



University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER

# POSTGRADUATE STUDY AND FUNDING

## Career Planning Series

Careers & Enterprise

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**CAREERS  
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# **Introduction**

This guide contains information about applying for postgraduate study and about finding funding for postgraduate study. It is intended as an introduction only.

- **Postgraduate Study**
- **What Sort of Postgraduate Study is Available?**
- **What is a Taught Course?**
- **How Do I Find Information on Taught Courses?**
- **Conversion & Vocational Postgraduate Courses**
- **What is a Research Degree?**
- **Finding Information on Postgraduate Research Programmes**
- **Where can I find Information on Postgraduate Study Abroad**
- **Postgraduate Funding**

## Postgraduate Study

The first place to look is **Prospects**. The Prospects website offers information and guidance on reasons for considering postgraduate study, profiles of institutions, help for international students, funding options as well as details on studying abroad.

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study?p=18>

Prospects also have an online search facility to help you search for postgraduate taught courses, conversion courses and research opportunities.

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-courses>

UCAS and Find a Masters are also comprehensive online databases, allowing you to search for Postgraduate courses.

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/postgraduate>

<http://www.findamasters.com>

Research opportunities (In the UK or abroad) are also often advertised via Jobs.ac.uk and Find a PhD.

<http://www.jobs.ac.uk/>

<http://www.findaphd.com/>

You can browse our careers pages on Postgraduate study here: <https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/further-study>

## Making a postgraduate application

Most postgraduate applications will require a personal statement (typically one side of A4) and for postgraduate research courses, a research proposal. You may also need to provide copies of certificates/transcripts of previous qualifications.

Always follow the instructions you are given and tailor your application carefully. Typically you will be asked to cover:

- Reasons for wanting to do the course and attend the specific university. You can reference any relevant academics or literature to support your application and make clear the reasons for your choice of postgraduate study.
- Key aspects of your previous studies, technical skills (if applicable), dissertation or final year project.
- How postgraduate study can enhance your career aspirations.
- Relevant skills and experience gained from outside of your studies, positions of responsibility etc.

My Postgrad Apps is an online system which can help you especially if applying for more than one course. <http://www.mypostgradapps.com>

Guidance on the University of Salford's postgraduate research study website:

<http://www.salford.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/applying/applying-for-research>

Additional advice is available in the 'Writing a Research Proposal' Guide – produced by the Skills for Learning Team in the Library, at the University of Salford.

<http://www.salford.ac.uk/skills-for-learning/home/all-study-guides>

### **Prospects**

Useful guidance is also available on the Prospects website:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/masters-degrees/personal-statements-for-postgraduate-applications>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/phd-study/what-is-a-phd>

### **Vitae**

Vitae supports the professional development of researchers and has useful guidance for anyone considering undertaking a doctorate

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/doing-research/are-you-thinking-of-doing-a-phd>

## What Sort of Postgraduate Study is Available?

Postgraduate study can range from one year to three years or longer depending on the type of qualification gained. Postgraduate qualifications tend to be divided into:

- **Taught Courses**
- **Conversion and Vocational Courses**
- **Research Degrees and Studentships**

## What is a Taught Course?

Taught courses can include Masters' courses, postgraduate diplomas/certificates, other specialist courses and a wide range of professional qualifications.

Taught Courses usually consist of a number of modules and units, which are often delivered by continuous assessment and/or exams. There will be a set amount of contact time with the course providers, which will take the form of seminars, tutorials and lectures. Postgraduate diplomas and certificates are usually awarded after the successful completion of a postgraduate taught course. Qualifications include:

**PGDip, PGCert, PGCE.**

For a taught Masters qualification, the final assessment for a Master's degree is often based on the submission of a dissertation, usually between 10,000 - 20,000 words.

Examples of qualifications include

**Masters of Arts (MA)**

**A Master of Science (MSc)**

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)**

**Master of Education (MeD)**

## **How do I find Information on Taught Courses?**

There is no central admissions system that covers all postgraduate courses. How and when you apply depends on the institution and on the popularity of the course.

