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Salford
MANCHESTER

Applying / Courses / Finance

POSTGRADUATE STUDY GUIDE



**BECOME
UNSTOPPABLE**

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TYPES OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY

Postgraduate study can be defined in one of two ways; Postgraduate Taught (PGT), and Postgraduate Research (PGR).

Taught courses are generally also called master's degrees; however, they encompass a wide range of qualifications of which master's are only one, but admittedly the largest, part.

PGT courses include:

- / **PG Certificate** – usually three to four months of study comprising of two 30-credit modules.
- / **PG Diploma** – normally equal to two full-time semesters, with students usually completing four 30-credit modules or equivalent.

A student whose performance on a diploma course is of a sufficiently high standard may transfer to an appropriate master's programme and the time spent on the diploma will be counted towards the master's award.

- / **MA, MSc, MLitt, MEng, MPhys, etc** – the most common PGT qualification, the majority of full time master's courses are taught over one calendar year.

They typically feature two semesters of teaching, comprised of four 30-credit modules and an end of year dissertation or project, which is equivalent to a 60-credit double-module.

- / **MRes**: A research focused master's degree that offers less teaching but a chance to complete a much larger research project. An MRes is a great degree for students wishing to progress to a PhD.
- / **MBA** – A master's in Business Administration, this is a degree programme designed specifically for those in a business management capacity with at least two years of work experience looking to enhance their skills in an academic environment to later return to work and progress their career.

Many of our PGT courses can be completed through distance learning, allowing you to learn online and without having to relocate to Salford. For the full list of our PGT courses that can be studied via distance learning please visit salford.ac.uk/postgraduate/distance-learning

PGR courses are more commonly understood to be PhD or Professional Doctorate degrees, but also include the MPhil.

- / **MPhil** – the MPhil is completed over two years of study. The dissertation is normally shorter than at PhD, and the course is often inclusive in PhD study.
- / **PhD** – the most common research degree and the highest level of study achievable, the PhD student completes an intense period of research in a chosen field, supported by a PhD supervisor. The degree is normally taken by those looking to forge a career in academia. PhD's usually take three to four years to complete if studying full time, and between six to eight years for part time students.
- / **Professional Doctorate (Prof Doc)** – the Prof Doc qualification differs from the PhD by being more attuned to pursuing professional rather than academic careers, lasting between two to five years of full-time study.

Have a look at [Postgraduate courses](#)



SHOULD YOU DO A POSTGRADUATE COURSE?

Whether a PGT or PGR degree, any postgraduate undertaking is a lengthy, intense period of highly specialised study that can be very taxing on an individual. Before you apply for any course, it's worth considering your reasons for doing one in the first place.



You may love your subject or think PG study will give you the competitive edge, but will it help you get closer to your career goals?

1 Is the course required for your profession?

If you're interested in academia or research, then a PhD is likely to be required. Perhaps you're looking to develop yourself outside of the academic sphere and a PG degree will give you the skills you otherwise wouldn't have, through a programme like an MBA or any professionally accredited masters.

2 Does it give you specialist knowledge – or the opportunity to pursue specialist knowledge – that could not be gained at UG or PGT?

You may love study for the pursuit of knowledge alone, and if so does your chosen PG degree give you the chance to explore areas that you only briefly touched on at a previous level, but nevertheless found fascinating, or perhaps never had the chance to study at all. Maybe there's a particular area of your subject that you feel is underexplored or underrepresented, or a facet of it that you feel is deserving of more attention in an attempt to widen the accepted canon of your field.

3 Does it come with a professional accreditation in your chosen subject area?

Many people choose to study for a PG degree because it gives them something professional alongside their academic achievement. Certain courses come with certain accreditations that may be necessary for particular professions. However, it's also worth noting that some courses do not contain the necessary qualifications to practice certain professions; For example, Salford's Midwifery MSc. does not enable you to become a midwife, it is designed to increase the knowledge of current midwives.

