UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
Postgraduate Research Admissions Policy

Policy from June 2017

The purpose of this document is to set out for all interested parties the position of the University of Leeds on key matters relating to recruitment and admission to our research postgraduate programmes.

This policy is the responsibility of Graduate Board and was last reviewed in June 2017

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Section 1  Principles

The University of Leeds is a research-intensive institution which creates, advances and disseminates knowledge. Our aim is to develop outstanding graduates and scholars who can make a major impact upon global society.

The University is shaped by the values of academic excellence, community, professionalism, integrity and inclusiveness. The setting of high admissions standards plays a key role in maintaining academic excellence.

The University of Leeds is committed to providing a professional admissions service through clear, fair and consistently applied policies and procedures. The University aims to provide fair and equal access to all prospective students who have the potential to benefit from and contribute to academic life at a research-intensive university.

The University recognises that, in order to provide fair and equal access to all prospective students, it may need to demonstrate a flexible approach and, where appropriate make adjustments for individual applicants - for example, disabled applicants or applicants who have faced exceptional circumstances.

Our policies and practice are driven by our belief that the life of the University is enriched by having a body of students which reflects the community at large and includes students from all parts of the UK, from other EU countries and from further overseas.

Section 2  Context

The University’s admissions policies are consistent with Chapter B2, Recruitment, Selection and Admissions to Higher Education and Chapter B11, Research Degrees of the Quality Assurance Agency’s Quality Code and comply with current equality laws affecting the admission of students. Admissions policies and practices are also guided by the principles articulated within the Schwartz Report of the Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group 2004 (available at http://www.admissions-review.org.uk/)

Section 3

3.1 Governance
The research postgraduate admissions policy at the University of Leeds is overseen by the University’s Graduate Board.

3.2 Monitoring
This policy will be reviewed annually by Graduate Board and where appropriate policies and procedures for the admission of students to postgraduate research awards will be revised in line with changes to the internal and external admissions environment. Faculty admissions arrangements are outlined in the relevant Faculty Protocol for the Implementation of the Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures. The Protocols are submitted for approval annually.

3.3 Consistency
In order to ensure consistency and fairness, the general principles and procedures set out in this policy are followed by all academic Schools. The University acknowledges that admissions processes will vary to some extent across discipline areas depending on the area. Any variations in process will be detailed in Faculty Protocols.

3.4 Guidance for Admissions Staff
All members of staff with responsibility for the admissions process are given appropriate guidance to fulfil their roles competently and in line with this policy. Structured guidance is given in light of any national or institutional changes to admissions policy or procedures and ongoing counsel is provided to all admissions staff in the Student Education Service.
Section 4  Admissions Requirements

4.1 Selection principles
The University of Leeds operates a fair and equitable selection process ensuring due consideration is given to all applicants who apply by the relevant closing dates. Achievement or predicted achievement of the required qualifications does not necessarily guarantee an offer of a place. All selection decisions are made on the basis of merit and the ability of each applicant to meet the academic and non-academic criteria for admission to the relevant programme. In addition, the University of Leeds will only accept research students into an environment that provides support for research, and where excellent research, recognised by the relevant subject community, is occurring.

The selection criteria must treat all applicants fairly and equally and not discriminate unlawfully because of their age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy or maternity status; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation.

The admissions process is covered by the University’s Policy on Equality and Inclusion which is available from the University’s Equality Policy Unit

Applications for admission to postgraduate research study will be considered under arrangements specified by each Faculty Graduate School Committee which are set down in the relevant Faculty Protocol for the implementation of the University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures

4.2 General entrance requirements
Admissions decisions for research postgraduate programmes at the University of Leeds are made by academic Schools under arrangements specified by the Faculty Graduate School Committee and set out in the Faculty Protocols. Applications are assessed by admissions staff on the basis of information provided on the application form, the submission of relevant academic documents and when required, a research proposal.

Any unsupported or inaccurate claims within an application may invalidate the application and may lead to the applicant being rejected.

In order to comply with the requirements of relevant professional bodies, applicants to certain vocational or professional courses may be required to pass checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (formally a Criminal Records Bureau check), or to demonstrate medical fitness to practise prior to being admitted. Applicants will be advised if these or any other conditions apply when they are made an offer of a place.

