Doctoral Academy Updates



In this last newsletter before the new year, we congratulate our December graduates and celebrate those working towards that milestone!

We also highlight our fantastic Writing Retreats, led by Professor Tanja Bastia so please do look after your wellbeing and book a place if you can. We also hear from our funding team with some important updates (including the launch of the PGR Incentive Fund), the Library Team and some wise words from Kumru, one of our School PGR Reps.

As always, if you would like to feature anything in the newsletter, please let us know. We would also love to hear about any achievements to celebrate!

Have a fantastic Festive Season!

The Doctoral Academy Team

Join us on LinkedIn: The University of Manchester Faculty of Humanities Doctoral Academy | Groups | LinkedIn

Follow us on Instagram: @uomhums

DA Spotify Podcast

Congratulations December Graduates!

Winter ceremonies will take place in Whitworth Hall from Thursday, 10 December - Friday, 18 December

Your graduation ceremony is the final milestone on your Manchester journey and a chance to look back and celebrate all that you've achieved throughout your time here.

Get Ready to Graduate!



Details can be found here on what you need to do before, what will happen on the day and how the University can continue to support you after you graduate. You will also find a full schedule of ceremonies here.

Meet your School PGR Directors

Introducing your School PGR Directors!

Greig Charnock is Professor of Global Political Economy at the University of Manchester and Director of Postgraduate Research for the School of Social Sciences.



Apart from the three years he spent as an undergraduate student at Newcastle University, where he studied Politics, Greig has lived all his life in north Manchester.

He returned to Manchester to complete his Masters degree before staying on to do his PhD in International Politics. Since he began working as a Gradate Teaching Assistant for the university in 2001, he's been a member of university staff for some 25 years – that's half his life! During this time, Greig's mainly worked on issues in global political economy and urban studies, exploring how capitalism transforms cities, work and everyday life. Much of

his work focuses on Spain and Barcelona, including the tensions surrounding urban regeneration, digital work, housing and struggles over the future of city neighbourhoods.

Alongside his research and postgraduate responsibilities, he teaches courses on global capitalism, bringing these questions into the classroom. When not at work, he's usually out with friends, walking, playing the guitar, decorating the family home, watching football, or procrastinating about going to the gym.

Hello, I am Tanja and I was appointed as the SEED PGR Director in February 2026.



I have previously served as the Director of the Rory and Elizabeth Brooks Doctoral College and the PGR Discipline Coordinator at the Global Development Institute, a role I really enjoyed, which is why I applied for the role of SEED PGR Director when the opportunity came up.

This role has been a steep learning curve, and I have really enjoyed working with new colleagues across the School and meeting PGRs from the five disciplines we have in SEED.

I am particularly excited about the SEED Pods scheme, which was introduced this year following a suggestion from Y2 PGRs – this is a new buddy scheme that matches incoming PGRs with those moving into Y2 and Y3.

Seeing the new cohort being welcomed into the SEED PGR community by existing PGRs themselves has been the highlight so far this academic year. In my other work at the University, I also co-convene the Migration, Refugees and Asylum research group, which links with my main research interests in migration. In my research I take a feminist and anti-racist intersectional approach and mainly focus on Latin America as the region where I carry out research.

Besides my academic work, I am also a Shiatsu and Holistic Acupressure practitioner and a member of the UK Shiatsu Society, I have a regular meditation practice and enjoy crocheting hats, practicing Qigong, walking my dog (a 1 and ½ year old labrador/ German Shephard cross) and spending time with my two children (in reverse order of preference!).

Funding Updates



PGR Incentive Fund

The Humanities Doctoral Academy is offering up to 6 PGR Incentive Fund awards in the 2026/27 academic year over 2 rounds.

This scheme aims to support career development and the generation of high quality research outputs by offering 3-month standard UKRI stipend rate.

The application closing dates are:

- **31 January 2027 for PGRs who will submit the thesis between 15 September 2026 and 28 February 2027**
- **31 May 2027 for PGRs who will submit the thesis between 1 March and 30 June 2027**

To apply, please complete the form here. Full details about the scheme, including eligibility criteria can be found in your handbook.

