 'the PhD is more than a thesis', and our PGRs are highly engaged in a number of related activities that enhance their broader research. Throughout the year, PGRs attend over 100 different workshops as part of our excellent Researcher Development Programme – giving them a chance to meet their peers and get involved with research in new and unexpected ways. The Community Writing Days and Thesis Boot Camps have been especially popular, and attendees tell me that they feel inspired and motivated to tackle what is probably their biggest challenge – writing their thesis!





Be assured that The Doctoral Academy has an established track record of researcher engagement that encourages you to be informed about your peers' research and to discover connections within your environment and situation. We value your involvement in decision making through a number of channels (see 'Having Your Say') and your representatives co-design our calendar of events.

I look forward to meeting you at one of our Researcher Events.

To hear more about Postgraduate Research at LJMU, from PGRs: https://youtu.be/9-d_AdIzCXU

Professor Julie Sheldon

Dean of The Doctoral Academy



 @LJMU_PGRs

Keep in touch with PGR news and activities!

Email:
DoctoralAcademy@ljmu.ac.uk

Website:
ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy

YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE PLAN

Name:

eDoc Student Number:

Start Date:

Project Title:

Planned Thesis Submission Month & Year:

Project Timeline:

Supervisors:



Please take a few moments to write your **Development Plan** in the space below:

A large, empty light blue rectangular area intended for writing a Development Plan. The area is framed by a decorative border consisting of teal diagonal stripes along the right and bottom edges.

RESEARCH PROFILE – COMMUNICATING AND SHARING YOUR RESEARCH

As a postgraduate research student, you should make the most of the research events and activities in your department and across the University. You are encouraged to be involved in the wider research community as much as possible throughout your research degree.

As a postgraduate research student, you should make the most of the research events and activities in your department and across the University. You are encouraged to be involved in the wider research community as much as possible throughout your research degree.

Most departments have dedicated postgraduate seminars, in addition to the Staff research seminars, where you will have a chance to discuss research with others. The Library runs an annual programme of Research Cafes, informal events where established academics, PhD students and early career researchers share their latest research.



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.

We also provide training on social media and managing your digital profile. 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, and the Postgraduate Research Festival.

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. Training in public speaking, research presentation and media skills is available all year round, and the 3MT is a great way of putting these skills into practice.





ONLINE WRITING COMMUNITY

Researchers can join an online community of supportive peers by taking part in the Doctoral Academy's regular writing days. Running every Wednesday and one full day month, these can really help with motivation, offering you structured time to focus on your work, a chance to connect to other PGRs in the breaks, and access to a writing tutor for one-to-one support.

THE POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH FESTIVAL

Each year, The Doctoral Academy and PGRs work together to run a research festival. This is a chance for PGRs to present their work to other researchers as well as gaining experience of organising, chairing and judging sessions. The Faculty PGR Representatives lead the planning, and invite input on the event from the entire PGR community.



eDoc

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

eDoc is the University's online progression system which supports a shared understanding of the doctoral journey, the policies and regulations that govern it and the common reference to progression stages. Your eDoc profile will allow you to maintain Supervisory meeting logs, construct a development portfolio and keep to your Project Timeline. All PGRs are required to manage their studies via eDoc.

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 Plan 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.



UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH DEGREES

The Doctorate is the generic name given to a variety of qualifications awarded by universities recognising sustained work of original research in a particular field. There are three types of Research degree at LJMU:



1.

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) is a programme, in which the key activity is undertaking research, combined with appropriate training. Registered PGRs must produce a thesis containing original work of merit, worthy of publication.

2.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is a programme, in which the key activity is undertaking research, combined with appropriate training. Registered PGRs must produce a thesis which makes an original contribution to knowledge, worthy of publication in whole or in part in a learned journal.

3.

Professional Doctorate is a programme, which integrates taught postgraduate work and/or professional practice with research within a programme of 540 credits. Registered PGRs are assessed by a combination of written examinations and/or project report(s), dissertation or thesis which collectively make an original contribution to knowledge, worthy of publication.