4 Can you afford the course? Can you look at part-time options?

Fees, funding, and finance are arguably the biggest barriers to PG study – can you afford to study for the course as well as support your living arrangements? It's worth looking at part-time study options if you feel the cost may be too much to bear initially, allowing you to pick up a part-time job or explore the possibility of reducing your current work hours. Naturally, this will mean that the course length will be extended, from one to two years in the majority of PGT cases, and three to six years for PGR, but this may be a more attractive option for some, allowing you to split the length of your study to help alleviate deadline pressures around your life.

5 Could you study overseas?

Does your chosen degree scheme give you the opportunity to study overseas if needed? Your PhD might benefit from some important research being done in Europe, Asia, or America, and is there the option to get out to these locations as part of your research? If so, is there full or partial funding available to help you? There is a fantastic community of postgraduate students all around the globe, helping each other develop their research at conferences, in publications, and in the research they're doing themselves. Do you have the option to get out there and meet and talk to people about their experiences?

These are just five of the important questions you should be asking yourself when thinking about PG study, and of course you may have more of your own too. It's ok not to know the answer to these questions and more, but over time you should start to formulate an idea of where you want to be, and how you want to get there, and answering these questions can certainly help.

If you would like a little more guidance about your PG options, or just want to talk it through with someone at the university, get in touch with the Recruitment Support Team via enquiries@salford.ac.uk or on 0161 295 4545. If you know that you're interested in postgraduate study, attending a dedicated Open Day could give you a broader idea of what a postgraduate qualification could do for you. [All the details on the University of Salford's Open Days can be found here.](#)

BENEFITS OF A POSTGRADUATE COURSE

Undertaking a postgraduate course offers a range of benefits, both in the short term and throughout your professional career. Studying your chosen field in more depth allows you to develop a wide range of skills and a fuller knowledge of your subject, it also increases your future potential.

The Graduate Labour Market Statistics report confirms again that professionals looking to increase their opportunities really benefit from the skills and contacts a postgraduate education can offer. The most recent survey in 2018 highlighted the following key points:

Working Age (16 – 64 year olds) Employment Statistics

/ Higher level of employment

- 78.9% of working age PG students in high skilled jobs, compared with 65.6% for graduates and 23.9% for non-graduates

/ Higher pay

- Working age PG students earn on average £8,000 p/a more than graduates with an average salary of £42,000 p/a.

These benefits are not just in place to help you in the later part of your career, they can be seen right away.