The following may help you in your search:

### **Find a Masters**

This is a searchable database of Masters' Degree programmes in the UK and Ireland.

<http://www.findamasters.com>

### **The Guardian**

Courses with spare places to fill often advertise in *The Guardian* newspaper on a Tuesday.

<http://www.theguardian.com/education/list/educationsubject>

### **UCAS Postgraduate Course search**

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/postgraduate/apply-and-track>

### **Postgraduate Study Fair**

Held annually in Central Manchester usually in November, this fair has stands from many UK Universities offering taught or research postgraduate pathways. The fair will be advertised by the Careers and Employability Service and via the website.

<http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/events/postgraduatestudyfair>

### **Postgraduate Study at the University of Salford**

<http://www.salford.ac.uk/study/postgraduate>

# **Conversion and Vocational Postgraduate Courses**

## **What is a Conversion Course?**

These are short vocationally orientated qualifications designed to enable graduates of one discipline to acquire skills and training in a different discipline.

Conversion courses are usually taught courses and take one academic year. Examples include conversion courses in Computing/Information Technology and Law for graduates without a first degree in this area.

## **How Do I Find Information on Conversion Courses?**

There is no central admissions system. You will need to contact the institution you wish to study at. The following may help you in your search:

### **FindAMasters**

This site has an online search facility which can help you search for conversion courses by using the keyword "conversion" in your search, alongside the subject area.

<http://www.findamasters.com>

### **Other Vocational courses**

Numerous career areas require postgraduate study e.g. social work and medicine courses, as well as teacher training. UCAS has a search facility for many postgraduate qualifications.

<http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/postgraduate>

### **Prospects**

Prospects also provide information on conversion courses. <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/conversion-courses>

## **What is a Research Degree?**

Research involves the in-depth study of a specific field, usually related to your first-degree subject. The results are presented as a written report known as a thesis or dissertation of usually 60,000 –100,000 words.

This dissertation forms the subject of an oral examination (viva) usually conducted by two specialists in your field of research. Most research degrees involve working closely with one or more experienced researchers who supervise your study.

The most well-known research qualification is the **PhD** which usually lasts a minimum of 3 years full-time, also known as the DPhil.

### **Masters Degrees by Research**

These are shorter than a PhD usually lasting 12 months full-time, although some may take longer. Qualifications can include MA or MSc by research, MPhil or MRes. The MPhil usually lasts for two years and requires the student to produce a research paper of around 40,000 words. Some MPhils have a significant taught element in their first year whilst others are purely research based.

A recent development is the Master of Research (MRes) which provides a blend of research and taught courses in research methods. It may be possible to transfer onto a PhD programme at a later date. You should discuss this with the institution concerned.

## Finding Information on Postgraduate Research Programmes

There are several websites dedicated to research opportunities, e.g.

### **Jobs.ac.uk**

Is the main recruitment site for the academic sectors. Opportunities cover research, science, academic and related professions. Site also includes studentships and postdoctoral positions.

<http://www.jobs.ac.uk>

### **FindAMasters.com/FindAPhD.com**

This site has an online search facility which can help you search for research opportunities at MPhil level. You can also search for current PhD studentships via the FindaPhD site.

<http://www.findamasters.com/> and <http://www.findaphd.com>

### **Research Studentships**

Sometimes university departments offer Graduate Teaching Studentship Schemes where fees are paid in return for undertaking teaching or research duties.

Posts are also advertised throughout the year on university websites and in the educational press and relevant specialist journals, such as *The Guardian* and *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, *New Scientist* etc.