Research Degrees are overseen by the Research Degrees Committee (RDC). Chaired by the Dean of The Doctoral Academy, RDC has the overall responsibility for decisions regarding progression and awards of MPhil/PhD.

Within your area the Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC) has responsibility for your day-to-day studies and supervision. Your FRDC will consider your programme approval, appoint your Supervisory team, and review your progress.



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



Progression

- Protect your data and work – use OneDrive (available through Microsoft 365) to store your data and work. OneDrive enables seamless access both on and off campus and ensures data are backed up automatically. <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/ithelp/saving-and-sharing-your-data/onedrive>
- Ensure you understand the realities of Postgraduate Research and the expected standard of work.
- Complete initial enrolment and subsequent re-enrolment and, in the case of International PGRs comply with all immigration requirements.
- Make yourself familiar with the Research Degrees Framework.
- Establish and comply with progression milestones from Enrolment to Completion.



Supervision

- When you start, agree style and frequency of meetings, minimum of 10 per year
- Discuss respective roles and responsibilities, how Supervision will work in practice.
- Develop strong working relationships with Supervisors to establish clear communication channels.
- Organise and record formal supervision meetings in eDoc, complete actions as agreed.
- Recognise when you need help and take the initiative in raising any concerns and problems as early as possible with your Supervisory Team.
- Inform your Supervisor of any intention to take holiday and discuss the timing of the intended holiday in relation to academic priorities.



RDP & Career Planning

- Undertake appropriate skills and career development training and maintain a record of completed development activities.
- Use eDoc to create a development plan and Symplectic for your research profile.



Thesis & Examination

- Ensure thesis meets required format, as per Regulations and Supervisor's guidance.
- Comply with all GDPR, intellectual property and copyright requirements.
- Send draft thesis to Supervisors on agreed date, prior to formal submission, for their feedback.
- Make sure you know the viva arrangements, by speaking with your Lead Supervisor.

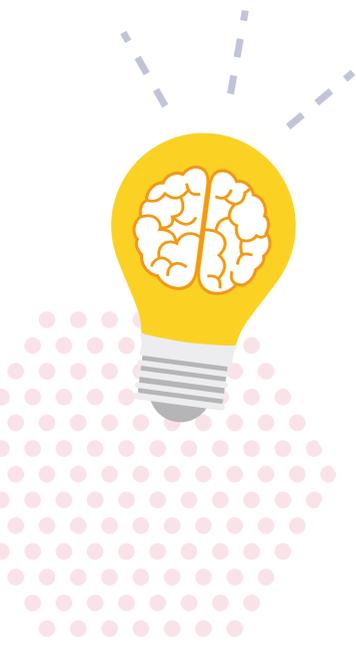


Use Your Voice

- Use your initiative with different working practices and resources.
- Tap into the support available across LJMU.
- Provide feedback to your PGR reps and through completion of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES).



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.



Your Supervisory Team

You will be assigned a Supervisory team that comprises a Lead Supervisor, Co-Supervisor(s), and, on occasion, External Supervisor(s). Their combined purpose is to ensure that your requirements and any arising issues are addressed and dealt with in a timely and constructive manner.

Your Supervisors have several overlapping roles – part mentor, trainer, supporter, and critic.

Your Lead Supervisor takes responsibility for the overall management and direction of your research degree in addition to administrative issues relating to your registration, attendance, and progress. They are the member of the Supervisory team with whom you will have most contact, and will agree with you objectives for your research, provide advice and guidance on your plans and progress, and give you feedback on your research findings/results and draft written work.

Co-Supervisors complement the Lead Supervisor's expertise and should provide continuity of supervision if the Lead Supervisor is absent from the University. They may provide you with a second opinion on research matters. It is important to remember that researchers often hold different or conflicting opinions.

How Often Should We Meet?