Accreditation for Prior Learning (APL) will be considered in respect of the taught components of research degree programme only. Applications for consideration of prior learning will (normally) be made at the time of admission and considered by the relevant Faculty/School in accordance with the procedure set out in the programme of study specification

Graduate Board will be advised of any decisions taken in respect of APL for taught components. Accreditation for prior learning is not permitted, in any circumstances, against the research thesis or thesis preparation components.

In order to qualify for admission to a programme of study leading to a research degree, all applicants must demonstrate that they have the qualifications and/or experience required through meeting the normal minimum entry requirements for the research degree concerned.

Applicants to research degree programmes should normally have at least a first class or an upper second class bachelors honours degree in an appropriate discipline. The criteria for entry for some research degrees may be higher, for example, several faculties, also require a Masters degree. Applicants are advised to check with the relevant School prior to making an application. Applicants who are uncertain about the requirements for a particular research degree are advised to contact the School Graduate School prior to making an application.
Exceptions to this academic requirement may be made when applicants hold other relevant qualifications and/or experience as may be deemed by the relevant committee to be acceptable as equivalent to or in lieu of a degree. Unless otherwise stated in the prescribed programme such applicants will normally be required to satisfy the relevant committee that their educational attainments and experience qualify them to undertake an approved course of supervised research and research training at the appropriate level.

For some research awards applicants must meet the requirements for admission stipulated in the relevant prescribed programme of study and by any relevant professional statutory or accreditation body. When such criteria has to be met the requirements will be set down by the School.

4.3 English Language requirements

Applicants for whom English is not their first language may require an English Language Qualification to gain entry to the University.

Supervision, progression requirements and examination will normally take place in English, unless otherwise stated. Schools must be confident that applicants have the proficiency in English Language necessary to succeed in their chosen research degree and where relevant that they meet the UKVI minimum requirements to obtain a Tier 4 visa.

The minimum requirements for entry to research degree study are stated on the University website. Please note that some faculties have higher requirements than those set out in Appendix A, Section 2. Please consult the relevant school / faculty website or Faculty Protocol for the implementation of the University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures for the relevant information.

English Language requirements include either:

- successful completion of one of the approved Secure English Language Tests (SELT) at the relevant level, such as International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

  or

- Masters or undergraduate degree awarded from a UK HEI/or HEI in a majority English speaking country:
  
  o The duration of the masters degree (not a PG Diploma or PG Certificate) must have been at least 12 months full-time and continuous study. The degree must have been awarded less than 2 years and 4 months from the proposed start date.

  o the duration of the undergraduate degree was at least 2 academic sessions (this would include a 2+2 arrangement that faculties have in place for specific programmes).

  or

- Successful completion of the University's pre-sessional English Language courses. (Applicants need to have obtained a lower level SELT first in order to gain entry to a pre-sessional course)

Please be aware that Secure English Language Tests such as IELTS, must be taken within the two years prior to the start date of the research degree in order to be considered by the University. Students who have a choice between language tests are preferred to opt for IELTS.

Any offer made that is conditional on an English Language requirement will be subject to provision of documentary evidence that the required standard in one of these tests has been met. Applicants who have already taken an English Language test should enclose a copy of their test score with their application.

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1 The date of the award is taken to be the standard award date assuming that the student had no extensions to their period of study and has been awarded at the earliest opportunity following completion of the course. For example, a Leeds Masters student who started their course in September would have an award date of November of the following year.
Applicants will have to show original certificates of undergraduate or masters degrees prior to or at registration, if these have not already been seen by the University.

A list of applicants who are not required to undertake further English Language tests can be found in Appendix A, Section 1. A list of acceptable language qualifications and the minimum pass level required are detailed in Appendix A, Section 2. It should be noted that some Schools specify higher requirements than the University minimum.

Applicants who wish to pursue a research degree candidature under split-site arrangements are required to provide evidence that they have attained a band score of 6.5 in IELTS with no component below 6.0.