#### ➤ **The Guardian**

<http://education.guardian.co.uk>

#### ➤ **Times Higher**

[http://www.timeshigherededucation.co.uk/jobs\\_home.asp](http://www.timeshigherededucation.co.uk/jobs_home.asp)

#### ➤ **New Scientist**

<http://www.newscientistjobs.com>

## **Research opportunities at Salford**

The University of Salford annually advertises vacancies for Graduate Teaching Studentships which are funded PhDs. You can search all research opportunities via:

<http://www.pg.salford.ac.uk/g-t-s>

## **Other Research Opportunities**

The majority of research degrees are taken at universities and other higher education institutions. There are some opportunities for studying, often in partnership with a university, in government laboratories, hospital laboratories, research institutions and in industry. Such opportunities will usually be advertised in the specialist press for your subject, and most commonly on <http://www.jobs.ac.uk>

Collaborative projects between industry and academia are sometimes possible, particularly in engineering and science. These include:

## **Knowledge Transfer Partnerships**

Under this scheme, researchers are employed by a company for a specific project and are able to register for a PhD through a partner university to work on an industrially relevant research project.

<http://ktp.innovateuk.org>

## **Collaborative Postgraduate Training and Knowledge Transfer**

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) has developed a range of opportunities involving collaboration with industry to lead to industrially-relevant postgraduate training.

<https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/innovation/business/opportunities/knowledgetransferpartnerships>

## **Where can I find information on Postgraduate Study Abroad?**

Application procedures will vary from country to country so it is essential that you research eligibility criteria and procedures well in advance. The following are useful starting points:

### **Braintrack University Index**

This links to 5300 institutions in 152 countries and contains contact details for higher education institutions all over the world:

<http://www.braintrack.com>

### **Embassies/Commissions**

Embassies, commissions and educational/cultural organisations can be a useful start when trying to track down overseas institutions. There is a database of embassies at: <http://www.embassyworld.org>

### **Ploteus**

Search for information on learning opportunities in Europe, exchange programmes and grants and information on moving abroad.

<http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus>

### **The Fulbright Commission**

The Commission promotes and supports educational exchange between the UK and the US. The Fulbright Awards Programme provides scholarships for postgraduate study and scholarships and fellowships for lecturing and/or research: <http://www.fulbright.co.uk>

### **Study Overseas**

The following sites provide university and college advice for students worldwide who are considering studying in a different country.

<http://www.studyoverseas.com>

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/countries>

<http://www.studiesinaustralia.com>

<http://online.goinglobal.com/guides.aspx?context=Global>

## Universities Worldwide

A searchable database of universities internationally: <http://univ.cc>

## USA and Canada

Petersons, an American publisher of HE material, includes a searchable database of US Masters and Research degrees:

<http://www.petersons.com>

## Postgraduate Funding

It is often much easier to obtain the offer of a place to undertake a postgraduate course than it is to get the money to finance it. With the exception of teacher training and Social Work, there are **no** mandatory awards from the Local Education Authorities (LEAs), Government or Public Sector bodies.

Student Finance England doesn't cater for postgraduates and so many students are entirely self-funded or get money from a range of sources, for example, most commonly loans (the Professional and Career Development Loan - <https://www.gov.uk/career-development-loans>, money from bursaries, part-time jobs, private savings and loans

## How Much Will It Cost Me?

There are two main types of expense to consider- **fees** and **cost of living**:

### Fees

The average **tuition fee** for a one-year Masters programme is typically between £5,000 and £10,000 per year for UK and EU students' fees, with the majority of courses in the lower half of this range. The figure varies depending on the programme and the institution at which you are studying. MBAs (Masters in Business Administration), for example, may cost as much as £16,000. Students from outside the EU or EEA (European Economic Area), often pay double the EEA-student rate.

Details of fees for a particular course will usually be found in the postgraduate prospectus from an institution.

## **Cost of Living**

This is difficult to quantify since it varies according to individual needs. Obviously, you will need money for somewhere to live, for heating, lighting, food, and for travel and resources. As a general guide, Universities UK (the representative body for UK universities), suggests around £8,000 per annum is a basic necessity outside London; you should budget a minimum of £10,000 per year for institutions in London and the South East of England.