It is a University regulation that formal Supervisory meetings are held at least 10 times per year (pro-rata if you are studying part-time). You should formally contact your Lead Supervisor every month.

If your research programme involves collaboration with an external sponsor, it is recommended that formal meetings of all personnel involved in the project, including the external sponsor is held at least once each year.

Supervisory Meetings

Formal Supervisory meetings are an opportunity for you to discuss your progress, and to raise any problems you may have in the research. These meetings will play a crucial role in shaping your project and it is therefore important that you spend some time thinking about what you can do to make Supervisory meetings as constructive as possible. A record of the frequency and outcome of Supervisory meetings should be kept as a matter of best practice in eDoc, where you can log agendas, attach documents and set action plans.





Maintaining Effective Relations

Your relationship with your Supervisors will take time to develop and it requires effort on both sides to maintain an effective working relationship. Your relationship will only work if you maintain regular contact with your Supervisors and meet agreed deadlines.

It is also important that you know how to use your Supervisors' advice and feedback. You may have come to your research degree with a first class honours degree and a distinction in your masters programme, and you have only ever heard positive comments about your work. However, during your research degree you will encounter criticism of your work. It is important to remember that your Supervisors' comments are intended to be constructive – to provide you with guidance to help you improve your work and finish your research degree successfully. If you are unsure why your Supervisor is making a particular suggestion, feel free to ask them about this – just do not disregard comments you do not fully understand or with which you disagree.

If there are any aspects of your Supervisors' advice and feedback which are unclear you should ask for clarification as early as possible; it can also be helpful to keep a written record of the feedback provided by your Supervisors so that you can refer to this later.

Finally, do tell your Supervisor if you are experiencing problems and tell your Supervisory team as early as possible to minimise any disruption to your progress.



Absence or Change of Supervisor

The University cannot guarantee that you will be able to work with a particular Supervisor when you start your programme, or that you will have the same Supervisor(s) for the duration of your research degree, but, wherever possible, will endeavour to ensure continuity and alternative provision if your Supervisor leaves the institution.

Other Important Contacts

Although your Supervisors should be your first point of contact should any issues or concerns arise over the course of your degree, there may be times when you want to speak with someone outside of your Supervisory team.

School Postgraduate Coordinator is the person in your School/Department who is responsible for oversight of its PGRs and local support. They are available to provide support, advice, and guidance on matters relating to your academic progress or any personal circumstances that may be affecting your progress. Common subjects of discussion include options available when medical or personal circumstances are affecting your work, maintaining a good working relationship with your Supervisor, and balancing a research degree with other commitments.

The Doctoral Academy can answer many questions you might have as a registered research student. If you need to speak to The Doctoral Academy you can reach them by email at DoctoralAcademy@ljmu.ac.uk or telephone **0151 904 6375**.

If you prefer to discuss your situation with someone outside of your department, you are welcome to arrange an appointment to speak with the Dean of The Doctoral Academy. Discussions with the Dean are confidential. However, in order to resolve issues it is normally necessary to involve others at some point.



RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT

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.



Researcher Development Programme (RDP)

The Doctoral Academy offers a comprehensive programme of workshops to develop your research and transferable skills. The Researcher Development Programme is designed to support you throughout the research journey, from getting started with research, enhancing your personal effectiveness, through to engaging others and successfully communicating your work. The programme content is mapped to the national Vitae Researcher Development Framework (see diagram overleaf) which sets out the characteristics of excellent researchers.

The RDP runs all year round, and workshops are repeated for each cohort of new starters. You are encouraged to identify the workshops that are most relevant to you by undertaking a training needs analysis early in your research journey, which you can do on eDoc. In addition to our workshops, the Doctoral Academy hosts weekly writing groups, and an annual postgraduate research festival.