Funding Reminders:

- SALC Travel and Fieldwork Fund deadlines are approaching. Please submit your applications by the end of the day on 1 December. Applications will be considered from Monday 2 December and outcomes communicated within 7 to 10 days. The Doctoral Academy cannot guarantee full funding but subject to available budgets will at least part-fund your trip at the discretion of the budget holder.
- Reminder: please give your Humanities DA Funding Team and your School Ops teams as much notice as possible by planning and submitting your funding applications, Key Travel bookings and procurement requests in plenty of time. Avoid submitting urgent booking requests on Fridays – your School Ops team is very busy and may be unable to attend to short notice requests.
- Please note that January stipends will be paid early – on 17 December – due to the Christmas shutdown.

Methods@Manchester and Methods North West



Methods@Manchester is flagship initiative in the Faculty of Humanities, which highlights University of Manchester's strengths in research methods/ approaches in the humanities and social sciences. Each year there are a programme of events and activities, most notably the annual Methods Fair and Summer School.

Under the umbrella of Methods North West, there are a number of exciting events coming up, with the next:

Archives out of the Box: Innovating Methods for Critical and Creative Praxis
8th and 9th December 2026; University of Manchester

This two-day workshop will help participants translate theoretical insights into practical methodological tools and think with archives “outside of the box”.

Participants are invited to present an "archival puzzle": an object, image, absence, or contradiction that has challenged their archival journey.

Any queries can be directed to archivesoutofthebox@manchester.ac.uk

For full details and to register for any of the above events, please visit the M@M website.

Save the Dates!

Methods Fair 2027

The Methods Fair is an annual one-day event organised in collaboration with Methods North West. It brings together researchers and PGRs from across the region featuring a keynote, talks, posters, and hands-on workshops.

The 2027 Methods fair will be held on Wednesday 26 May.

Read all about last year's Fair here.

Summer School 2027

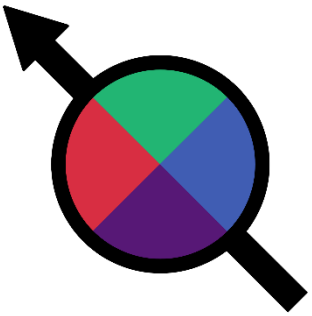
The Methods@Manchester Summer School provides research methods training with a range of courses on offer including Qualitative Interviewing, Digital Methods, Creative Methods, AI Data Analytics, Quantitative methods for qualitative researchers, and Systematic Literature Reviews.

The 2027 Summer School will be held Monday 5 - Friday 9 July.

Read all about the 2026 Summer School here.

Methods North West

is the regional hub for research methods innovation, celebrating the collective strength, depth and breadth of methodological expertise across the participating Universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Lancaster, Lancashire and Keele.



The calls for the MNW Catalyst Bids and Methods Labs are now open!

Catalyst Bids

This funds collaborative projects events, initiatives, workshops and symposia to support cutting-edge developments in research methods across the North West. Catalyst Grants are intended to support creative proposals that speak across disciplinary pathways and research fields and that evidence how the NWSSDTP is taking a lead in the application of cutting-edge methodology regionally, nationally and internationally.

Methods Labs

Methods Labs offer opportunities for postgraduate and academic researchers to come together to work intensively for a concentrated period of time around particular methods or methodologies. Normally running for half or full days, the Methods Labs format is dynamic and flexible, and MethodsNW will support those delivering the Labs.

For details on how to apply to either of the above initiatives, please see the website.

You can also find a short information session from our M@M Director, Dr Jessica Gagnon, on what the MNW Panel are looking for in an application on our YouTube channel.

From your School Representatives

Kumru Akdogan



When you're doing a PhD, it's easy to get caught up in your own research, especially when most of your time is spent in your department, working with your supervisors, or writing your thesis. But there’s a lot happening across the University, and sometimes it’s worth taking a step back and seeing what else is available to you.

Make use of the research skills workshops

The University's Researcher Development programme offers workshops and online courses on academic writing, thesis planning, viva preparation, presentations, and time management, among other topics. There are also coaching and mentoring opportunities. It’s worth checking the programme every now and then, even if you don’t have a particular need in mind. You might come across something useful that you wouldn't have thought to look for yourself.

Keep an eye out for funding

There are funding opportunities beyond your studentship, and some are specifically designed to help PGRs organise activities and bring people together. The University's PGR Funding Opportunities page is a good place to start. For example, the Manchester Doctoral College's Community Enhancement Fund offers up to £1,000 for eligible PGR-led activities. If you've ever thought about organising a reading group, a social event, or something that would help researchers connect across departments, it might be worth looking into.

