

# School of Social Sciences

## PGR Admissions - Good Practice Guidelines for 2019 entry

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### Pre-Application/Recruitment

- If academic colleagues receive a research proposal directly (prior to formal application), provide feedback to the prospective applicant within a reasonable amount of time (maximum 2 weeks if possible). Please **do not** “approve” or commit to supervising any proposal, just advise the enquirer that you are “potentially interested” in their proposal and encourage them to submit a formal application.
- General PhD enquiries which are received directly by academics should be answered within a maximum of 5 working days. If colleagues do not feel they have the right information to respond, the enquiry should be forwarded to [zoe.woodend@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:zoe.woodend@manchester.ac.uk)
- Sign-post good students to the School PGR web pages for information on [how to apply](#) and also to the [funding web page](#) for details on funding and deadlines.
- Identify and target current 3<sup>rd</sup> years that would be suitable for 1+3 study (for NWSSDTP funding purposes). Current 3<sup>rd</sup> years to be invited the PGR Open Day (24 October 2018) and also by inviting prospective applicants to contact the relevant PGR Admissions Tutor for further advice.

### Post-Application

- See appendix 1 for academic and English language entry requirements.
- ZW will check the academic qualifications of the applicant to ensure they have met the minimum requirements and also the English language.
- Applications which narrowly miss the academic entry criteria may still be forwarded to the Department for consideration. If the applicant is deemed worthy of an offer (after full assessment and interview) the department can put forward a case to the PGR Director explaining why the student should be made an offer.
- Complete applications **ONLY** will be referred to Admissions Tutor. Admissions Tutor will be emailed the ID of the applicant so that they can then access the Student Document Centre directly to see the application. If you require access to the SDC, please email VB. Please note that applications WILL NOT be emailed as attachments as this is in breach of new rules on data protection. The SDC can be accessed when off Campus but it is via a VPN which needs to be set up by IT (see <http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/our-services/my-it/vpn/>) If you use an Apple MacBook or other Apple laptop there could be further issues in setting up the VPN, so please contact IT directly to get your laptop set up correctly.
- Admissions Tutor considers application and if appropriate refers application to prospective supervisors giving a clear indication of the deadline for a decision. Please do not forward the application documents to your colleagues. They must too have access to SDC.

- Academic colleagues to provide feedback on applications to Admissions Tutor within 5 working days (maximum). NB: The School is monitored on the turn-round time of complete applications and we are expected to have a decision within 2-3 weeks.
- Academic colleagues or Admissions Tutor to engage with applicant directly if further information is required (please cc ZW into your correspondence).
- References – the proposed main supervisor must NOT be a referee. In cases where references are submitted by the proposed first referee then an additional reference must be requested.
- Conduct an interview for any candidates you wish to make an offer to. This needs to be done within the 2-3 week turn-round time. The interview can be face-to-face, telephone (UK only), skype. *If telephone is the only option for outside the UK, please seek approval first from your HoD or Alison Wilson, HoSA.* See separate forms and guidance notes. Colleagues involved in interviewing MUST have completed the Unconscious Bias training.
- Admissions Tutor to email final decision to ZW within 2-3 weeks. If approved, the Admissions Team needs the names of the two confirmed supervisors as well as a copy of the interview form (fully completed). If the application is to be rejected then a full reason needs to be given.
- The policy on appointing supervisors can be found [here](#). Please pay particular attention to the appointment of the first supervisor to ensure they meet the criteria.

### Post-Offer/Conversion

- Supervisors will be informed when the offer letter has been uploaded to SDC.
- Supervisors are required to regularly engage with their prospective students (+3 and 1+3) via whatever means possible (Skype, email etc). Give them information on seminars they may be interested in or details if you are giving a paper somewhere etc.
- Please cc [zoe.woodend@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:zoe.woodend@manchester.ac.uk) into any conversion emails.
- Departmental PGR Directors – good practice to also keep in contact with offer holders.
- Admissions Office will continue with the normal conversion activities which dove-tail with Central communications (eg letter from HoS, newsletters, visa advice etc).
- Decliner survey is automatically sent out centrally and results will be available at the end of the recruitment cycle.
- VB to provide a regular breakdown of applications/offers/decliners to Admissions Tutors.

