

# Research

at Liverpool John Moores University



# Why study for a research degree at LJMU?

1

We deliver **solutions to some of the most pressing issues** facing society today – our pioneering research benefits people, communities, commerce and industry, and policy makers in the UK and beyond

6

We have **18 highly acclaimed research institutes and centres** such as the award-winning Astrophysics Research Institute and the world-renowned Centre for Public Health

2

We demonstrate **world-leading research** in 77% of our disciplines



7

**96%** of our research is of international quality or better



3

We've **invested £160 million** into new facilities for our research staff and students



8

The volume of **world-leading research** activity at the University **more than doubled** from 8% in 2008 to 18% in 2014

4

We have a **strong reputation** for collaboration between disciplines and with institutions **around the world**



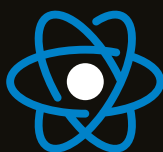
9

In Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism, **97% of our research activity is rated 3\* and 4\*** overall



5

We are rated **61<sup>st</sup> in the UK** for world-leading and **internationally excellent** research



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We have demonstrated internationally **excellent research in all disciplines**



# Research at Liverpool John Moores University

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**Research students form the bedrock of LJMU's vibrant research community and make a valued contribution to the intellectual life of the University. We currently have around 850 students undertaking postgraduate study at LJMU and many collaborate with the public sector, industry and businesses in the UK and abroad.**

As a research student at LJMU you will join a community delivering world-leading, internationally excellent research right across the institution. Supervised by leading researchers, you will work in state-of-the-art facilities and receive excellent training and support via our dedicated Doctoral Academy.

“When I began my studies I had certain goals but LJMU gave me more and more knowledge so my achievements have way outstripped my expectations.”

Khalid Hashim, PhD student, Civil Engineering

In the 2014 REF, 96% of our research was considered of international quality or more, whilst the proportion of research rated internationally excellent almost doubled. And when it comes to engagement, our interaction with postgraduate research students was identified as an area of good practice in the 2016 Higher Education Review.



# Support throughout your research degree

## Dedicated Doctoral Academy

Whether you need advice on training and support or information about research degree regulations, LJMU's Doctoral Academy is on hand to guide you.

## Excellent supervision

Supervision is key to successfully completing a PhD. You will be assigned a dedicated supervisory team to support and guide you through your research programme.

The University's Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors provides information about expectations and responsibilities for postgraduate research students and their supervisors throughout the research programme.

## Bespoke researcher development

LJMU is committed to helping you reach your full potential. We will enable you to identify your training needs and give you access to the RDF planner - an online application enabling you to:

- create a skills development action plan
- review your achievements
- create a portfolio of professional development evidence

The Doctoral Academy's Researcher Development Programme offers a comprehensive programme of training, fully aligned with the UK Researcher Development Framework and designed to provide vital research and transferable skills.

Topics include:

- project planning
- information management
- personal effectiveness
- governance
- communicating your research
- career development

As well as workshops, there will be plenty of opportunities to put your skills into practice at research cafes, showcases, conferences, competitions and networking events. You will be encouraged to develop presentation and engagement skills while contributing to our thriving research culture.

## Outstanding facilities

For us, world-leading research calls for world-leading environments and that's why, as a research student at LJMU, you will benefit from cutting-edge facilities and equipment. Our researchers work with the latest technologies and enjoy access to extensive print and electronic library collections. We have already invested £160 million in our buildings and facilities and have ongoing plans to invest further in our infrastructure.

## PGR Community

Within your School and Faculty, Postgraduate Research (PGR) representatives will co-ordinate local activities and represent your views at Faculty and University level.

You will be able to meet and work with researchers across LJMU. On arrival, you'll be invited to a welcome event to meet new PGRs, The Doctoral Academy and other teams that will support your research. The Doctoral Academy's Annual Conference is PGR lead, featuring a programme relevant to PGRs at any stage of their research, in all disciplines and any mode of study. The University's Research Week is the celebration of work undertaken across all subject areas by all researchers at every level.

For a taste of the development and support available, follow us on Twitter:

@LJMU\_PGRs,  
@LJMUResearch,  
@LJMUaw

# Acclaimed research centres and institutes

**Research at LJMU is often focused on our research centres and institutes. Research opportunities are available in these centres and institutes as well as in individual academic Schools.**

Applied Biology Research Group

Astrophysics Research Institute

Biomedical Science Research Group

Built Environment and Sustainable Technologies Research Institute (BEST)

Business, Corporate Banking and Finance Law Research Group

Centre for Collaborative Innovation in Dementia

Centre for Educational Research

Centre for Port and Maritime History

Centre for the Study of Crime, Criminalisation and Social Exclusion

Chemical, Pharmaceutical and Forensic Analysis Research Group

Cheminformatics Research Group

Clinical Pharmacy and Therapeutics Research Group

Criminal Justice Research Group

Dance Research Group

Drama and Performance Research Group

Education and Early Childhood Studies Research Group

Educational Technology Research Group

Electrical and Electronic Engineering Research Centre

Environment Research Group

European Institute for Urban Affairs

European, Public and International Law Research Group

Evolutionary and Behavioural Biology Research Group

Exhibition Research Centre

Face Lab

Faculty of Engineering and Technology Research Institute

Faculty of Science Pedagogic Research Group

Finance, Economics and Evaluation Research Group

Formulation and Drug Delivery Research Group

General Engineering Research Institute (GERI)