Young Population (21-30 year olds) Employment Statistics

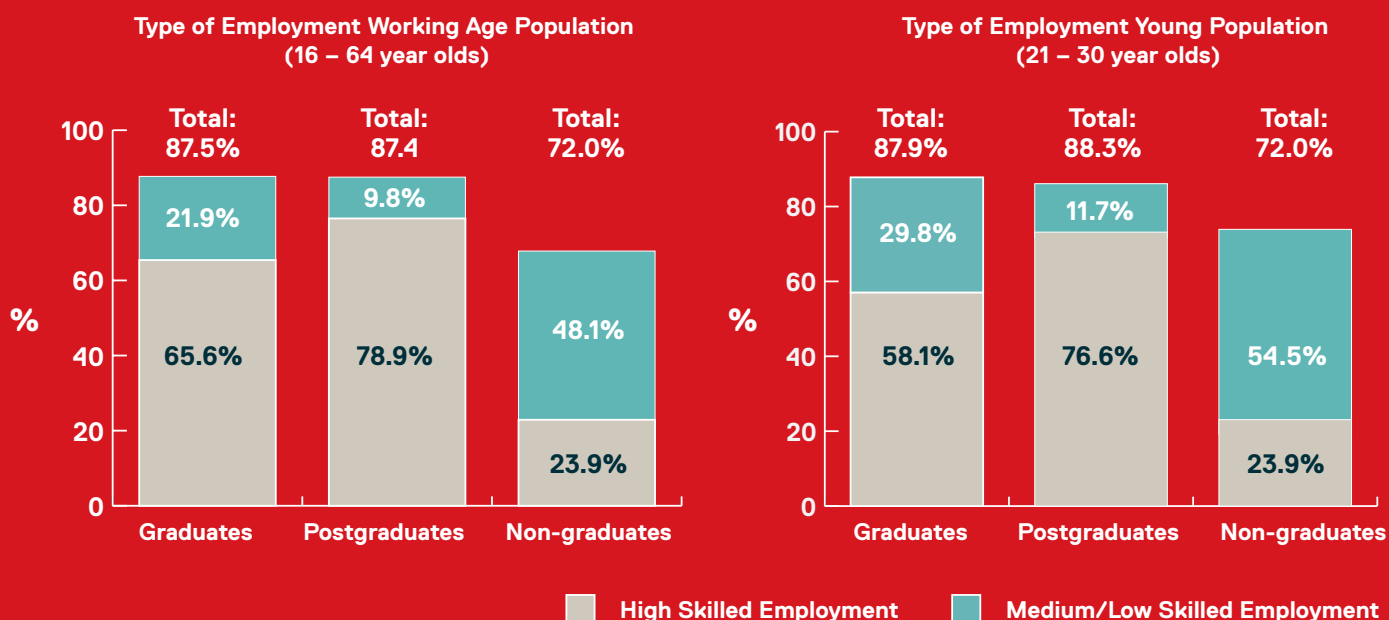
/ Higher level of employment

- 76.6% of young population PG students are in high skilled jobs, compared with 58.1% for graduates and 20.0% for non-graduates

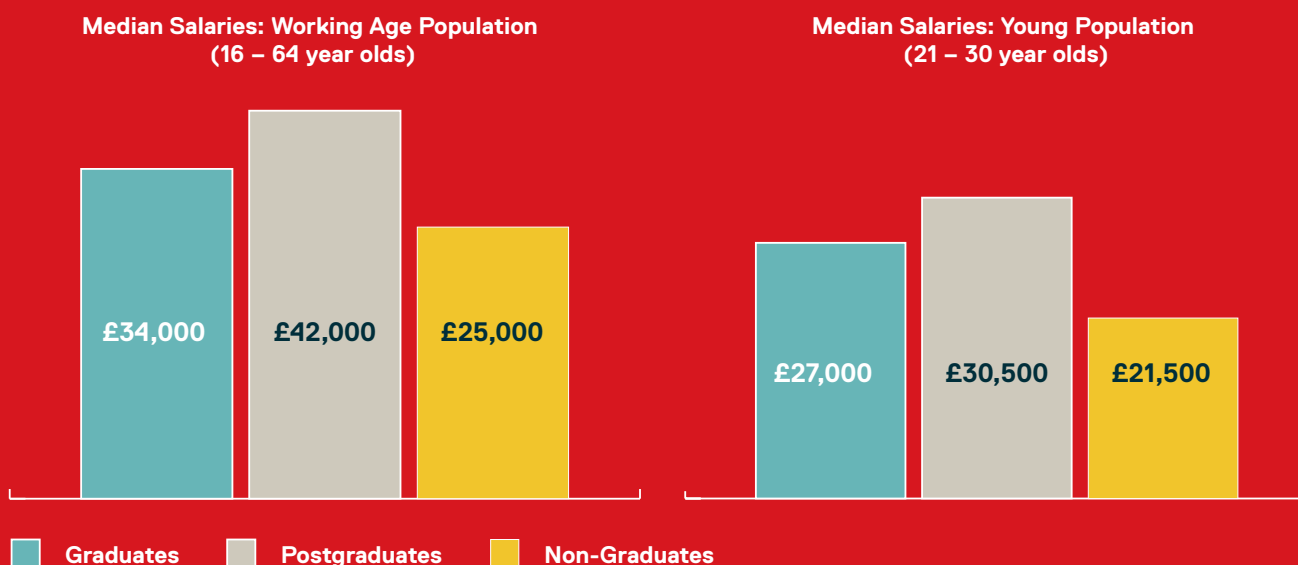
/ Higher pay

- Young population PG students earn on average £3,500 p/a more than graduates with an average salary of £30,500 p/a.