### Deferrals

- Applicants may request to defer their offer to 2020. All requests to defer will be confirmed by the supervisory team.
- Offer holders from 2017 entry who request to defer again to 2019 (who were offered a place based on the old entry criteria) will NOT be required to meet new criteria (either academic or English).

### Funding

- Departments must inform their offer holders as soon as possible whether they are on the short-list or not (please cc VB into this correspondence).
- Departments can inform their top ranked candidates (as soon as the ranking has been complete) that they will be awarded a scholarship. For example, if Politics had 5 SoSS awards, this would mean the top 5 ranked candidates in Politics are guaranteed funding whether from the NWSSDTP (formerly NWDTTC) or in the form of a SoSS award.
- NWSSDTP [details](#) for applicants and staff are now available.

## Visiting Students

- All visiting PhD students MUST submit a formal application and supporting documents.
- This is a different process to normal PhD applications so please email VB details of any prospective new visiting students so she can contact them directly with the information on how to apply.
- Colleagues are NOT obliged to accept all requests for supervision from visiting PhD students (regardless of where they are applying for funding).
- A visiting PhD student must be of strategic importance/relevant to the department's research objectives and offer general "added value" to the PhD research community.
- Fees are payable – fees are @ £385 per month (rising to £395 in 2019/2020) – there are NO fee waivers for visiting PhD students.
- NB-The process for visiting PhD students is different to Visiting Researchers/Academics. Further information on this is on <https://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/research/visiting-scholars-programme/>

## Recruitment Activities/Open Days/other PGR matters

- Departmental PGR Directors/Admissions Tutors are expected to participate in University PGR Open Days and School conversion events.
- PG Conversion event (May 2019) – this dovetails with the Faculty's event for all RCUK funded students. All PGR (and PGT) offer holders are invited to come along to the School event to meet with key academic colleagues and Departments should arrange (or re-arrange) a weekly seminar so that students can attend.
- It is the responsibility of the PGR Director/Admissions Tutor in each Department to inform their departmental colleagues of any changes which relate to PGR matters throughout the year.

## Useful Information/contacts

- [School Funding](#)
- [International applicants/students](#)
- [On-line application system](#)

This is a work in progress document and will be reviewed regularly.  
28 August 2018

## Appendix 1

### **PhD Academic and English Language Entry Criteria for 2019/2020 entry**

*New criteria, for 2019 entry (please note, any deferrals which had previously been offered will NOT be affected).*

#### **Academic entry requirements:**

Candidates MUST normally have;

- Bachelors (Honours) degree (or overseas equivalent) at 2:1 level or above in a cognate subject, **and**
- Normally a Masters degree at 65% overall average with minimum 65% in dissertation and with no mark below 55% (or overseas equivalent) in a relevant cognate subject, preferably one with a substantial research methods component. Transcripts will be carefully scrutinised to ensure that applicants have the required background.
- GRE score (Economics only).
- Note; due to the volume of applications received each year, and limited spaces, regrettably offers cannot be made to all applicants who satisfy the academic entry criteria.
- All applicants who pass the initial assessment stage will be interviewed before any offer is confirmed.

**PLEASE NOTE: Qualifications from non-UK institutions must be equivalent to UK qualifications.** Grading schemes of some institutions may vary - please provide an official grading scheme with your transcripts.

#### **English Language Requirements:**

- IELTS 7, including 7 in writing and with no further score below 6.5
- TOEFL IBT 103 with 28 in writing and no further score below 25 in each section.
- **ALL** non-native English speaking students are required to do the English language assessment when they register in September.
- Any non-native English speaking student going away for fieldwork in an overseas, non-English speaking country encouraged to re-take the English assessment when they come back to Manchester.
- All non UK/EU, non-native English speaking applicants must have obtained the minimum IELTS or TOEFL score in order to obtain a CAS for their visa.