History Research Group

Liverpool Centre for Advanced Policing Studies

Liverpool Logistics, Offshore and Marine (LOOM) Research Institute

LJMU Writers' Workshop

Machine Learning Research Group

Management, Learning, Knowledge, Organisations, HR and Evaluation Research Group

Marketing, Consumption, Social Engagement and Entrepreneurship Research Group

Mechanical Engineering and Materials Research Centre (MEMARC)

Media, Culture, Communications Research Group

Medicinal Chemistry and Natural Products Research Group

Nursing Research Group

Nutrition and Health Research Group

Outdoor Education Research Group

Public Health Research Institute

Research Centre for Critical Infrastructure Computer Technology and Protection (PROTECT)

Research Centre for Literature and Cultural History

Research Centre in Brain and Behaviour

Research Centre in Evolutionary Anthropology and Palaeoecology

Research Institute for Sport and Exercise Sciences

Research Unit for Financial Inclusion

Social Work Research Group

Socio-Legal Research Group

Sport Research Group

Tourism, Leisure and Events Research Group

“Staff are really good at sharing their contacts and involving you in projects to aid your development”

Lisa O'Halloran, PhD student,  
Sport and Exercise Sciences

For more information see: [www.ljmu.ac.uk/research/centres-and-institutes](http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/research/centres-and-institutes)

# Postgraduate degrees

To study for a masters qualification you should normally have a minimum upper second class honours degree in a relevant subject (see individual programme details for specific requirements). International applicants must also hold an IELTS qualification (usually 6.5 or equivalent) and may also need an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate.

To study for a PhD you should have a masters degree in an appropriate subject area. If you have an MPhil or MRes, you may be able to study for a PhD over three rather than four years.

## MA/MSc

MA and MSc degrees are taught courses with a research component. They are a common entry route to PhD study.

## MRes

The MRes has some taught elements but focuses on research, providing a firm foundation for doctoral study.

## MPhil

If you want to start a research degree directly after completing your undergraduate study you can undertake an MPhil. An MPhil is a research degree in its own right and develops the prerequisite skillset for a PhD.

## Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

A PhD is built around a substantial, supervised piece of research, culminating in the presentation of findings via a written thesis (40,000-80,000 words) and independently assessed by an oral examination.

PhD candidates are expected to investigate an approved topic, extending the forefront of a discipline and making a distinctive and original contribution to current subject knowledge. You can demonstrate originality through the discovery of new facts and/or the exercise of independent critical thought.

Research students must undertake relevant training and participate in the University's Researcher Development Programme.

## Professional Doctorate

As an alternative to a PhD, we also offer Professional Doctorates for experienced professionals who want to research and develop their practice at doctorate level. For details of our Professional Doctorate programmes please go to:

[ljmu.ac.uk/study/courses](http://ljmu.ac.uk/study/courses)

“Liverpool John Moores has given me a whole range of ‘money can’t buy’ opportunities and I would certainly not be where I am now without the staff here.”

Laura Marks, PhD student Education

## How long does it take to complete a research degree?

Degree	Mode of study	Minimum	Maximum
PhD	Full time	33 months	48 months
	Part time	45 months	84 months
MA/MSc/MRes/MPhil/ Professional Doctorate	Full time	12 months	24 months
	Part time	24 months	48 months

# Six steps to apply for your PhD

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## 1. Formulate your research idea carefully

To achieve a PhD you need to make an original contribution to the:

- understanding of a problem
- advancement of knowledge
- generation of new ideas

Before formulating your research idea, read as much as possible around your subject area and think about how you would present your idea in a proposal.

## 2. Find out where your research sits in LJMU

Investigate who does what and where at LJMU and identify which Research Centre, Institute, School, Department or Faculty is the natural fit for your studies.

## 3. Contact a potential supervisor

Find out who could supervise your research by contacting the relevant Faculty admissions hub ([DoctoralAcademy@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:DoctoralAcademy@ljmu.ac.uk)) or completing the Postgraduate Research Enquiry Form ([ljmu.ac.uk/research-enquiry-form](http://ljmu.ac.uk/research-enquiry-form)). You can then discuss your ideas with an expert in your field.

## 4. Finalise your research proposal

Taking into account any feedback gained from your new academic contact(s), draft your research proposal including:

- details of your intended area of research
- core research questions
- possible methodologies
- your proposed approach
- a timescale for completion

## 5. Apply

Submit your application online at: <https://uaf.ljmu.ac.uk>. You will need to include:

- details of your qualifications, work experience and academic referees
- a personal statement
- your research proposal
- passport details and/or an International Agent Number (for international applicants)

## 6. Funding

You need to know how you are going to fund your PhD so it is important to check the deadlines for applying for grants and bursaries.