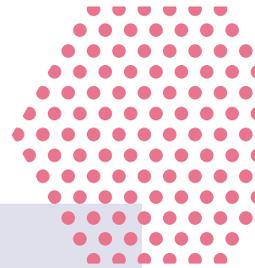
There are plenty of opportunities to put your skills into practice, by taking part in research communications competitions, or applying for funds to help you present at external conferences. You can find details of the RDP and other opportunities on The Doctoral Academy website <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy/researcher-development>

You can access a variety of online resources to support your development when you are working remotely. All LJMU researchers have access to:

- A host of training materials and recordings on the Researcher Development Programme course on LJMU's Virtual Learning Environment Canvas, <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/enroll/8FXP4Y>
- Vitae's full range of resources on undertaking a doctorate: www.vitae.ac.uk
- SAGE Research Methods - methods.sagepub.com – an extensive online resource with multimedia content on methods and methodology
- An online Call For Participants service to help you advertise your research and find the right participants
- The Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding to help you identify funding options

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FOR ANY QUERIES ABOUT RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT EVENTS AND RESOURCES, please contact Jo McKeon - j.m.mckeon@ljmu.ac.uk or Victoria Sheppard - v.m.sheppard@ljmu.ac.uk in The Doctoral Academy.



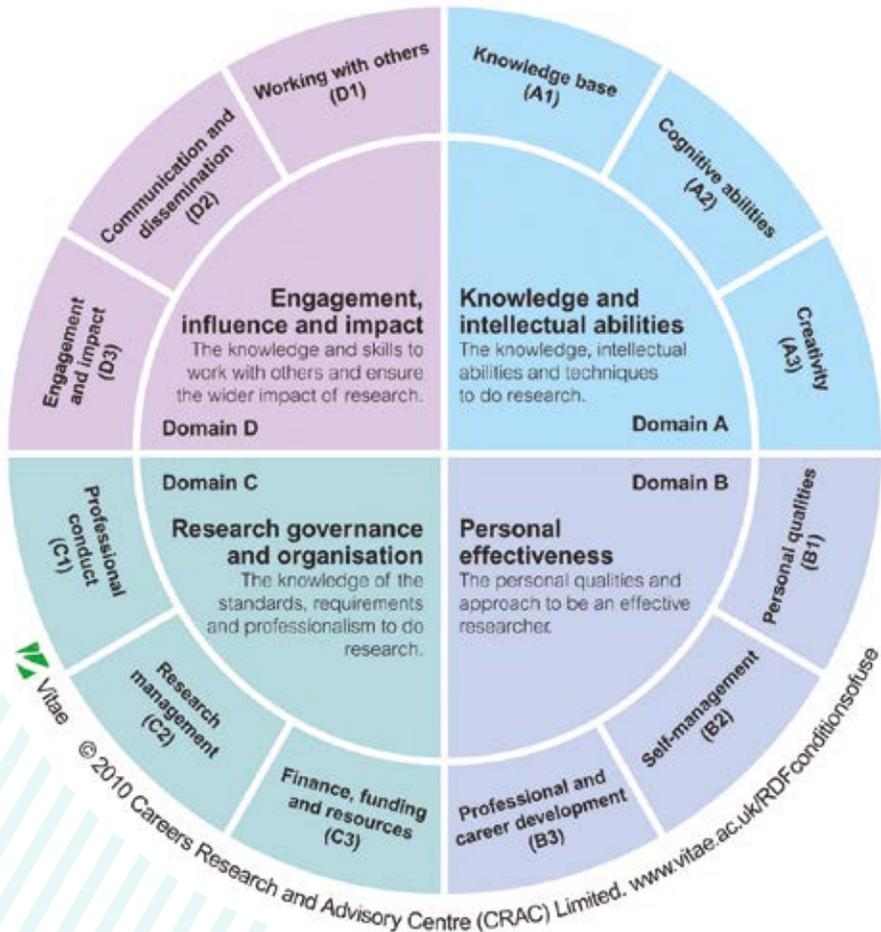
Teaching

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

In the last 2 years, postgraduate researchers from LJMU delivered 39 placements to over 450 school pupils through The Brilliant Club



RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (RDF)





YOUR DOCTORAL JOURNEY

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE? **1**

2 ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

3 ENROLMENT

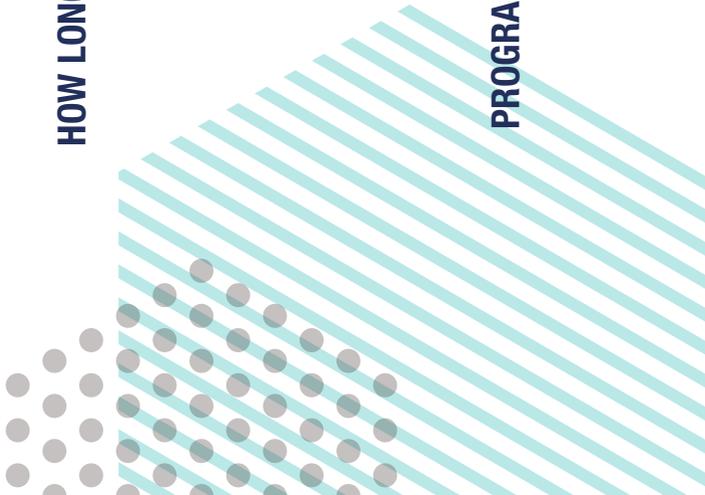
4 LOCAL INDUCTION AND
THE DOCTORAL ACADEMY
WELCOME EVENT

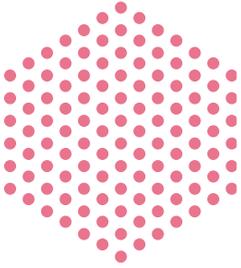


5 PROGRAMME APPROVAL

6 FIRST PROGRESS REVIEW

7 CONFIRMATION





8 PROGRESS REVIEWS

9 THESIS PENDING

10 GOING INTO OVERTIME

11 THESIS PRESENTATION
AND SUBMISSION

12 EXAMINERS AND
VIVA VOCE

13 CONFERRAL OF AWARD
AND GRADUATION





UNDERSTANDING YOUR DOCTORAL JOURNEY

This section provides a brief guide to the different stages of the Doctoral Researcher's journey. You are encouraged to read this in conjunction with the University's Research Degrees Framework.

1 HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

PhD Candidates should typically complete their programme within four years (seven years for a part[1] time PGR). In the final year, PGRs are expected to submit their thesis for examination and complete the final assessment process. PGRs should make sure that they organise their work to meet the deadlines set, including the final date for submission. Special permission is required from the Research Degrees Committee to submit after the four/seven years allowed for the PhD.

2

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Full-time PGRs are expected to be engaged with their research degree programme for a minimum of 35 hours per week, part-time PGRs for minimum of 12 hours per week, over 45 weeks of the year. PGRs may take breaks for holidays, up to a maximum of eight weeks for a full academic year of study. This holiday entitlement includes Public Holidays, and should be taken at times agreed with your Supervisor.

The University recognises that many part-time PGRs are also working full-time and will be subject to the requirements of their employer in terms of taking annual leave. However, it is expected that part-time PGRs will agree any authorised absences relating to their research degree programme, e.g. field trips, in advance with their Supervision team and will also advise their Supervision team of any planned holidays and unforeseen absences as a matter of courtesy.

3

ENROLMENT

Enrolment is the formal process by which you begin your studies. You will be invited to re-enrol on the anniversary of your start date for the duration of study, upon which all re-enrolment formalities must be completed to ensure your record remains active. This process is also known as “term activation”.

You must enrol to formally activate your programme of study, and then re-enrol annually during that same month. A reminder email will be sent to your LJMU email address.

Any queries about enrolment please use the Helpline:

studentregistration@ljmu.ac.uk or
0151 231 3289 (9am-4.30pm UK time
Monday – Friday)

Once you have enrolled, you will receive:

A University ID card containing key information that is utilized by a number of systems around the University. You should keep your card safe – it gives you access to the University Library and you may need it to access university buildings or to prove your identity while on campus.