Remember, if you are deciding whether to study full or part-time, you may want to consider issues such as Council Tax liability that may vary according to your status. In such cases you should check with the University of Salford's Information, Advice and Guidance for the most up-to-date information:

You can view our askUS Money Matters pages <https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/our-services/money-matters> and Finance calculator <http://salford.moneydoctors.info/budget> to help with your financial planning, especially relevant if you want to study at the University of Salford.

## **askUS Student Advice and Support**

**University House**

**Tel: 0161 295 0023**

**E-mail: [askUS@salford.ac.uk](mailto:askUS@salford.ac.uk) Website:**

<https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus>

## **So What Money is Available?**

The most frequent sources of funding for postgraduate study are:

- **Public Funding: Research Councils**
- **University/Institutional Sources/Learned Societies**
- **Company Sponsorship**
- **Charities, Foundations and Trusts**
- **Part-time work**
- **Professional and Career Development Loans**
- **Other Loan Schemes**

## **Postgraduate Loans**

Postgraduate Loans are available for Masters' (taught and research) courses due to start from or after 1 August 2016. If eligible you can borrow up to £10,000 to cover fees and living costs. Loans are available for people aged under 60, from the UK or EU/EEA countries\* (check for eligibility) and who don't already have a postgraduate master's or higher qualification. These loans will not cover PhD funding, teacher training or Graduate Diploma in Law to name a few.

<https://www.findamasters.com/funding/guides/new-uk-postgraduate-loans-scheme.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/postgraduate-loan/overview>

## **Public Funding**

The most important sources of funding for postgraduate students in the UK are the Research Councils. These bodies are government-funded agencies engaged in the support of research in different disciplines and postgraduate funding is just one part of a broad range of responsibilities.

**It is important that you check with the department where you are intending to study whether such studentships are available and whether you meet the eligibility criteria.**

Those intending to follow a Masters by Research or a PhD are recommended to check the Research Council's own websites for the latest funding in their area of study; to be eligible for a Research Council award you must be what is called 'ordinarily resident' in the UK throughout the three years preceding your application. (This does not include living here while being a student.).

➤ **Arts and Humanities Research Council**  
(AHRC) <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk>

➤ **Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council**  
(BBSRC)  
<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk>

- **Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)**  
<http://www.esrc.ac.uk>
- **Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)** <http://www.epsrc.ac.uk>
- **Medical Research Council (MRC)**  
<http://www.mrc.ac.uk>
- **Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)**  
<http://www.nerc.ac.uk>
- **Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)**  
<http://www.stfc.ac.uk>

### **University Institutional Scholarships and Awards**

Most UK higher education institutions operate their own scholarship and award schemes. These vary considerably from institution to institution and may range from full-fee studentships to smaller bursaries to alleviate financial hardship.

Sometimes departments offer Graduate Teaching Studentship Schemes where fees are paid in return for undertaking teaching or research duties. Such opportunities are often advertised in newspapers such as *The Guardian* (on a Tuesday) and *The Times Higher Education Supplement*:

- **The Guardian: jobs guide**  
<http://jobs.guardian.co.uk>
- **Times Higher Education**  
[http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/jobs\\_home.asp](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/jobs_home.asp)

**It is vital that you question the department where you are intending to study about any possible sources of scholarship awards or sponsorship.**

## **University of Salford Funding**

The University of Salford advertise vacancies for Graduate Teaching Studentship Schemes on our website: <http://www.pg.salford.ac.uk/g-t-s>

There is a range of favourable financial incentives available for all postgraduate programmes at Salford. Up-to-date details of these are at this link: <http://www.salford.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees-and-funding/taught-course-fees-and-funding>

## **Company Sponsorship**

Sometimes companies sponsor postgraduate students through the institution. Such opportunities are often advertised in newspapers such as *The Guardian* (on a Tuesday) and *The Times Higher Education* but they may also be run on an ongoing basis with a particular institution.