Employment percentages and level by age and qualifications



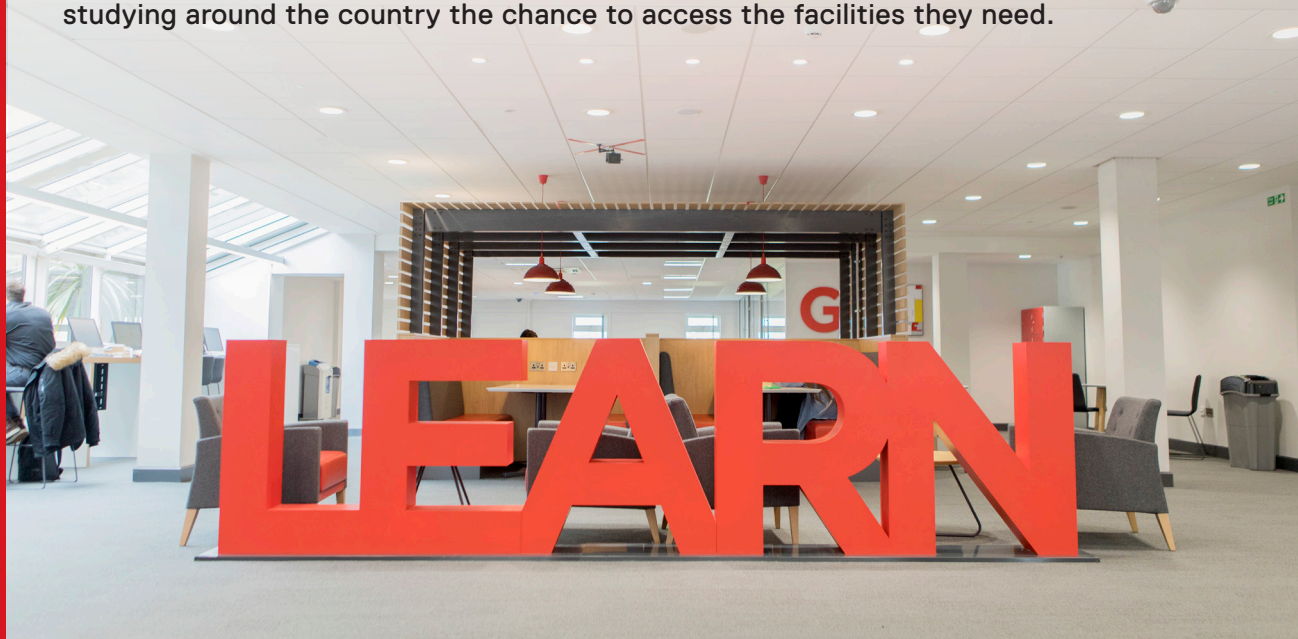
Salary averages by age and qualifications



At Salford we want to ensure that all students, regardless of the level they study, feel like they are part of the University. Whilst the way you study your course means you may not be on campus as much as when you were an undergraduate student, you will still be a part of a growing postgraduate community of over 3,500 students. As a postgraduate student, you will be able to access all the [support](#) and [facilities](#) you need to ensure you get the best degree possible.

LIBRARY ACCESS

As a postgraduate student, you will need to spend a good amount of time researching, and access to a range of university libraries can really benefit you. [The University of Salford's Library](#) is a member of the [SCONUL scheme](#), a library sharing programme granting a student that studies at a member university the opportunity to access a university library closer to them. With over 130 universities signed up, it offers students studying around the country the chance to access the facilities they need.



CHOOSING YOUR COURSE

The quality, cost and teaching style of each course will vary across institutions. Some universities may have specialisms in areas that others do not, while some courses may only be available at particular establishments.

