# University of Leeds

# Postgraduate Research Admissions Policy 2020

This document sets out for all interested parties the position of the University of Leeds on key matters relating to recruitment and admission to our postgraduate research courses for all applications received from the 1st September 2020 to 31 August 2021.

# Admissions aims and principles

## University values and aims

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 admissions requirements plays a key role in maintaining academic excellence and inclusivity throughout the process of admission. Our policies and practice are driven by the belief that the life of the University is enriched by having a body of students and researchers which reflects the community at large and includes postgraduate researchers from all parts of the UK and overseas.

The University of Leeds is committed to providing a professional admissions service through implementation of clear and transparent policies and procedures. The University aims to provide fair and equitable access to all prospective postgraduate researchers who have the potential to benefit from and contribute to academic life at a research-intensive university. In order to do so, the University recognises that, it may need to demonstrate a flexible approach and, where appropriate, make adjustments for individual applicants.

## Transparency and consistency

The University is committed to providing accurate and clear communication of information that will support applicants to make an informed decision about their research degree programme. The University requires academic Schools to publish guideline entry requirements for all research degree programmes in relevant communications. All offer letters must also include full details of any conditions an applicant must meet in order to be confirmed onto a programme. Additionally, the University requires academic Schools to publish local level admissions policies, which support this main University policy and provide applicants with more detailed information about course-specific selection criteria and processes. This is set out in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/1656/code_of_practice_for_research_degree_candidatures)

In order to ensure consistency and fairness, the general principles and procedures set out in this policy are followed by all academic Schools.

## QAA, equality law, and equality unit

The University’s admissions policies are consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency’s Code on Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access and comply with current equality laws affecting the admission of students and Chapter B11, Research Degrees of the Quality Assurance Agency’s Quality Code. The admissions process is covered by the University’s Policy on Equality and Inclusion, which is available from the University's [Equality Policy Unit](https://equality.leeds.ac.uk/equality-inclusion-framework/policies/)

# Governance and responsibilities

## Policy review and monitoring

This policy is reviewed annually by the University’s Postgraduate Research Recruitment Group (most recently in February 2020) and, where appropriate, policies and procedures for the admission of postgraduate researchers to research degree programmes may be revised in line with changes to the internal and external admissions environment. For example, the University continually develops its widening access strategy and processes in line with Office for Students (OfS) guidance and the University’s value of inclusiveness.

The admissions policy and practice of academic Schools, as set out in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/1656/code_of_practice_for_research_degree_candidatures), is reviewed annually by Faculty Graduate School committees on the basis of guidance provided by Graduate Board.

Any amendments made to admissions policies after the point of publication will be summarised in an appendix.

## University roles and responsibilities

Admissions policies at the University of Leeds are overseen by the University’s Postgraduate Research Recruitment Group. The Group’s [terms of reference](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22228/research_degree_committees_and_groups/1230/pgr_recruitment_group) can be found on the University website.

Admissions decisions at the University of Leeds are ultimately made by academic Schools and/or faculties in order to admit applicants who have the potential to succeed on course.

The Doctoral College is part of the Student Education Service (SES), provided by professional services staff, and is responsible for managing the admissions procedures in line with the University’s admissions policies, providing support, training and advice to its staff, enquirers and applicants.

All members of academic and professional services staff with responsibility for the admissions process are given appropriate guidance in order to fulfil their roles competently and in line with this policy. Structured guidance is given in the light of any national or institutional changes to admissions policy or procedures and ongoing counsel is provided to all admissions staff in the Doctoral College and Student Education Service.

Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies work collaboratively with admissions and marketing colleagues in delivering the academic elements of the recruitment strategy and Faculty/School’s offer-making strategy. This is facilitated, in part, through Graduate School Committees, where responsibility for the review and implementation of faculty/school admissions policies are ultimately held.