Even students with high language scores can find they need additional language support before and during their degree studies at the University of Leeds. The Language Centre offers a range of classes throughout the year, including pre-sessional intensive English courses for academic purposes from July to September. Details of pre-sessional programmes and classes offered during the academic year including contact details for can be found on the Language Centre website

Where an applicant has already satisfied the English Language requirements and subsequently provides further evidence that falls below the University’s or the UKVI’s entry requirements, the offer must be revised as follows:

- An unconditional offer, made on the understanding that English Language proficiency was met, will be changed to conditional upon evidence of a level of at least UKVI minimum of CEFR Level B2. For example, an IELTS test with an overall score of 6.0 taken in 2014 would be overridden by an IELTS test with an overall score of 5.0 taken in 2015, making the offer conditional on English.

- An offer which would normally not need additional evidence of English language proficiency, due to having met this requirement using alternative qualifications, will be made conditional on English if the most recent evidence provided is below CEFR Level B2. For example, an Indian XII or a Bachelor degree from Nigeria taken in 2009 would be overridden by an IELTS test with an overall score of 5.0 taken in 2017, making the offer conditional on English.

- If an applicant provides evidence that they do not meet the English Language requirements for their programme but they do meet the University of Leeds minimum English Language requirement, the School has the discretion as to whether to accept the applicant without the need for further English language evidence.

4.4 Applicants who have non-UK qualifications
Admissions staff have experience in considering a wide range of international qualifications against the University’s entry requirements.

Prospective applicants who wish to discuss whether their qualifications and experience will meet the University’s entry criteria should contact the relevant School to see if this is sufficient and whether the School can support the applicant in a research degree. Whilst the University works with a network of representatives across the globe who can give informed advice on all matters relating to life in Leeds, only the School can decide if it can support the applicant.

General information for international applicants can be found on the University of Leeds International website

4.5 Part-time Study

Applicants should be aware that part-time study is not offered as an option for all research degrees and advice should be sought from the relevant School in advance of making an application.
Where the research degree programme is offered on a part-time basis applicants for part-time study will be considered in the following circumstances only:

(a) The applicant has responsibilities or work commitments (including actively seeking work) which preclude them from studying on a full-time basis (and / or)

(b) The applicant has a long-term medical condition or disability which prevents them from studying on a full-time basis (or)

(c) The Faculty/School is satisfied that the applicant will have access to the necessary facilities for their research and that their attendance will be on a part-time basis

Academic requirements for part-time study are identical to those for full-time study.

Please be aware that for international students current visa regulations would not normally allow study on a part time basis. If you have any query at all the University’s International Student Office can be contacted at: Tel: +44 (0)113 343 3930 or the University of Leeds International website

4.6 Disabled applicants
The University welcomes applications from disabled people. The University will make reasonable adjustments to help ensure that disabled applicants have full and equal access to our admissions procedures and courses. Information about disability is not used when considering your academic eligibility for your chosen research degree. It is reviewed in order to identify your potential study-related support requirements, and your eligibility for disability-related support funding, so that the University can ensure you are supported effectively during the course of your research degree.

The University will always aim to make appropriate adjustments for disabled applicants. However, applicants who choose not to disclose their disability should be aware that it may be more difficult, or in rare cases impossible, to make the appropriate adjustments.

Applicants are invited to indicate their disability status on their application form and we strongly encourage applicants to disclose any disability. Where candidates choose not to disclose their disability this may make it more difficult, or in some cases impossible, for the University to make appropriate adjustments. Disabled applicants are also advised to contact the University’s Disability Team (part of the University’s Equality Service) once an application has been submitted, to discuss any support requirements they may have in relation to the programme for which they have applied.

The admissions process is covered by the University's Policy on Equality and Diversity which is available from the University’s Equality Service website

4.7 Applicants with a health-related issue
This section deals with health-related issues, which are distinct from disability-related issues. Applicants with a health-related issue should contact the relevant Postgraduate Research Tutor as soon as possible if their health is likely to impact on their ability to engage with the admissions process. The University aims to be flexible in such circumstances and to take such issues into account.