University websites are almost certainly going to be your first port of call, and you can often find a wealth of information on them about any courses you may be interested in. Often the names of some of the academics who teach or supervise those degrees will be included here, and it's perfectly ok to email them and strike up a conversation about the course in a bit more detail.

As well as the university websites, there are many third-party websites that can also help with narrowing down your choice. Those listed below can be excellent resources when embarking on your search:

- ✓ [FindAMasters](#)
- ✓ [FindAPhD](#)
- ✓ [Universities Worldwide](#)
- ✓ [Prospects](#)

For both PGT and PGR it's important to see if the tutors and supervisors are available for your chosen year of entry. Many universities will publish a list of all the PGT courses and modules they offer, but due to staff research and sabbaticals they may not run all the time. Equally, whilst some university professors may be ideally situated to help supervise your PhD, ensure that they are not on research leave for your year of entry.

One of the best resources for evaluating a course is to speak to current students on that course. Students are often available at [PG Open Days](#) to speak to people about their own experiences on the course. Additionally, feel free to email the tutors on the course to speak to them in more detail about specific modules, or to find out more about their key areas of research. [Research students can find contact details for each of our schools can be found on our new doctoral school website.](#)

Consider who else may be teaching on the course; is it also taught by industry professionals? Many of Salford's PG degrees come with the opportunity to undertake a placement to gain further practical skills in relation to your academic ones, allowing you to gain academic knowledge from your tutors and professional expertise from those already working in the field. This can be invaluable when it comes to employment but will also help you decide if you prefer a more theoretical or practical approach to your subject.

When thinking about professional qualifications gained as a part of your degree it's also worth bearing in mind where that qualification allows you to practice if you're thinking about moving overseas. Professional bodies themselves can often provide this information, so it's worth exploring if you know your course comes with accreditation and you want to take it overseas upon graduating.

What are the employment rates like upon completing the course? This may be more prevalent for those looking at PGT degrees, but websites like [Prospects](#) can give a good indication on what graduates do after their postgraduate study.



TAKE A DIFFERENT PATH

One of the most asked questions we receive is regarding subject availability. A common misconception is that you must study the same subject area as a postgraduate student that you did when completing your undergraduate degree. Whilst you will have a range of options that link to your previous subject, there are also a wide number of degrees you can do, regardless of the subject you studied before. You can use postgraduate study to apply the skills gained as an undergraduate student in a different way or look to branch out to a different career completely.

At the University of Salford, we offer nearly 50 different master's programmes that are open to students who have a good honours degree, usually a 2:2 or above, in any subject.

By studying one of these master's degrees you'll get the chance to learn from industry experts and gain valuable practical experience. On some programmes you'll also get recognised accreditations that can further your career.

Subjects areas include:

- / Business, finance and management
- / Computing, science and engineering
- / Construction, surveying and property
- / Creative technologies
- / Environment
- / Fine art and photography
- / Festival production
- / Health and society
- / Journalism and public relations
- / Nursing
- / Performance and dance

More details on the courses available can be [found here.](#)

FEES, FUNDING AND FINANCE

Cost is often the biggest barrier to PG study, but there are a wealth of funding options available that can help alleviate the financial burden. Whilst this section won't deal with all options exhaustively, it will highlight some of the main funding avenues available and provide pointers on where to get the best funding information.

UK AND IRISH STUDENTS

The cost of a postgraduate degree can vary across institutions, and from degree to degree. Fees at Salford currently range from £8,100 to £10,980 for postgraduate taught courses, with the MBA rising to £18,000. Those undertaking their degree part-time would pay between £1,350 - £1,530 per 30 credits or module. Full details of specific course fees can be found on the individual degree webpage through [Coursefinder](#).