## Applicant responsibilities

The University operates a policy of Dignity and Mutual Respect, which all staff, postgraduate researchers, and third parties, including applicants, are expected to abide by. The University reserves the right to withdraw an application if behaviours are deemed to have contravened this policy. This policy can be found within the [Equality Policy Unit’s](https://equality.leeds.ac.uk/equality-inclusion-framework/policies/) webpages.

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 or misleading 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 University may subscribe to a system that processes research proposals received in support of an application in order to identify proposals that show similarity. Where potentially plagiarised material is identified by these systems the University will review the case and decide whether the applicant is permitted to submit a new research proposal in support of their application. In cases where this opportunity is not granted (or is not taken up by the applicant), the University reserves the right to reject or withdraw the application.

# Entry requirements

## Admissions considerations

The University is committed to developing a diverse student and postgraduate researcher community and our admissions processes are implemented in line with University policy and strategy. Academic and non-academic entrance requirements are reviewed annually in line with the University’s aim to provide fair and equitable access to all applicants who have the potential to benefit from and contribute to a quality education on their degree programme, regardless of background.

All applicants are required to meet certain minimum academic and non-academic standards for entry, however, the University recognises that how these requirements are met may vary by individual applicant. Academic Schools exercise flexibility where appropriate in response to contextual factors and when assessing the overall profile of an applicant. Applicants who do not meet the criteria as listed in the relevant admissions policy but who may meet the requirements via other qualifications and/or experience are encouraged to contact the relevant admissions team. This allows the applicant’s individual set of qualifications, and the context in which these were attained, to be considered.

## General Entry Requirements

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 entry requirements for a particular research degree are advised to contact the Graduate School prior to making an application.

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Exceptions to this general entry requirement may be made when applicants hold other relevant qualifications and/or experience, which may be deemed 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

## Academic requirements

The University considers a wide range of qualifications for entry, and qualifications from across the world are assessed for acceptability through a formal process undertaken by the University’s qualifications groups, and with ultimate ratification by the University’s Postgraduate Researcher Recruitment Group. This may be demonstrated through different qualifications; however, applicants are expected to have demonstrated the ability to study at a progressive and concentrated level. Applicants who would like to discuss their profile in relation to entry requirements are encouraged to contact the relevant [Graduate School admissions team](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/130206/applying/124/graduate_school_contacts).

The University’s approach to a number of qualifications can be found on our [international admissions qualifications webpage](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/site/custom_scripts/admissions_qualifications.php)

## English language requirements

Supervision, assessment and support will take place in English, unless otherwise stated. Schools must be confident that applicants have the proficiency in English language necessary to succeed on their chosen research degree programme and that, where relevant, they meet the UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) minimum requirements to obtain a Tier 4 visa.

The University requires that all applicants to courses at degree-level and above meet our minimum requirements for English, however many courses will have requirements which are higher than this minimum in order to ensure applicants are appropriately prepared for their chosen programme of study. Acceptable English qualifications and the University’s minimum requirements for these can be found under [Accepted Language Qualifications](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/123100/admissions/143/entry_requirements). Applicants can view School-specific English requirements as part of the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/1656/code_of_practice_for_research_degree_candidatures)

Applicants who do not meet the relevant English requirements at the point of application may be made an offer which is conditional on successful completion of one of the approved tests one of the University of Leeds pre-sessional English language courses and their chosen research degree programme.

Where an applicant has already satisfied the English language requirements but subsequently provides further evidence that falls below the University’s or the UKVI’s requirements, the offer must be revised as detailed in appendix A.

## Non-academic requirements

Some courses will require additional checks to be undertaken in order for an applicant to gain admittance. These will be detailed in the relevant School’s admissions policy, however some of the most common checks are highlighted below.

### Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Fitness to Practice

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 (DBS), and/or to demonstrate medical fitness to train prior to being admitted. Applicants will be advised if these or any other conditions apply when they are made an offer of a place

### Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

Applicants who require immigration permission to be the UK may require an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate in order to undertake postgraduate study in certain subject areas. Those who require ATAS clearance must obtain the ATAS certificate before applying for the Tier 4 visa. A statement will be produced by the Graduate School in support of an application for ATAS clearance. **It is the applicant's responsibility to apply for ATAS clearance.** More information about ATAS can be found on the [University website](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/130114/visas_and_immigration/477/atas-academic_technology_approval_scheme).