A University Email Account – your University email address is our primary means of contacting you. Check your University email account frequently to ensure that you do not miss any important communication from the University or your Department.

4

LOCAL INDUCTION AND THE DOCTORAL ACADEMY WELCOME EVENT

Local Induction is provided at School/ Faculty level and covers specific procedures and conditions that apply within the Faculty, for instance presentation at internal conferences, availability of subject-specific research methods training, codes of conduct in laboratories, etc.

The Doctoral Academy Welcome Event is an excellent opportunity to meet other new PGRs from across LJMU. The programme includes details of researcher development opportunities and the chance to meet key Staff who provide specialist support for PGRs.

5

PROGRAMME APPROVAL

Once you are enrolled, the next stage is to formally register your research project with FRDC. At this time, you will confirm your project title, outline your research methodology, training needs and plan of work. You are strongly advised to do the following things within the first months of study:

- If you are considering teaching, you will need to register to attend 3is (see “Teaching”)
- Reach an understanding with your Supervision Team about the format and schedule for your meetings over the first few months (See “Working with your Supervision Team”)

Candidates and Supervisors must meet to discuss and determine:

- PGR/Supervisor roles;
- the frequency, duration and purpose of Supervisory meetings;
- the proposed/working title of work;
- the timescale of the programme of work when set against the designated registration period for the award;
- that the work outlined complies with Health and Safety regulations and ethical requirements.

Programme approval should be completed within 3 months of enrolment for full-time PGRs and within 6 months for part-time PGRs. The application for approval is made to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee. The FRDC offers the peer review outside of the Supervisory team, and may provide critical feedback on the application for programme approval.

Research using human participants will require approval from the University's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and, in the case of research involving NHS patients, approval from an ethics committee within the National Research Ethics Service (NRES) is required. UREC and NRES approval must be granted before the research work can proceed. Therefore, it is recommended that PGRs and Supervisors ensure that appropriate ethical approval is sought at the earliest opportunity.

6 FIRST PROGRESS REVIEW

Within 6 months full-time (or 12 months part-time) of enrolment, Candidates and their Supervisor(s) must undertake a review of research activities and achievements, and discuss progress towards achieving identified goals, including provisional year goals.

7 CONFIRMATION

Confirmation (sometimes referred to as the 'Transfer' or 'Upgrading' stage) is a formal review to determine whether your research is making sufficient progress to meet PhD standards by the end of the registration period. The Confirmation normally takes place within 12 months full-time and within 24 months part-time. The content of the Confirmation submission may vary between Faculties, reflecting the requirements within a particular subject area. Candidates should refer to their School/Faculty Handbook for full details.

The Confirmation Review is based on both your written submission and an oral assessment (or viva voce). The oral assessment will be conducted by a Review Panel consisting of members of your Supervisory team, plus an Independent Assessor (normally a member of LJMU staff). The Panel will reach a joint decision and make a formal recommendation regarding the outcome to Research Degrees Committee. Lead Supervisors will normally provide feedback from the review.



8 PROGRESS REVIEW

There are regular reviews of research in the doctoral journey:

	Full-time PGRs	Part-time PGRs
Approval of Project	at 3 months	at 6 months
First Review	at 6 months	at 12 months
Confirmation	between 12 and 15 months	between 24 and 27 months
Annual Progress Review	Annually until the thesis is submitted for Examination. (For PhDs, Annually following Confirmation).	Annually until the thesis is submitted for Examination. (For PhDs, Annually following Confirmation).
Pre-Submission Review	at 3 months before planned submission of thesis	at 3 months before planned submission of thesis

Annual Progress Review

You will be expected to undergo an Annual Progress Review on the anniversary of your enrolment. Your Supervisory team will conduct the review and submit a joint report based on the work submitted by the PGR and subsequent interview. 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.