Contact your relevant LJMU Research Centre, Institute, School, Department or Faculty for details of Scholarships and the LJMU Alumni Award.

# Writing your research proposal

To apply for a research degree at LJMU, you must prepare a research proposal of up to 2500 words, clearly outlining your proposed area of study.

The proposal enables you to demonstrate your ability to carry out original doctoral-level research and helps us to identify an appropriate supervisor for you.

In preparation for writing up your research proposal, you might want to get some feedback on your research idea from LJMU. You might also like to read the Doctoral Degree Characteristics Guide published by the QAA

(see [qaa.ac.uk/en/publications/documents/doctoral\\_characteristics.pdf](http://qaa.ac.uk/en/publications/documents/doctoral_characteristics.pdf)).

## Research proposals should include:

- the title of your research topic (this can be revised during your research)
- a short statement on what you want to study
- a brief overview of your topic area with a summary of current knowledge and recent debate. Demonstrate your clear communication techniques and your familiarity with your field of interest
- the aims and questions that will guide your research and how you intend to approach them - prioritise one or two questions, from which secondary questions may follow

- your main research techniques (e.g. interviews, case studies, modelling) plus data collection procedures
- an explanation of why your research is important and original
- a bibliography identifying the most relevant and recent works for your subject area

## Having written up your proposal, you may find the following checklist useful:

- Have I presented my research topic in the context of contemporary scientific and theoretical debate?
  - Why does my research matter and why do it now?
  - Have I established appropriate aims and objectives?
  - Have I shown how my work will build on existing research?
  - Have I outlined a clear and convincingly argued analytical framework?
  - Do I have a reasoned and realistic explanation of the scale, timing and resources necessary?
  - Have I provided a clear description of my research methods and why I plan to use them?
  - Are my methods appropriate to the research question, and can they deliver valid results?
- Is my data collection framework appropriate and realistic?
  - Will my data collection framework provide quality, reliability and validity?
  - Can I demonstrate a clear and systematic approach to data analysis?
  - Have I considered the ethical implications of my research?
  - Have I identified and fully addressed potential difficulties in gathering information?
  - Have I identified and understood any limitations on my research?
  - Can I identify potential users of research outside the academic community?
  - How will I share my findings?





# How to fund your studies

The costs of studying for a postgraduate research qualification can be broken down into three parts:

- tuition fees – variable, depending on subject area
- living costs – often covered by a stipend
- research costs ('bench fees') – variable, depending on subject area

If you are a self-funded or part-time student you must have sufficient funds to cover all three.

## LJMU Alumni Award

We offer a 20% tuition fee reduction for LJMU alumni progressing to a higher degree with us.

The discount applies to research degree tuition fees and is available to home and EU LJMU alumni (subject to eligibility criteria).

## Postgraduate Doctoral Loans

A Postgraduate Doctoral Loan can help with course fees and living costs while you study a postgraduate doctoral course, such as a PhD.

You can apply for funding for the 2018 to 2019 academic year in summer 2018.

You have to repay your Postgraduate Doctoral Loan at the same time as any other student loans you have. You'll be charged interest from the day you get the first payment.

## Postgraduate Masters Loans for MPhil Students

A non means-tested loan of up to £10,609 per student is available to assist with the cost of a full-time or part-time standalone masters course for English, Welsh and EU applicants.

For more information see:

[www.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance)  
[www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/](http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/)

## Postgraduate loans for students from Northern Ireland

Students who ordinarily live in Northern Ireland can apply for a non means tested loan for their tuition fees. The loan is capped at £5,500 per student. This loan will be paid direct to LJMU. There is no loan for living costs available so you will need to identify additional sources of funding to cover your living costs such as a Professional and Career Development Loan or employment.

For more information and repayment information see:

[www.studentfinancenri.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancenri.co.uk)

You may also want to look into Professional and Career Development Loans.

## Scholarships/Studentships for PhD Study

These usually cover tuition fees and living costs. They may also cover research costs but you will need to check the terms and conditions of the offering to find out.

LJMU scholarships/studentships are offered:

- at University level (see LJMU website for details)
- at Faculty level (contact your chosen Faculty)

You can also search for LJMU scholarships/studentships at:

- [www.findaphd.com](http://www.findaphd.com)
- [www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study)

## External Funding Sources

If you are interested in external sources to fund your PhD study, it is worth looking at Research Council offerings.

The seven grant-awarding Research Councils are:

- Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
- Medical Research Council (MRC)
- Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
- Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)

Help may also be available from trusts, charities, national bodies, government departments and industries connected with your area of research interest.

For further guidance on external funding sources please consult:

- the Grants Register, published annually by Palgrave Macmillan
- the Directory of Grant Making Trusts, published annually by the Directory of Social Change

“The support you get here is great. Staff are always there for you whether that is face-to-face, at the end of a phone or using email or skype.”

Robert Seaborne, PhD student Sport and Exercise Sciences



**Website:** [www.ljmu.ac.uk/research](http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/research)

**Enquiry helpline:** 0151 231 5090

**Email:** [courses@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:courses@ljmu.ac.uk)

**International enquiries:** [international@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:international@ljmu.ac.uk)

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