The University operates procedures to ensure that applicants who have made the University aware of specific individual needs are provided with appropriate support through the application process and subsequent study where possible. The admissions process is covered by the University’s Policy on Equality and Diversity which is available from the University’s Equality Service website

1 The University is committed to the social model of disability and in line with the definition under the Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone with a physical or mental impairment which is long-term (lasting 12 months or more) and which has a substantial impact of that person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition of disability includes long-term medical conditions such as cancer (from the point of diagnosis), epilepsy, diabetes, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME and HIV/AIDS amongst others.

2 Which are not classed as a ‘disability’. 

3 Which are not classed as a ‘disability’.
Applicants with a disability or health related issue should notify the University as soon as possible by contacting the University’s Equality and Diversity unit in order to discuss their specific needs and how these may be accommodated. Any such factors will have no influence on the selection process but any offer of a place to study on the programme is ultimately made on the basis that any specific disability or health related needs can be reasonably accommodated.

4.8 Applicants wishing to defer/reapply
Deferral of a place of study is at the discretion of the academic School. Once the initial application has been received and an offer has been made, the start date for this application can only be deferred for a maximum of two years before a new application must be submitted.

For example as of April 2017, if an applicant who applied in March 2015 and previously held an offer for a September 2017 start date now wishes to change their start date they must make a new application.

Any decision on the eligibility of applicants who have previously held an offer of a place but failed to achieve the academic conditions at first attempt will be an academic judgement. Such candidates should be aware that no guarantee can be given that another offer will be made, and that the conditions of any future offer may differ to those of the original.

4.9 Criminal convictions
The University has a policy statement on students with criminal records, which can be accessed from the student cases website. This policy includes applicants seeking admission. It should be noted that if an applicant is required to disclose a criminal offence and fails to do so this will generally be considered a very serious matter and is likely to lead to their application being rejected or, if admitted, to their registration at the University being revoked.

Having a prior criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being offered a place; this may depend, for example, on the nature, timing and relevance of the criminal offence in question. The University may request further information about the nature or context of an applicant’s criminal record.

Specific areas of research may involve regular access to children and/or vulnerable adults, and applicants may be required to undertake with satisfactory results, certain checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The University will send further instructions as part of the admissions process where this is the case.

4.10 Registration on more than one programme of study
Candidates for research degrees will not normally be permitted to register concurrently for another programme of study at the University of Leeds and another Higher Education Institution, except when a student is on a joint programme that includes the University of Leeds.

4.11 Masters by Research
A research proposal should be submitted and agreed prior to a School recommending that an offer of a place to a Masters by Research programme is made. This is to ensure that the research proposal and design of the project are clear from the start of the candidature and that the programme can be completed within the timescale of the period of study (12 months full time and 24 months part time).
Section 5  Admissions processes

5.1 Applications
Applicants to postgraduate research degrees are encouraged to apply online which allows the applicant to track the status of their application. It is also possible to apply by downloading a paper version of the application from the same section of the website. Applicants for the Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol) must apply to the National Clearing House and not to the University.

The suitability and qualifications of all applicants are carefully considered in the light of the entry requirements for the particular research degree programme and other requirements of the University e.g. English language requirements. At least two members of staff will be involved in the consideration of each application which meets the University's minimum entry requirements including the Postgraduate Research Tutor and the potential supervisor(s). All applicants are assessed as individuals and will be given equal opportunity to demonstrate relevant skills and provide supporting information where required.

Success in the application process will depend on the supervisory availability and adequate resources and facilities and the fit with the research strategy of the School. Resources would include equipment, library collections, computing facilities and software. Therefore applicants should be accepted only where appropriate expertise for supervision and adequate resources are available. Arrangements are also in place to consider any potential ethical issues in relation to the intended area of research.

Applicants who are uncertain if they meet the entrance requirements for a particular research postgraduate programme are advised to contact the University prior to making an application. Pre-application enquiries should be made with Graduate Schools. The above does not prejudice the University’s right to rely upon published disclaimers relating to delivery of programmes and services.

5.2 Applications Deadlines
For PhD programmes with flexible start dates, applications can be received at any point during the year. It is not unusual for Research Council funded research awards to have a set application deadline and a fixed start date. When deadlines for the receipt of applications do apply the date will be clearly stated on the relevant School/Faculty web pages.

If you intend to apply for funding, you are strongly advised to submit an application for a place at least two months before any specific scholarships deadline.