## Documentation

Various academic documents must be submitted as part of a research degree application. At the application stage copies of certificates are accepted. Original or certified copies of the documents submitted with an application must be produced at the point of registration.[[1]](#footnote-1) **Applicants must not send original certificates.**

### Higher education and professional qualifications

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.

Evidence of all previous degrees taken by the applicant must be submitted with the application form.

If an applicant has already completed professional qualifications or previous degrees, a copy of the final degree certificate should be submitted with the application. Transcripts of an applicant’s academic record, which provide full details of the degree class and grades obtained in each unit/module, are also required.

If these documents are not in English they must be accompanied by a formal certified translation into English, provided by the awarding institution, by a University of Leeds accredited agent and office, or by an official translator. This should be signed and dated, including their credentials, company details and confirmation that the translation is accurate.

Applicants awaiting the outcome of another degree programme must provide an interim transcript. Any offer made will be subject to the successful completion of the programme. In certain circumstances, normally where an applicant wishes to start a new research 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.

Candidates for research degrees are not permitted to register concurrently at the University of Leeds and another Higher Education Institution. Applicants currently studying for a research degree at another institution will be required to provide evidence that they have withdrawn from that programme of study.

### Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) and Tier 4 visa

Applicants who require a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and have previously studied in the UK will need to provide documentary evidence detailing any periods of study on a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa (or on a Student Visa if the UK study was pre-2009) in order for the University to be able to carry out checks to ensure compliance with the UKVI’s Points Based System.

Applicants are encouraged to include documents such as previous CAS, copies of passport pages containing visas or copies of Biometric Residence Permits with their application. Any information that is not included in the application will be requested when the application is considered, or we may need to ask the permission of the applicant to check their UK immigration history directly with the UKVI.

###  English qualifications

Proof of English language proficiency is required as part of the application to the University. Copies of the results of any acceptable, formal English tests, which evidence that an applicant has met the requirements for their chosen course should be submitted with the application.

Without this evidence, any offer made will be conditional on meeting the minimum English requirements. Any offer made that is conditional on an English requirement will be subject to provision of documentary evidence that the required standard has been met

Professional qualifications are not accepted as evidence of English Language competence.

### English language requirements

We accept the following as evidence of English language proficiency:

1. The successful completion of one of the approved English Language Tests, such as **International English Language Testing System (IELTS) [[2]](#footnote-2)**
2. 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)
3. A masters [[3]](#footnote-3) or undergraduate degree [[4]](#footnote-4) awarded from a UK HEI

If an applicant has already satisfied the English Language requirements and subsequently provides further evidence that falls below the University’s or the UKVIs entry requirements, as detailed in appendix A.

The offer must be revised to reflect the most recent SELT and could result in an offer being amended from unconditional to conditional.

Schools may also request a higher level of English language proficiency, if the research topic requires it.

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.

### English language exemption

If an applicant provides evidence that they do not meet the English Language requirements for their programme butmeet the University of Leeds minimum English Language requirement for research degrees study, the relevant School has the discretion to accept the applicant without the need for further English language evidence.

###  References

Contact details of two referees should be provided as part of the application. Schools may request references from academic referees as a crucial element of the selection process.

Nominated referees must not be related to an applicant and should be qualified to comment in detail on the applicant’s capacity to cope with the academic demands of the programme for which they are applying.

Information and guidance to referees can be found on the [University website](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22226/research_degree_admissions_and_registration/1157/references_for_research_degree_applications).

### Research proposal

Some research areas require applicants to submit a research proposal as part of the application process. Applicants should check with the relevant Graduate School before making an application. Information on writing a research proposal is available on the University website.

### Masters By Research

A research proposal should be submitted and agreed as part of the application process, to ensure that the programme can be completed within the period of study (12 months full time and 24 months part time).