Postgraduate Research fees display a greater range based on a number of different factors. The varying costs for entry into the different research schemes are listed below:

TYPE	FEE
Full-time	£4,407
Part-time	£2,160
Split-site	£6,295
Split-site School of Built Environment	£8,335
Online Doctorate	£7,270
Professional Doctorate in the Built Environment	£4,220 per year for years one and two, plus £2,190 per year for years three, four and five
Professional Doctorate in Health & Social Care	£2,980 per year for five years

Thankfully, there are options to help alleviate the cost of your degree:

University of Salford Loyalty Discount

The Salford Loyalty Discount entitles students who have previously completed a full undergraduate degree at Salford to a 20% reduction on course fees at master's level (PG Cert and PG Dip qualifications are not eligible for this reduction). Students who are applying for Doctoral study at Salford are also eligible for a 20% reduction in their fees if they have completed either a full undergraduate or Master's degree at the University. For further details or to check your availability please contact enquiries@salford.ac.uk.

External funding resources

- ✓ [Postgraduate Funding](#)
- ✓ [Research Councils UK](#)
- ✓ [Postgraduate Studentships](#)
- ✓ [FindAMasters](#)
- ✓ [FindAPhD](#)

There are many bodies that provide external funding, and many websites that can help you find it. These are just a handful of those out there so be sure to dig around.

For more information...

Check out our website where you can find even more pointers to help you fund your degree.

[Taught courses](#) / [Research courses](#)

These aren't the only options available to you, and you may wish to explore other funding avenues to help with your finances. Most PhD students will be expected to teach as part of their research, and this will come with its own remuneration. Equally, you may wish to take on a part-time job, but it's important to remain realistic about how much you can do, especially if you choose to do your research full-time.

For those considering a PhD in a science or business field, many employers will look to sponsor research into specific areas, and it's worth investigating if your research may be eligible for employer funded study.



VIRTUAL SESSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

If you would like further information on funding your postgraduate degree, we have a range of virtual presentations available. [More details can be found here.](#)

POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT LOANS

Applications for Postgraduate Loans will open in June, you can apply via [Student Finance England](#)

First time master's students can apply for a Postgraduate Loan of £11,222*.

The loan is:

- / A contribution towards the costs of study (fees, maintenance and other costs)
- / Non-means tested
- / Paid directly to the student

Eligibility

- / The loan will be available for eligible postgraduate taught or research for full-time, part-time, and distance learning master's courses.
- / Shorter postgraduate courses and postgraduate research courses beyond master's level currently do not qualify for the loan.
- / From 1 August 2021 these loans will only be available for UK and Irish students or students resident (for non-educational purposes) in England for a minimum of three years prior to the start of their master's.
- / Individual loan schemes are in place for [Welsh](#), [Scottish](#), and [Northern Irish](#) students.
- / Students under the age of 60 will be eligible.

Full details of the student loans, including repayment details can be [found here](#). To apply for your loan please use the link in the box above visit [Student Finance England](#).

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH LOANS

A postgraduate Doctoral loan is available for UK students.

The Doctoral loan of £26,445* can be weighted over three to eight years. The loan can be put towards overall course costs, including tuition fees, accommodation and living expenses. Both students studying on campus and via distance learning (providing they live in the UK) will be eligible for the loan.

More information is available on the gov.uk website.

*Figures correct at time of publication (October 2020).





Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria for the doctoral loan is governed by three main areas:

- / Your course
- / Your age – you must be under 59 on the first day of your first academic year of your course
- / Your nationality or residency status

PLEASE NOTE: you won't be eligible to receive a doctoral loan if you have received or will receive a scholarship, grant, social work or NHS bursary or already have a doctoral degree. [More details can be found here.](#)

Your course must:

- / Be a full, standalone doctoral course (not a top-up course)
- / Have started on or after 1 August 2018
- / Last between three to eight academic years

It can be:

- / Full-time or part-time
- / Taught or research-based, or a combination of both

Your nationality or residency status

You can get the Postgraduate Doctoral Loan if all of the following apply:

- / You're a UK national, or have EU settled status, so there are no restrictions on how long you can stay
- / You normally live in England, and didn't move there just to study
- / You'll have lived in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for three years before starting your course

You could also be eligible if you're:

- / The child of a Swiss national
- / The child of a Turkish worker
- / A refugee or a relative of one
- / An EEA or Swiss migrant worker, or a relative of one
- / Under humanitarian protection or a relative of someone who has been granted it
- / 18 or over and have lived in the UK for at least 20 years or at least half your life

Student finance for EU, Swiss, Norwegian, Icelandic or Liechtenstein nationals from August 2021

- / If you're starting a course on or after 1 August 2021, you must have settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme to get student finance.
- / This does not apply if you're an Irish national.