International students are particularly advised to submit applications as early as possible to ensure they have sufficient time to obtain a visa (and if appropriate ATAS) and prepare for arrival in the UK. Furthermore, an offer of a place is needed for many of the scholarships available to international students and closing dates can often be early in the year.

5.3 Academic Documents
A number of academic documents must be submitted with a research postgraduate application. These can either be photocopies or officially certified copies. If you have submitted a photocopy then we will need to see the original certificate or a certified copy at the point of registration. International applicants who require a Tier 4 student visa to study in the UK should be aware that the Home Office may request to see original copies of academic documents during the visa application process and at the point of entry to the UK and are asked instead to send copies of originals or additional certified copies with their application.

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4 Consideration of applications to some collaborative programmes with other universities may involve academic staff from partner institutions and at least one member of staff from the University

5 officially the first day of any calendar month
Higher Education and Professional Qualifications

If an applicant has already completed professional qualifications or previous degrees, whether at a UK or overseas university, a copy of the final degree certificate should be submitted with the application form.

Transcripts of an applicant’s academic record are also required. These should provide full details of the degree class and grades obtained in each unit or module. If these documents are not in English they should be accompanied by a formal certified translation into English by the awarding institution, by University of Leeds accredited agent and offices or by an official translator, signed and dated including their credentials, company details and confirmation that the translation is accurate.

Applicants who are awaiting the outcome of another degree programme such as an undergraduate or taught postgraduate degree, should provide an interim transcript where possible. Any offer made will be subject to completion of the programme concerned at the prescribed level, and to the production of original or certified copies of academic documents to the University at the point of registration.

If an applicant wishes to start a new degree or makes an application to transfer to Leeds with a supervisor they may be required to provide evidence that they have withdrawn from a particular programme of study.

English Language Qualifications

Proof of English Language proficiency is required as part of the postgraduate research application. Copies of the results of any formal English Language tests, as approved by the University (see Appendix A, Section 2), which provide evidence that an applicant has met the minimum requirements for their chosen programme of study should be submitted with a Research Postgraduate Application. Without this evidence, any offer made will be conditional on completion of an approved English language qualification at the required level. All offers made will be subject to the provision of original or certified copies of academic documents to the University at the point of registration.

Referees

Full, clear and accurate contact details of two referees should be given to the University by the applicant at the point of application.

Academic Schools may request references from academic referees as a crucial element of the selection process. Where they are requested, please note that it is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure references are sent to the University. Where possible they should be part of the initial application submission. Nominated referees should not be related to an applicant and should be qualified to comment in detail on their capacity to cope with the academic demands of the programme for which they are applying. In exceptional circumstances, applicants who are applying with directly relevant work experience may nominate a person with knowledge of their employment activity to act as the second referee.

The acceptance of references is at the discretion of the relevant academic school and any further questions relating to the format of references or nominating appropriate referees should be directed to the Graduate School for the specific programme of study applied to.
5.5 Written work
Some schools require applicants to submit written work such as a research proposal as part of the application process and this should be included with the submitted documents. Applicants should check with the relevant academic school prior to making an application as to whether there are any such requirements.

5.6 Communication with applicants
The Postgraduate Research and Operations Office will formally communicate any offers of a place to study directly with the applicant on behalf of the University of Leeds. Academic Schools will also communicate with applicants during the admissions process, for example requesting further information where required, arranging interviews and having discussions about the proposed research and allocation of supervisors. Any queries about the contents of an offer letter can be addressed to Postgraduate Research and Operations but applicants wishing to query the progress of their application should contact their Graduate School.

5.7 Fraudulent statements and documents, plagiarism and omissions
By submitting an application to the University of Leeds applicants are confirming that the information given is true, complete and accurate. Applicants should not omit any requested or relevant information, make any misrepresentation (for example, through plagiarism) or give false information or documents at any point of the application process including after an offer is made. Should this occur the University reserves the right to dismiss a current or future application, withdraw an offer of a place and/or revoke registration.

The academic school may use a system to process research proposals received in support of an application in order to identify proposals that show similarity. The school will receive notification of any cases where a significant amount of potentially plagiarised material is identified. At the discretion of the school applicants who are identified by the system may be given the opportunity to submit a new research proposal in support of their application.