9 THESIS PENDING

Your Supervisors will approve your move to Thesis Pending (as part of the Annual Progress Review). In order to qualify you must have completed the research element of your project, fieldwork/data collection, or equivalent and confirm that you no longer require access to facilities to gather data/material.

In this period the Lead Supervisor should meet with you at least 6 times (either face to face or electronically).

10 GOING INTO OVERTIME

There may be reasons why you find that you are unable to complete your research and submit your thesis before the maximum registration date. Following consultation with your Supervisors, you can seek a formal extension for a period up to one year. Any extension of registration is at the discretion of the Research Degree Committee.

11 THESIS PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION

The examination of a Research Degree involves two stages: first, the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis, and second, the defence of the thesis by the candidate at a viva voce examination with the same examiners.

We have a detailed Policy and Procedures for the Examination of Research Degrees with information on the following areas and which you should familiarise yourself with in the lead up to your final submission and examination:

- The composition of an examination panel and how they are confirmed
- The role of an Independent Chair
- What processes happen in the lead up to the viva
- The purpose and conduct of the viva
- The recommendations that the examiners can make following a viva

We would also strongly encourage you to attend The Doctoral Academy's Preparing for Assessment Workshop between 6 and 12 months ahead of submission.

Thesis Presentation

Early on in your candidature, you should discuss with your supervisors the most appropriate model for presenting your thesis. The university has a policy for the presentation of research theses and you should familiarise yourself with this. It contains information about acceptable

presentation formats, word count and how the thesis should be formatted:
<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy/policies/policy-for-the-presentation-of-research-theses>

Submission Planning

Before you can submit your thesis for examination, you will need to complete the process of Submission Planning. This is an opportunity for candidates to receive final feedback on their draft thesis prior to submitting for examination. Ultimate responsibility for the academic quality of the thesis and the timing of submission lies with you. It is important to note that the opinion of your supervisors is in no way a guarantee of the outcome of your assessment as this decision will rest with your examiners alone.

Your draft thesis should be submitted to your supervisors in good time to allow teams at least one month to review this, meet with you and provide their feedback. We recommend that you start the process of submission planning three months before you are hoping to submit. You will receive a reminder on eDoc about 4 months before your expected submission date.

Following completion of the process of submission planning, you will then be invited to complete a notification of intention to submit on eDoc.

If you have not already done so, we would encourage you to discuss your potential examination team with your supervisors as part of the submission planning process.

Submission for examination

Your thesis for examination will need to be submitted via eDoc following the stage of Submission Planning and Notification of Intention to Submit. We have some online guides to help you with this process:

<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/the-doctoral-academy/pgr-project-timeline/online-guides>

12

EXAMINERS AND VIVA VOCE

Your Lead Supervisor will be responsible for proposing the arrangements for your examination team to be approved and confirmed by University Research Degrees Committee (RDC) ahead of your examination. RDC will take appropriate steps to ensure that there is no potential conflict of interest between either you or your supervisors, and any of your examiners and will inform you at the earliest opportunity who has been approved. If you have good reason to object to any given individual as an examiner, you should make this known and RDC will consider any such objection when making an appointment.

The Doctoral Academy will be the examiners' main point of contact throughout the examination period.

Viva Voce

Your viva should typically take place between 1 – 2 months from the date that you submit your thesis for examination. This is to allow examiners sufficient time to review the thesis and complete their preliminary assessment of it and for the arrangements of the oral examination to be made. We would advise that wherever possible, you discuss arranging a mock viva with your Lead Supervisor.

Your Lead Supervisor will be responsible for agreeing the date and time for the viva in consultation with yourself and the examiners. You will receive a

notification via eDoc of the details once they have been confirmed by your Lead Supervisor.