Full details on the loan and eligibility can be found on the government [Postgraduate Loan overview page.](#)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Prices differ for international students compared to their UK counterparts, with full-time study costing between £15,030 and £18,990 (the MBA remains the same at £18,000). Here you'll find some information about what funding is available to you, but there are a host of other options out there and remember that your own country may also offer scholarships and bursaries of their own.

University of Salford Loyalty Discount

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International Scholarships

Over the past five years, we have awarded more than £5 million in scholarships and bursaries to support high-achieving international students.

We are proud to offer a range of scholarships to support more international students to pursue their course. Find out more about the scholarships you can apply for at the link below.

[International Scholarships](#)

Please note students will only be eligible to receive one scholarship.

For more information...

Check out our website where you can find even more pointers to help you fund your degree.

[Taught courses](#) / [Research courses](#)

As for Home/EU students, the cost for research degrees can vary greatly depending on your chosen mode of study. Here is the current list of fees for each research course permutation.

TYPE	FEE
Arts and Media	£13,260
Salford Languages	£13,260
Salford Business School	£13,780
Salford Law School	£13,780
Environment and Life Sciences	£14,515
Built Environment	£14,515
Computing, Science and Engineering	£14,515
Health and Social Care	£14,515
Split-site	£6,295
Split-site School of the Built Environment	£8,355
Online Doctorate	£7,270

MAKING YOUR APPLICATION

Postgraduate applications are made directly to University, via our website. You can apply for as many courses across as many universities as you like, but your choices will probably be quite similar at course level, regardless of institution.

As part of your application you need the following documents:

- / Two references, at least one of which is academic. It may be that one of the tutors you use for a reference may also be teaching on your course, or you may ask tutors who you have only been taught by at undergraduate level. Work references are also fine should you be returning to study after a period of employment.
- / Your CV and covering letter, including your personal statement highlighting why you wish to study your course and the skills and experience you have that would make you a good student.
- / Transcripts or certificates demonstrating that you meet or are predicted to meet the entry requirements for your course.
- / If English is not your first language, you'll need to supply evidence that your command of English meets the standards required for postgraduate study (an IELTS score of 6.5, or the equivalent, is the norm).
- / If you are applying from outside the EU, you will need to provide a copy of your passport.
- / A few select courses require further information or paperwork, such as a written synopsis, an Agency Sponsorship Form or an advanced DBS clearance.
- / If you are applying for a Postgraduate Research course, you will also need your research proposal.

For most universities there are no closing dates for applications, and you can apply all year round. For Salford, we have multiple entry dates that vary based on your specific course, but in general we advise to leave it no later than six weeks before the start date of your course.

VIRTUAL SESSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

If you would like further information on funding your postgraduate degree, we have a range of virtual presentations available. [More details can be found here.](#)





ALTERNATIVE ENTRY SCHEMES - YOUR EXPERIENCE COUNTS

The majority of universities understand that experience can be as important as a qualification when it comes to studying at a postgraduate level. We know that someone with significant relevant work experience will be as well equipped to study the course as someone who has a degree in the subject area. Universities can use an Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) process to see if they are able to make you an offer for a course where you may not have the stated entry requirements.

At the University of Salford, we use two form of APL, the Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and the Accreditation of Prior Learning Experience (APEL). There are no fixed rules for either scheme, and we will use the best one for each student, the admissions team will assess each student in a case by case basis. If you have any questions about APL, you can contact us on 0161 295 4545 or by email at enquiries@salford.ac.uk.