5.8 Interviews
It is normally expected that a face-to-face interview should take place. In certain circumstances such as when a visit to Leeds is impractical this might take place by other means (ie. telephone/or video conference/ voice over internet protocol [VOIP] or face to face online communication eg Skype, FaceTime). Applicants who are invited for interview may obtain further information about the interview process from the relevant Graduate School.

Some applicants (for example, disabled applicants, pregnant applicants, etc) will require adjustments at interview (for example, a sign-language interpreter) to provide them with full and equal access to the process. Academic Schools are responsible for making reasonable adjustments where possible in such cases. The University’s Equality Service should be consulted for further advice or information.
5.9 Offers
Formal offers of admission, which will include any conditions to be met prior to entry, are only made by Postgraduate Research and Operations acting on behalf of the University’s Graduate Board.

After consideration of the application, the School will recommend to Postgraduate Research and Operations that a formal offer be made and will state any conditions that must be met for successful admission to the programme, such as pre-sessional English Language courses or the charging of bench fees, so that these can be specified in the offer (letter) and brought to the attention of the applicant and sponsors where relevant.

5.9.1 Conditional offer
A conditional offer means that the University of Leeds will offer an applicant a place providing certain conditions are met. Usually conditions are based on the completion of outstanding qualifications or meeting the minimum English Language requirements. Other conditions may include criminal records and health checks. Conditional Offers may state the overall grades that must be achieved. Each offer is specific to an applicant's individual qualifications and circumstances. Applicants must meet all conditions as set by the University prior to the start of the course.

5.9.2 Unconditional offer
An unconditional offer means that an applicant has met the academic and non-academic requirements if appropriate and English Language entry requirements (though they may still need to show original certificates at registration) and has been accepted onto their chosen programme of study at the University of Leeds.

5.9.3 Unsuccessful application
Applicants will receive a response telling them they have been unsuccessful from the academic school to which they applied if the University has decided not to offer them a place on the programme.

5.10 Feedback
Following an interview, unsuccessful applicants may wish to request feedback on the reason for the outcome of their application. All requests for feedback must be made in writing to the relevant Graduate School/Research Postgraduate administrator and must be signed by the applicant. Generally where applicants ask for feedback following interview on why they have not been admitted feedback will be given.

5.11 Fees and scholarships
Acceptance for research postgraduate study does not imply that the University will provide financial assistance. The expectation is that applicants will make satisfactory arrangements for financial support before entry, both for programme fees and for living expenses, for the whole period of the proposed programme at the University. Any documentary evidence of funding that has been secured, for example in the form of a bank statement or sponsor's letter, should be included as part of the application. The University of Leeds currently offers a wide range of scholarships that provide funding for students to undertake postgraduate study at the University. These range from partial funding towards academic fees to fully funded awards which also provide a living allowance. Scholarship deadlines vary and applicants are advised to refer to the Scholarships website to ensure that research degree applications and any application for a scholarship meet the stated deadlines. Further details can be found on the University of Leeds Scholarships website.

5.12 CAS Issuance
Postgraduate Research and Operations issues a Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS), to applicants who have accepted an Unconditional Offer. International students need the CAS in order to apply for a Tier 4 General Student Visa. All necessary data for CAS issuance (e.g. passport details) must also be supplied with the application.
5.13 ATAS
The Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) applies to all students from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) planning to undertake postgraduate study in the UK in certain science, engineering or technology disciplines. Applicants will need to acquire an ATAS certificate.

When relevant applicants are sent a formal offer of a place to study, they will also receive alongside this, an “Initial Proposed Summary of Research Area” statement which is produced by the School that they wish to study in. This summary is used when applying for ATAS. Further details can be found on the Government UK website or the University website.

5.14 Accepting an Offer
Applicants who are successful in gaining a place for research postgraduate study will be made either a conditional or an unconditional offer. Applicants should contact the University of Leeds as soon as possible to confirm whether or not they wish to accept this offer. Applicants are encouraged to respond to their offer on line though they can also email Postgraduate Research and Operations.