Candidates may request the presence of an independent chair for their viva voce examination via eDoc. Requests for the presence of an independent chair should normally be made when the examination team arrangements are confirmed. An Independent Chair can also be requested by your Lead Supervisor, your examiners, Faculty Research Degrees Committee or Research Degrees Committee. They are appointed by the Doctoral Academy and you will be advised ahead of your



viva if an Independent Chair has been requested (if you have not done so) and who this will be.

Candidates may also request the presence of a member of their supervisory team at the viva as a silent observer. You should indicate on eDoc if you wish for one of your supervisors to be present at your viva and you will be invited to request this if you wish to when your examination panel is confirmed.

Your examiners should advise you of the outcome of the examination on the same day of your viva and you will receive a formal notification of the outcome via eDoc, typically within 5 days of your viva.

Following the Viva

This will depend on what the outcome of your examination is. If after examination for the research degree you are required to make amendments to the thesis, there will usually be a period of up to three months for the amendments to be made and submitted to the examiners for review. You will need to provide the amended thesis via eDoc.

If the examiners recommend that the thesis be re-examined, PGRs will be given up to 12 months to make the necessary revisions and corrections. Additional fees will be payable in such instances. You are entitled to up to six supervision meetings a year during a re-examination period, but the

responsibility for initiating these meetings rests with you. Further details about the re-examination process are available in the Policy and Procedures for the Examination of Research Degrees.

Upon successful completion of your award, you will be expected to submit your final copy thesis to the University's E-Theses Collection in line with the Policy and Procedures for Depositing e-theses.

13 CONFERRAL OF AWARD AND GRADUATION

The conferral of the award will occur on the 1st of the month after the Examiners' recommendations have been completed and approved. You will be invited to attend the next Graduation Ceremony. Certificates are produced by the Awards Team and are normally issued via post.

Certificates and Graduation

Details about your certificate and graduation, are available on following websites: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/academic-registry/student/registry-services/awards> <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/students/graduation>

Closing of your IT account

Please visit the website below for further details: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/ithelp/user-accounts-and-security>



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 that you 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.



HAVE YOUR SAY

Your feedback on your research degree experience is important to us. It helps The Doctoral Academy 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 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 Tutor or the Head of 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.

In cases where a problem or issue has not been dealt with satisfactorily at the initial, local level – or if the problem is demonstrably of a more serious nature – then other, formal complaint procedures are available.





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 have 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. See <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/discover/student-support/health-and-wellbeing>. They run a dedicated PhD Student Support Group, which meets virtually every alternate Tuesday 5.30-6.30pm. Email counselling@ljmu.ac.uk for joining instructions.

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





RESEARCH ETHICS ONLINE TRAINING MODULE

Research ethics is the framework applying broad ethical principles to the responsible conduct of research and to the use of any outcomes resulting from research. The University's Research Ethics Committee assesses the ethical propriety of all research using human subjects.



You can find online ethics resources on Canvas, LJMU's virtual learning environment, by enrolling here: <https://canvas.ljmu.ac.uk/enroll/M3Y4FC>. The training introduces the principles of research ethics from a historical perspective, it explains how different types of research, participants and methods etc. challenge the principles of research ethics and it consists of tests on these topics. 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. An ethics application from a student who has not completed the LJMU Research Ethics Training will be rejected for review.

For any queries regarding the online ethics module or UREC, contact Mandy Williams a.f.williams@ljmu.ac.uk or FullReviewUREC@ljmu.ac.uk

<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/ris/research-ethics-and-governance>

 [@LJMUethics](https://twitter.com/LJMUethics)

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:

<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/library/research-support-and-outputs>

Library Research Support Team:

LST_research_support@ljmu.ac.uk

 @LJMUResearch

<https://ljmuresearchsupport.wordpress.com/>

CAREERS

The Careers Service offers tailored information, advice and guidance for PGRs, including providing feedback on CVs and applications and providing interview preparation and advice.

You can make a one-to-one appointment with an adviser by calling **0151 231 3719/2048**. The service is currently being delivered remotely, but is normally delivered in the Career Zones at Byrom Street and Aldham Roberts Library.





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