## Advanced entry

Accreditation of prior learning (APL) is a process undertaken by the University in order to assess and, as appropriate, recognise prior experiential learning or prior certificated learning for academic purposes. This recognition may give the learning a credit value and allow it to be counted towards the completion of a course of study. Credit Transfer is the process by which the University accepts credit arising from prior certificated learning, either awarded by itself or another institution, as contributing to an award of the University.

Any decision on credit transfer or entry of postgraduate researchers with advanced standing is an academic decision taken within the relevant School at the point of admission onto a programme of study. Retrospective applications from postgraduate researchers part-way through a course will not normally be considered. Further details of the University’s policy can be found on our [APL webpage](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22149/a-z_of_policies_and_key_documents/623/accreditation_of_prior_learning).

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](http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22168/student_support-related_policies/646/ordinances).

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.

# Application process

## Application routes and deadlines

The University is committed to developing a socially and culturally diverse student and postgraduate researcher community and therefore encourages those from all backgrounds to apply for a research degree.

International applicants requiring a visa are advised to submit applications as early as possible to ensure they have sufficient time to obtain their visa and prepare for arrival in the UK. An offer of a place is also needed for many of the scholarships available to international applicants, and scholarship closing dates can often be early in the year.

If an applicant intends to apply for funding, an application should be submitted for a place at least two months before any specific scholarship deadline.

Applicants to postgraduate research degrees must [apply online](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/125187/applying_for_research_degrees).[[5]](#footnote-5) 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 academic staff must be involved in the consideration of each application which meets the University’s minimum entry requirements, including the relevant Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and the potential supervisor(s).[[6]](#footnote-6)

Pre-application enquiries (including eligibility) should be made with the relevant [Graduate School admissions team](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/130206/applying/124/graduate_school_contacts) prior to making an application.

## Part-time study

Academic requirements for part-time study are identical to those for full-time study and the same principles of admission apply to part-time entry.

Part-time study is not offered as an option for all research degree programmes and advice should be sought from the relevant Graduate School before making an application.

Where the research degree programme is offered on a part-time basis, applicants will be considered only when the Graduate School is satisfied that the applicant will have access to the necessary facilities for their research on a part-time basis.

## Fee status and financial support

Applicants may be subject to a [fee assessment](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/128004/fees_and_costs/601/fee_assessment) in order to determine the tuition fees they will be required to pay, and all postgraduate researchers are expected to have made arrangements to meet the tuition fee payment requirements before accepting their offer. For information about tuition fee payment options please visit our [tuition fees payment schedule website](https://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10210/paying_fees_and_charges/604/tuition_fees).

The offer of study does not imply that the University will provide financial assistance. The expectation is that applicants will make satisfactory arrangements for financial support before the start of study and for the full duration of the programme.

Any evidence of secured funding, such as sponsorship must be included as part of the supporting documents of the application.

The University strives to broaden access to scholarships and other financial support in an effort to minimise the impact of any financial barriers to study. We offer comprehensive [financial support](https://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10230/university_scholarships_and_funds) to help with the costs of studying, which includes a range of scholarships and/or bursaries. Support from the University does not have to be repaid.

Details of scholarship opportunities for postgraduate researchers can be found on the university’s research opportunities site <https://phd.leeds.ac.uk/>.

Eligible UK postgraduate researchers, whether full-time or part-time, are able to apply for a repayable government loan. A [postgraduate doctoral loan](https://www.gov.uk/funding-for-postgraduate-study) can help with course fees and living costs while studying, Information on how to apply and the eligibility criteria is outlined on the government website at the links above.

Please see the University webpage for the most up to date [information for EU applicants](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/123000/international_students/365/eu_referendum__information_for_students).

##  Tier 4 sponsorship

The University requires additional information from applicants who require sponsorship under Tier 4 and have studied previously in the UK under Tier 4. This information will be used to ascertain whether an applicant can be sponsored and, as these checks may be undertaken only after an offer is made, applicants should be aware that an offer of a place does not constitute confirmation of sponsorship. Where UKVI allows exceptions to its policy, the University reserves the right to make its own assessment on whether these are applied.