WRITING A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The research proposal is a crucial part of your PhD or research application. You should discuss your proposal with the **Postgraduate Research Admissions Contact** of the school to which you are applying, to make sure you understand what is expected in your subject area.

When submitting an application, make sure that the specialist area you wish to study is covered by a member of staff at the University:

- / Check individual staff entries on the [Research Centre](#) sites that relate to your area.
- / Explore [staff profiles](#) and check current research interests.
- / Take note of the relevant Research Administrator as you will need their details when completing your online application.

There is no upper or lower limit on how long your proposal should be, but traditionally 1,000 - 2,000 words should be sufficient. It should not be too long or too short and should provide an accurate overview of your thesis. Make it clear, concise and coherent, and most importantly, love what you do, as this is a project you will be undertaking for at least three years, and at times can prove to be a very independent and isolating experience.

Your research proposal should include:

- / A clear working title for your research project.
- / A clear statement about what you want to work on and why it is important, interesting, relevant, and realistic.
- / Some background knowledge and context of the area in which you wish to work, including key literature, key people, key research findings.
- / Consideration of the methods/approach you might use.
- / Indication of the strategy and timetable for your research project and any research challenges you may face.
- / A list of the key references which support your research proposal.

If you would like to find out more about how to structure your research proposal or any more information, [please visit our doctoral school website](#).

EXAMPLE TITLES

The titles below indicate just how diverse a range of subjects can be explored at postgraduate level, research in particular, and also the niche and hyper-specific nature that you can take your study to. All titles listed here are real research projects that have been completed by Salford students within the last five years.

- / The Importance of Culture on Competitive Advantage of Nations
- / Destination Branding: An Analytical Study Applied on Libya as a Tourism Destination
- / The Power Struggles at Play During the Photographic Social Exchange
- / Implementing Green Business Models in the UK Construction Industry: Opportunities and Challenges
- / A Novel Technique for Measuring and Sensing Rain
- / The use of Molecular Tools for Pan-Trypanosoma Analysis and Epigenetics of the Host
- / Analysis of the Gut Microbiome of the Common Black Slug: In Search of Novel Lignocellulose Degrading Enzymes
- / The Effects of Heel Height, Shoe Volume, and Upper Stiffness on Shoe Comfort and Plantar Pressure
- / Kinematics and Kinetics of Maximal Velocity Sprinting and Specificity of Training in Elite Athletes

A wide-angle photograph of the University of Salford campus. In the foreground, a large, modern building with a curved glass facade and a blue-tinted roof is situated on a waterfront. Behind it, a tall, cylindrical building with a white facade and a blue-tinted top section rises. To the right, a tall, rectangular building with a white facade and a blue-tinted top section stands. The buildings are reflected in the calm water in the foreground. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

OPEN DAYS

If you want to find out more regarding what the University of Salford can offer you, why not visit us at one of our Postgraduate Open Days. You will get the chance to:

- / Talk to our academic tutors, expert staff, students and alumni about our postgraduate programmes
- / Get one-to-one advice and guidance from our careers and employability team
- / Find out more about the application process, accommodation, funding, research support, student life and more

You can find more detailed information and book your place at the [next event here](#).



VIRTUAL SESSIONS

To complement the Open Days we are delivering a range of live and pre-recorded presentations, webinars and drop in sessions to ensure you can always find all the information you need regarding postgraduate study.

Topics include:

- / What to look for in a postgraduate degree
- / Studying in the north-west of England as a postgraduate student
- / Postgraduate applications and personal statements
- / Take a different path: Using postgraduate study to change your career
- / Postgraduate Fees and Funding
- / Mature learners – Returning to Study – PG Version
- / Research at Salford
- / A day in the life of a Postgraduate Student

Full details on the range of sessions we offer, a host of virtual presentations and the booking details for our live drop ins can be [found here](#).



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