5.15 Complaints
The University will consider all applications fairly and effectively in line with the procedures outlined in this document. Applicants applying for a research degree who wish to challenge a decision to reject their application should write to, or where agreed email the relevant Head of School detailing the nature of their complaint. The complaint must normally be made within 14 days of the decision. On receipt of a complaint, the Head of School (or nominee not involved in the admissions process) will review the decision to reject the applicant. Following this review the Head of School (or nominee) will write to the applicant giving grounds for their decision, normally within 14 days.

Applicants who have complained to the Head of School and remain dissatisfied may submit their complaint to the University's Complaints Officer within 14 days of the Head of School's response. This Officer (or their nominee) will not review academic or professional judgements that have been made but will review matters relating to process. The Officer or nominee will aim to provide a response – a reasoned judgement – within 14 days of receiving a complaint. This judgement will represent the University’s final decision on the matter. The Officer will report the outcomes of any reviews they conduct to Graduate Board.

Section 6 Applicants' Personal Data
The personal data of applicants is processed for the purposes of considering their admission. Personal data will be processed in accordance with the University's Code of Practice on Data Protection.

If applicants have any concerns with regard to the processing of their personal data they should contact the University's designated data controller, Adrian Slater.

7 Research Student Visitors
Guidance and information can be found via the University website.
Appendix A - Proof of English Language Proficiency

Section 1 Exemptions

The following applicants are not required to provide further English Language qualification as proof of English language proficiency:

Native English speakers who have completed compulsory education and been educated up to first degree level in English in the following countries will be regarded as having fulfilled the University’s English language requirements:

- Australia
- Belize
- Botswana
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Caribbean States where English is the first language
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Guyana
- Ireland
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Malta
- New Zealand
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- United Kingdom
- United States of America
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

Applicants will be regarded as having met the English Language requirement if they have been awarded:

a) a postgraduate degree (Masters or Doctorate not a PG Diploma or PG Certificate) from one of the above countries (where English is the first language, used as the medium of instruction throughout the education system), if the degree was studied on a full-time, continuous basis and was at least 12 months in duration and was awarded \(^6\)less than 2 years and 4 months from the proposed start date. Or

b) an undergraduate degree studied from one of the above countries (where English is the first language, used as the medium of instruction throughout the education system), if the degree was studied on a full-time, continuous basis for at least two academic sessions (years) and was awarded less than 2 years and 4 months from the proposed start date. This would include a 2+2 arrangement which some faculties do enter into for some programmes.

\(^6\) The date of the award is taken to be the standard award date assuming that the student had no extensions to their period of study and has been awarded at the earliest opportunity following completion of the course. For example, a Leeds Masters student who started their course in September would have an award date of November of the following year.
Section 2 English Language Qualifications

The University recognises a range of English Language qualifications and where applicable, will make an offer which is based on one of the approved tests.

In summary the minimum University language requirement is IELTS band score 6.0 (with not less than 5.5 in any skill area) or internet based TOEFL (iBT) 87 (with not less than 20 in Listening, 21 in Writing, 20 in Reading and 22 in Speaking).

Other minimum acceptable scores for the most commonly presented English Language qualifications are given below. These are acceptable if they were completed less than 2 years from the proposed start date.

**Minimum scores**
- IELTS 6.0 with not less than 5.5 in any component
- Pearson (Academic) 60 with not less than 56 in any component
- iBT TOEFL 87 with not less than 20 in listening, 20 in reading, 22 in speaking and 21 in writing
- Cambridge ESOL Certificate in Advanced English grade C or above
- Cambridge ESOL Certificate of Proficiency in English grade C or above
- City and Guilds (Pitman) English for Speakers of Other Languages Pass at Expert or the Higher Mastery in both the ESOL and spoken ESOL examinations
- GCE O level in English grade C or above
- IGCSE English grade C or above
- IGCSE English as a second language grade C or above
- International Baccalaureate English grade 4 or above
Higher Scores

A School or Faculty can raise the required minimum level of English above the University minimum but cannot lower it. Please note that some schools and certain programmes require higher scores than those listed below.