##  Previous study in the UK

Applicants who require a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and have previously studied in the UK must provide evidence detailing any periods of study on a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa (or on a Student Visa if the study in the UK was before 2009) in order for the University to ensure compliance. Applicants should include documents including previous CASs/visas and /or copies of Biometric Residence Permits, as part of their application.

Any information that is not included in the application will be requested when the application is considered, or we may need to ask the permission of the applicant to check their UK immigration history directly with the UKVI.

Applicants who require sponsorship to study in the UK should note that the University does not sponsor applicants for part-time courses as standard practice.

##  Age and safeguarding

The University recognises that someone’s age (if under 18) or safeguarding position may need to be considered. Please see the School’s policies for further information, as well as our [Safeguarding Policy](file:///F%3A%5C2021%20plan%5C2021%20plan%20updated%5CThe%20University%20recognises%20that%20someone%E2%80%99s%20age%20%28if%20under%2018%29%20or%20safeguarding%20position%20may%20need%20to%20be%20taken%20into%20account.%20For%20certain%20courses%20there%20may%20be%20restrictions%20in%20place%20for%20module%20choice%20or%20admission%20for%20those%20under%2018%3B%20please%20see%20the%20school%20policies%20for%20further%20information%20as%20well%20as%20our%20Safeguarding%20Policy%20and%20our%20Information%20for%20Applicants.) and our [Information for Applicants](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/download/392/under_18_applicants).

Parental/Guardian consent forms must be submitted before a place can be confirmed.

UKVI guidance states that under Tier 4 (General), students must be 16 or over. Accordingly, the University cannot assign a CAS for anyone under 16 and those reliant on a Tier 4 (General) visa must be aged 16 or over in order to be considered for sponsorship.

##  Criminal convictions

The University may ask applicants to declare a relevant unspent criminal conviction as part of the process of accepting an offer which is made. The University does not require this at application stage unless and / or until an offer is made which the applicant wishes to accept.[[7]](#footnote-7) Information about why this information is requested, and the process for disclosing a relevant unspent criminal conviction is on the [University website](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/declaration) and in the University’s [policy statement on students with criminal records](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/documents/applicants_students_criminal_record.pdf).

##  Disability

The University welcomes applications from disabled people.[[8]](#footnote-8) The University will make reasonable adjustments, with the aim of ensuring that disabled applicants have full and equal access to our admissions procedures and courses. Information about disability is not used when considering academic eligibility for the chosen course. It is reviewed in order to identify the potential study-related support requirements, and the eligibility for disability-related support funding, so that the University can ensure the applicant is supported effectively on course.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to declare their disability status on their application so that reasonable adjustments and/or other support requirements can be made/considered. The University will always aim to make appropriate adjustments for disabled applicants. However, applicants who choose not to declare their disability should be aware that, without the knowledge it may be more difficult, or in rare cases impossible, for the University to provide support and/or make the reasonable adjustments. Disabled applicants are also advised to contact the University’s Disability Services team (disability@leeds.ac.uk) once an application has been submitted, to discuss any support requirements they may have in relation to the course for which they have applied.

# Applicant Support

The following section gives an overview of some key areas of support available to applicants and/or postgraduate researchers of the University, however more general guidance on support can be found on our [Wellbeing and Support](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/128003/campus_life/10/wellbeing_and_support) webpages.

## Applicants with a health-related issue

This section deals with health-related issues or additional support needs,[[9]](#footnote-9) which are distinct from disability-related issues. Applicants with a health-related issue should contact the relevant academic School as soon as possible if their health is likely to impact on their ability to engage with the admissions process. Offers made to some programmes in the Schools of Dentistry and Medicine are conditional upon a satisfactory occupational health assessment to be undertaken before the commencement of studies. Applicants will be advised if these or any other conditions apply when they are made an offer of a place.

If any applicant feels that their prior ill health has meant that they have faced exceptional circumstances which should be taken into account by the University when considering their application, they should refer to the section below.