Meet people beyond your own department

One of the things about a PhD is that your research can become quite isolating, and you don't always get the chance to meet people working on completely different topics. The Manchester Doctoral College supports the PGR community across the University, while events such as the annual Postgraduate Research Festival and Three Minute Thesis competition offer opportunities to share your work and hear about what other researchers are doing. You can also get involved in PGR representation or help organise activities.

Remember that support is available

A PhD doesn't always go as planned (ever!), and there can be times when managing your workload, staying motivated, or finding a balance outside research feels difficult. The University's PGR Wellbeing pages bring together resources and support specifically for postgraduate researchers. It's worth knowing what's available before you need it, and there's no need to wait until things become overwhelming to seek support.

You probably won't need all these resources at once, and that's fine. But it's easy to overlook what's available when you're focused on getting through your next chapter or meeting your next deadline. Taking a little time to explore what's happening across the University might introduce you to a useful opportunity, a new community, or simply someone who is like minded.

PGR Wellbeing Retreats

Full day writing retreats for PGRs: "Writing from a place of calm" writing retreat days

You are warmly invited to join us for these one-day writing retreats!



With inputs from an academic and a wellbeing practitioner, we aim to:

- Create a space where PGRs can write from a place of calm
- Share specific writing skills and techniques
- Share practices that can enhance wellbeing, including Shiatsu and Holistic Acupressure, gentle movement such as Qi Gong, breathing practices and meditation
- Create communities and self-support groups among PGRs from different disciplines within Humanities

During the writing retreat we will introduce you to Shiatsu (holistic acupressure) as well as gentle movements (Qi Gong) to encourage writing from a place of calm. There will be short periods of writing alternated with discussion and exercises that promote wellbeing. The intention is to give you the opportunity to connect with the 'inner critic' voice that stops them from writing from a place of calm and provide suggestions for how to deal with the obstacles you encounter when writing.

During the day, we will share knowledge of specific acupressure points traditionally used to support relaxation, ease everyday stress, tension, promote general wellbeing and encourage creativity, and show you how to use them safely.

We will guide you through a simple visualisation to help you become aware of what is stopping you from writing.

There will also be the opportunity to share experiences and come together, which will serve as a reminder that the stresses and problems we face are commonly shared by others as well.

The retreats will be held:

- **Monday 14/12/2026 10:00 - 16:00, Room 6.208 University Place**
- **Monday 22/03/2027 10:00 - 16:00, Hanson Room, Humanities Bridgeford Street**
- **Monday 24/05/2027 10:00 - 16:00, Hanson Room, Humanities Bridgeford Street**

For all the details and to book a place, please do so via the Training Catalogue or search for HUMS0094.

Celebrating our PGRs!



Every month we celebrate our amazing PGRs and their fantastic achievements! Please contact us if you have anything you would like to share - we would love to know!

Congratulations to:

- **Alisha Ibkar** (PhD Drama) who was awarded the 2026 Postgraduate Essay Prize by the Theatre and Performance Research Association for her essay, "*Performing Minoritarian Care: Muslim Women and the Political Imaginaries of Their Everyday Islamic Ethical Life*". Alisha was also awarded the John Rylands–Newberry Library Short-Term Research Fellowship, which supported a month-long residency at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

- **Yaofu Zhang** (PhD Business and Management) who received the Michael Brady Young Service Scholar Award at the Frontiers in Services Conference in Montréal

Updates from the Library

Library Training and Support for PGRs

Visit the Library website for all our Library Training and Support information and find out more about how the Library can support your studies via our Library support for PGRs page.

Upcoming Workshops

You can find the schedule for all upcoming PGR workshops here.

Christmas Opening Hours

For opening hours over the festive period, please check our opening hours calendars for the Main Library and the AGLC.

New Collections: Expanding the Range of our Digital Archives

The Library has expanded its digital archive collections with a range of new and enhanced resources supporting teaching, learning and research across the humanities.



These collections offer rich primary and secondary source material.

- Proquest Performing Arts One
- Apartheid South Africa Modules IV and V 1948-1994
- Oxford Handbooks Online
- Oxford Intersections
- El Pais Historical Archive 1976-2023
- State Papers Online – Nineteenth Century
- Chinese Dictionary Compendium

University News

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PGR News

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Contact Us | Tel: +44 (0) 161 306 6000 | Web: www.manchester.ac.uk
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