

## Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) COVID-19 Expense Support Fund

In response to the pandemic, a fund was created thanks to over a million pounds in generous donations from alumni, staff, students and friends of the University. Manchester Doctoral College was successful in securing £200,000 from the fund.

Half of this funding has now been allocated to help cover unexpected research programme-related expenses PGRs may have personally incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Please note that PGRs who have fallen into long term financial hardship due to the pandemic can follow the separate process established for the [Emergency PGR COVID-19 Hardship Fund](#). Please refer to the [full guidance](#) for all the details.<sup>1</sup>*

***PGRs travelling to Manchester to resume or start their research from a red-listed country between 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 should apply for a refund of costs via the new [Quarantine Hotel Cost Support Fund](#).***

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### Am I eligible to apply for the COVID Expense Support Fund?

All PGRs who have *personally* incurred unexpected research programme-related costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic are eligible to apply. You cannot claim for any expenses that were charged to a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) or were covered by other internal sources.

This fund is for PGRs only.

### What costs can I claim for?

Support cannot be provided for tuition fees, but applications will be accepted for personally incurred COVID-19-related costs limited to:

- Essential equipment for required home working.<sup>2</sup>
- Additional Visa costs due to COVID-19-related extension to programme.
- Research training – where not available and required as part of re-scoping a project.

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<sup>1</sup> Hardship is defined as having essential outgoings that are greater than income. The Emergency PGR COVID-19 Hardship fund is means tested and supporting documentation will be requested by the Living Cost Support Fund team when assessing the application.

<sup>2</sup> On the 14th of January 2021 the University put in place [processes](#) by which PGRs could acquire IT and office equipment for remote working at no personal cost – therefore, any such items purchased after January 14<sup>th</sup> may not be covered by the COVID expense fund. Any purchases related to home working made after Sep 1 2021 must be accompanied by a supporting statement from your supervisor or school/department to confirm that you do not have access to a suitable study space on campus.

- UK Government quarantine hotel costs due to essential travel for [University sanctioned](#) research from a [red listed country](#). *Please note that those travelling between 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 should apply via the new [Quarantine Hotel Cost Support Fund](#).*
- COVID testing costs due to essential travel for University sanctioned research / return to Manchester.

*Please note that we can only cover personal costs. We are unable to cover costs associated with PGR dependants / family. We are also unable to cover costs related to any increase in utility bills.*

### How much can I claim for?

Individual awards will be capped at a maximum of £500 except where claims include required UK government [Hotel Quarantine](#) costs – these awards will be capped at £2000. Applications will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis.

Multiple applications are permitted but the total awards over an academic year will be capped at £500 (or £2000 for UK Government Hotel Quarantine costs).

### What evidence is required?

Alongside the details required in the application form you will need to provide evidence/proof of the expenses being claimed for. We will accept receipts / email confirmations / travel tickets and/or credit card and bank statements that detail the expense. And please be as thorough as possible in your supporting statement.

### Can I apply retrospectively?

Yes, applications can be made for any eligible COVID-19-related expense that has been personally incurred since March 2020.

### How do I make a claim?

PGR claimants will need to fully complete the [claim form](#) and submit it (alongside the required evidence) to [mdc@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:mdc@manchester.ac.uk) using the subject heading 'PGR COVID Expense Claim.'

### When will I know if my application has been successful?

Applications will be reviewed weekly so it should never take longer than 5 working days to receive a decision. Applicants will be contacted by email.

### Help and contacts

If you have any questions regarding making an application, or about an application already submitted, please contact [mdc@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:mdc@manchester.ac.uk) and one of the team will be able to advise you.