## Applicants who have faced exceptional circumstances

If any applicant feels that any disability, prior ill-health – or other personal circumstance (for example, bereavement, or other difficult home or family circumstances) – may have affected their previous education, or grades received in past examinations, then they are welcome to contact the relevant School to discuss this further. All formal requests for mitigating circumstances which are supported by a full declaration about the nature of the circumstances will be considered in the admissions process.

Where those circumstances are affecting, or have affected, current studies the correct course of action should be to notify the relevant exam board or awarding body of those circumstances. Whilst an applicant is welcome to notify (via a verified statement) the relevant admissions office of the circumstances, the University will assume that the relevant board/body has taken these mitigating circumstances into account when awarding the final results and it will be these final results that will be used when making a decision.

## Applicants who are pregnant or have young children

In line with the University [policy on support for students and postgraduate researchers who are pregnant or have young children](https://equality.leeds.ac.uk/equality-inclusion-framework/policies/), applicants who are pregnant are advised to inform the Graduate School admissions team at an early stage, so that consideration can be given to appropriate support being available from the start of their degree programme.

## Guidance for trans applicants

Applicants who do not wish to disclose their trans status to the Faculty/School admissions team but require their status to be changed should contact rp\_applications@leeds.ac.uk and the team will be able to support them through the process. The University is required to carry out identity checks as part of the registration process, and/or admissions staff may be required to advise the relevant Admissions Manager of a status change in order to facilitate removal of any previous documentation, however these will be undertaken confidentially and with sensitivity. Full guidance to support trans staff, postgraduate researchers and students can be found on [Equality Policy Unit](https://equality.leeds.ac.uk/equality-inclusion-framework/policies/) website.

# Reapplications and former students of the University

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 applicants 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.

Applicants who have been withdrawn from their earlier studies due to academic failure may apply for re-entry to the University, but not to the same or a closely related research area. Applicants who previously left the University due to non-academic reasons, for example, ill health, financial reasons, will not be subject to this condition. When assessing applications from former students all relevant factors will be considered, including previous study, and applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Applicants who have been permanently excluded (expelled) from the University [[10]](#footnote-10) are not permitted to reapply and will be advised as such at the time of exclusion. Those who do reapply will be deemed to have contravened the responsibilities of an applicant to avoid misrepresentation will be rejected or have any outstanding offer(s) revoked. Former students and postgraduate researchers who are unclear on whether they are permitted to reapply should contact [Student Cases](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/student_cases.html) for further information.

Applicants who require a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and have previously studied at the university under Tier 4 sponsorship will be subject to academic progression checks to ensure UKVI compliance.

##  Deferral requests

The University considers a deferred applicant as an offer-holder who wishes to change their year of entry to the following academic year, or an applicant who applies for the following academic year from the outset. Applicants seeking deferred entry must engage in the full admissions process (including any required attendance at interviews) during the cycle in which they applied.

Deferral of a place of study is at the discretion of the School and can only be deferred for a maximum of two academic years (from the date of application submission) before a new application must be submitted.

Such applicants 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.

## Change of start date

Under certain circumstances it may be necessary for an applicant to change their start date within the same academic year. Prior to registration, approval of the change of a start date must be made by the Graduate School, in consultation with the prospective supervisors.

Retrospective changes to the start date can also be requested, once candidates have registered on their degree; but such changes do not lead to additional time to the standard period of study and no subsequent extension requests can be made in relation to this.

# Appeals and complaints

The University will consider all applications fairly and in line with the procedures outlined in this document. Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback.

If, following receipt of feedback, applicants wish to challenge a decision to reject their application they should write to the relevant Graduate School, detailing the nature of their complaint. The complaint must typically be made within 14 days of the decision.

On receipt of a complaint, the decision to reject the application will be reviewed. Following this review the application will be written to and given grounds for the decision, normally within 14 days.