A higher level of English of IELTS Band Score 6.5 (with not less than 6.0 in any skill area) or Internet Based TOEFL 92 (with not less than 21 in Listening, 21 in Reading, 23 in Speaking and 22 in Writing) is required in the following Schools and Faculties:

Faculty of Medicine and Health
School of Media and Communications
School of Design
School of Education
School of English
School of Food Science and Nutrition (see exception below)
School of History (including the Institute of Medieval Studies)
School of Languages, Cultures and Societies
School of Music
School of Performance and Cultural Industries
School of Politics and International Studies
School of Sociology and Social Policy

Leeds University Business School require IELTS Band Score 7.0 (with not less than 6.0 in any skill area) or Internet Based TOEFL 100 (with not less than 21 in Listening, 21 in Reading, 23 in Speaking and 22 in Writing).

The School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies require IELTS Band Score 6.5 (with not less than 7.0 in writing and not less than 6.0 in any other skill area) or Internet based TOEFL 92 (with not less than 21 in Listening, 21 in Reading, 23 in Speaking and 24 in Writing).

The School of Law require IELTS (Academic) Band Score 6.5 (with not less than 6.5 in Listening and Reading and not less than 6.0 in Writing and Speaking) or Internet Based TOEFL 92 (with not less than 22 in Listening, 22 in Reading, 23 in Speaking and 22 in Writing).

The Professional Doctorate and the Integrated degree of PhD and MSc in Clinical Dentistry in the Leeds Dental Institute and programmes in Nutritional Epidemiology within the School of Food Science and Nutrition, require IELTS band score 7.0 (with not less than 6.5 in any skill area) or Internet based TOEFL 100 (with not less than 22 in Listening, 22 in Reading, 24 in Speaking, and 23 in Writing).
Other qualifications which may be acceptable

For Schools that require applicants to meet the University minimum English language requirement the following may also be accepted, if the applicant has taken the test within two years of their proposed start date:

- University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations: Certificate of Proficiency in English: grades A - C
- University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations: Certificate in Advanced English: grades A - C
- City & Guilds Pitman Qualifications English for Speakers of Other Languages: a pass at Expert (or the Higher Mastery) Level in both the ESOL and Spoken ESOL examinations
- Pearson Test of English Academic: 60 overall, with not less than 56 in any of the four skills
- University of Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language: grades A - C
- Malaysian Certificate of Education: English language at Ordinary level if designated 121 (not 322 or 122): grades 1 - 6
- Hong Kong Examinations Authority Use of English: grades A - C
- Hong Kong Examinations Authority Certificate of Education in English language Syllabus B (Ordinary): grades A - C
- Cambridge Overseas School Certificate in English language: grades 1 - 6
- Singapore/Cambridge GCE O level in English language: grades 1 - 6
- 70% or higher in English in the All-India Senior School Certificate at Standard XII, together with use of English as the medium of instruction at school
- Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English Examination at level III

Other qualifications may be considered following advice from the Language Centre and, if appropriate, Postgraduate Research and Operations will seek approval from the Programmes of Study and Audit Group.
English language qualifications for applicants from the EU (who do not need a visa to come to the UK)

For Schools that require applicants to meet the University minimum English language requirement the following can also be accepted, if the applicant has taken the test recently:

**European High School Certificates as follows:**

**Denmark:**
8 or higher (9, 10, 11, 12, 13) in English in the Højere Forberedelseseksamen

**Finland:**
4 or higher (5, 6) in English in the Ylioppilastutkinto/studentexamen

**Germany:**
2 or higher (1) in English in the Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife/ Abitur

**Netherlands:**
7.5 or higher (8, 9, 10) in English in the Voorberidend Wetenschappe Onderwijs

**Norway:**
4 or higher (5, 6) in English in the Vitnemal

**Sweden:**
3/Godkänd or higher (4 /Väl Godkänd, 5/Mycket Väl Godkänd) in English in the Avgangsbetyg

**Ireland –**
Irish Leaving Certificate – Grade C or above in Ordinary Level English

It may be possible to accept other European English language qualifications in cases where there is valid and reliable evidence that the applicant has reached the level of **C1** on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Other qualifications may be considered following advice from the Language Centre and, if appropriate, Postgraduate Research and Operations will seek approval from the Programmes of Study and Audit Group.