## **Knowledge Transfer Partnerships**

Under this scheme, researchers are employed by a company for a specific project and are able to register for a PhD through a partner university to work on an industrially relevant research project.

<http://ktp.innovateuk.org>

## **Scholarship Search UK**

This database lets you search for university departments that are currently offering scholarships, bursaries and awards.

<http://www.scholarship-search.org.uk>

## **Charities, Foundations and Trusts**

Some trusts, charities and foundations award partial funding for postgraduate study. The types of scheme available include studentships, scholarships, grants, bursaries, competitions and prizes. Information may be found in *The Grants Register*, published by Palgrave (available in the University library).

**The Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding** also provides information on applying for charities. You can access the online database via Careers & Employability website: <https://www.postgraduate-funding.com>

### **Part-Time Work**

Many postgraduates (roughly 40%) study part-time, which means that they have the opportunity to hold down a part-time or even a full-time job at the same time.

The University of Salford promotes work opportunities to students and graduates in the form of part-time work, weekend work or vacation work.

You can check vacancies on the Careers & Employability website by visiting the webpage at: <https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/search-for-a-jobfind-a-placement>

### **Professional and Career Development Loan (CDL)**

This is a deferred repayment bank loan, which will help fund up to 2 years of training. Repayment of a CDL begins one to two months after graduation (Depending on the provider). CDLs are available to those who are over 18 and have lived in the UK at least 3 years prior to the start of the course. Loans from £300 to £10,000 are available to help you fund up to two years' study. They are primarily designed for vocational courses and unfortunately **not all postgraduate courses are eligible** for a CDL.

For a free information pack and application forms, phone 0800 100 900. Information is also available from the website: <https://www.gov.uk/career-development-loans>

## **Other Loan Schemes**

There are a variety of other loans for specific courses:

### **Association of MBAs Loan Scheme**

Students on MBA (Masters in Business Administration) programmes accredited by The Association of MBAs (AMBA) are eligible for The Association of MBAs Loan Scheme, which is designed to help students paying their own fees or part-fees. <http://www.mbaworld.com>

### **The College of Law Loan Scheme**

This loan is available to students who are studying at one of the College of Law's colleges (London, Chester, Guildford, Manchester or York) for one of the following qualifications: Graduate Diploma in Law (formerly CPE), Legal Practice Course (LPC) or Bar Vocational Course (BVC). Application for a loan can be made from the beginning of your course, whether you are studying full-time or part-time. NatWest offers this scheme. Ask at your bank for information on any similar schemes. <http://www.college-of-law.co.uk>

## **I Need Further Information on Funding. Where Can I Look?\***

### **Gov.uk**

Has a series of pages covering funding for postgraduate students with useful links to key sources.

<https://www.gov.uk/career-development-loans/overview>

<https://www.gov.uk/funding-for-postgraduate-study>

### **Prospects**

Prospects produce the free *Postgraduate Funding Guide* which is available to take away from the Careers and Employability Service at University House and the *Postgrad magazine* also offers a round-up of available opportunities.

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/fundstudy>

### **Turn2US**

Turn2Us is a benefits and grants website for families includes a Grants Section for education: [http://www.turn2us.org.uk/grants\\_search.aspx](http://www.turn2us.org.uk/grants_search.aspx)

### **Family Action**

Family Action is an information website for families, includes a Grants Section for education: <http://www.family-action.org.uk/section.aspx?id=77>

### **Teacher Training**

For information on funding for Teacher Training, look at the Department for Education web pages:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/funding.aspx>

### **Social Work bursaries and other health courses**

For information on Social work bursaries, go to the NHS site: <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students> Funding may also be available for courses relating to health and medicine. <https://www.gov.uk/nhs-bursaries/eligibility>

**\* Please note that bursaries and funding sources may be subject to changes by Government policies, all details correct at time of publication.\***