Applicants who have complained and remain dissatisfied may submit their complaint to the University’s Complaints Officer within 14 days of the initial response to the appeal. This Officer (or their nominee) will not review academic or professional judgements that have been made but will review procedural matters. The Officer or nominee will aim to provide a response 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 the Postgraduate Researcher Recruitment Group.

# Application assessment

Applications are assessed on the information provided as part of the application, including supporting documents and where relevant the research proposal. All applicants are given fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate relevant skills and provide supporting information where required. Achievement or predicted achievement within the required qualifications does not guarantee an offer of a place to study. The selection criteria must treat all applicants fairly and not discriminate unlawfully because of their age; disability; sex; gender reassignment; pregnancy or maternity status; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation.

The outcome of the assessment can depend on various factors, including the availability of suitable supervisors, adequate resources and facilities, and the fit of an applicant’s research proposal with the research strategy of the relevant School.[[11]](#footnote-11) Ethical issues of a proposed study may also be considered.

Applications for admission to postgraduate research study will be considered under arrangements specified by each Faculty Graduate School Committee set out in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/1656/code_of_practice_for_research_degree_candidatures)

## Interviews

All applicants must be interviewed before an offer of admission can be made.

At least two members of academic staff must be involved in conducting the interview. It is normally expected that at least one of the interviewers is a potential supervisor and another is not a member of the proposed supervisory team.

The interview must be conducted in English. Where a face-to-face interview is impractical the interview may be conducted by telephone or by video streaming. Some applicants (for example, disabled applicants, applicants who are pregnant, etc.) will require adjustments at interview (for example, a sign-language interpreter or an adjustment to an audition process) to provide them with full and equal access to the process. Academic Schools are responsible for making reasonable adjustments where possible. The University’s Disability Services team should be consulted for further advice or information regarding disability related adjustments (disability@leeds.ac.uk) and the Equality Policy Unit for advice on other adjustments (equality@leeds.ac.uk).

## Additional requirements

Some research degree programmes 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 have to be met the requirements will be set down by the School.

## Exceptional circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, if an applicant does not meet the usual entry requirements, or the School would like special arrangements to be made for the applicant, the School can make a case for the applicant to be made an offer a place. This could include applicants who hold other relevant qualifications and/or experience in lieu of a degree. Further information is available on the [University website](https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22226/research_degree_admissions_and_registration/1023/exceptional_cases_for_postgraduate_researcher_admissions).

# Decisions and communications with applicants

##  Communications during the application process

Applicants will receive acknowledgement of receipt of an application from the University. Graduate School admissions teams may also contact the applicant where further information is required in order to process the application; applicants must therefore ensure that they notify the University of any changes to their contact details.

## Offers of a place of study

Formal offers of a place of study are only made by the Doctoral College (Admissions), acting on behalf of the University’s Graduate Board, and following the recommendation of the relevant Graduate School.

Offers will be communicated by letter – and may include specific conditions to be met for successful admissions to the programme (see below for further information).

##  Types of offer

A **conditional offer** means that the University will offer a place to the applicant providing they meet certain specified conditions. Each offer is specific to an applicant.. Usually conditions are based on the completion of outstanding qualifications or meeting English language requirements, and may state specific grades and/or subjects required. Other conditions may include criminal record and health checks.[[12]](#footnote-12)

An **unconditional offer** means that an applicant has met the academic and non-academic entry requirements and has been accepted onto their chosen programme of study at the University of Leeds. As described above, an applicant may be permitted to complete non-academic requirements (such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or health checks) after registration at the discretion of the relevant School. Proof that these requirements will be met can be used to make an unconditional offer.

##  Accepting an offer

Applicants should contact the University of Leeds as soon as possible to confirm whether or not they wish to accept this offer via the online application form or by email to rp\_applications@adm.leeds.ac.uk

##  Unsuccessful applications

Applicants will be notified if the University has decided not to offer them a place on the degree programme.

##  Feedback

Unsuccessful applicants may want feedback on the reason for this outcome. This request must be made by the applicant to the relevant Graduate School. Generally applicants will be provided with feedback as part of the outcome information provided.

##  Withdrawn applications

An application may be withdrawn either by the applicant, or by the University. If the University withdraws an application the reason will usually be communicated directly to the applicant. The University reserves the right to withdraw an offer up to the point at which it has been accepted by an applicant. An applicant may be withdrawn if they fail to attend the admissions interview without making contact with the University, or if they are unable to attend and an alternative date cannot reasonably be found. An offer may also be withdrawn at any point if it is found that an applicant has failed to comply with the applicant responsibilities.

**The above does not prejudice the University’s right to rely upon published disclaimers relating to delivery of courses and services.**

#  Applicant data

The personal data of applicants is processed for the purposes of considering their admission in accordance with the [University’s Code of Practice on Data Protection](https://dataprotection.leeds.ac.uk/data-protection-cop/). If applicants have any concerns about the processing of their personal data or they wish to make a request regarding their individual rights in line with data protection legislation they should contact Alice Temple, the University’s Data Protection Officer, at a.c.temple@leeds.ac.uk

# Appendix A: Revision of offers for English

Where an applicant has already satisfied the English language requirements but subsequently provides further evidence that falls below the University’s or UKVI’s requirements, the offer must be revised as detailed below.

* An unconditional offer, made on the understanding that English language proficiency was met, will be changed to conditional upon evidence that the currently achieved level is lower than the UKVI minimum of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) Level B2. For example, an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test with an overall score of 6.5 taken in 2019 would be overridden by an IELTS test with an overall score of 5.0 taken in 2020, making the offer conditional on English.
* Where an applicant would be exempt from providing additional English language evidence from an older qualification but provides a more recent qualification that shows a level which is below CEFR B2, any offer made will be conditional on meeting the English language requirements for the course. For example, an Indian XII or a Bachelor degree from Nigeria taken in 2011 would be overridden by an IELTS test with an overall score of 5.0 taken in 2017.
* Where more recent evidence is provided which does not meet the English entry requirements for the course, but exceeds the UKVI minimum of CEFR Level B2, it is at the discretion of the academic School whether an English condition should be made.

# Appendix: Useful contacts and resources

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Team** | **Website(s)** | **Email** |
| **Admissions Enquiries** (for course or admissions information) | <https://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/102000/research_degrees> | rp\_applications@adm.leeds.ac.uk |
| **Data Protection** | [www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/data\_protection.html](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/data_protection.html) | a.c.temple@leeds.ac.uk |
| **Disability Services** | [www.disability@leeds.ac.uk](http://www.disability@leeds.ac.uk) |  |
| **Equality Policy Unit** | [www.equality.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.equality.leeds.ac.uk) | equality@leeds.ac.uk |

#  Version control

Updated by Jo Nassor, January 2020

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date of amendment | Change detail | Section |
| January 2020 | Significant revision of content | ALL |
|  |  |  |

1. 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 at the point of entry to the UK. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Awarded no more than two years before the proposed start date of study [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The duration of the masters degree must be at least 12 months of full-time and continuous study. The degree must have been awarded less than two years from the proposed start date. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The duration of the undergraduate degree must be at least two academic sessions. This would include a 2+2 arrangement that faculties have in place for specific programmes. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Applicants for the Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol) must apply to the National Clearing House and not to the University. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. 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 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. 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 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 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 on that person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition of disability includes long-term medical conditions such as cancer, HIV/AIDS and MS (in each case from the point of diagnosis) and may include epilepsy, diabetes, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME amongst others. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Which are not classed as a disability. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For disciplinary reasons and/or under the Referred Student Procedure and/or for reasons of misconduct or fitness to train in a professionally-regulated discipline. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Resources could include, but is not exclusive to, equipment, library collections, computing facilities and software [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. If these conditions remain unmet prior to registration, proof that these checks will be fulfilled during semester one can be used to confirm a place. This can be an appointment card or evidence of when forms were submitted. If these checks are failed during semester one, registration could be withdrawn or the programme of study may be changed. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)