

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH



Admissions Policy Postgraduate Research Programmes

Please note that this policy only applies to the following programmes:

Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.)
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
Integrated Ph.D. (or New Route Ph.D.)

For those applicants interested in Doctor of Medicine (MD) please contact the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry (<http://www.pcmd.ac.uk>).

1. BROAD SCOPE

The University welcomes applications from people who, in addition to any formal qualifications:

- ◆ can demonstrate the ability to succeed on the chosen programme of study,
- ◆ will derive the greatest benefit from studying at the University, and
- ◆ have a commitment and enthusiasm to learn and develop their research skills.

All applications are considered on individual merit in relation to the aims and outcomes of the programme.

2. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The University does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. In line with its Strategic Plan, the University has strategies to promote equality of opportunity, widen participation and encourage access. In particular we will encourage applications from:

- ◆ Mature students
- ◆ People with disability
- ◆ Black and minority ethnic people

2.1. Disability

We welcome and support students with disabilities, and we endeavour to meet specific needs. Procedures are documented in *Admissions and Information Folder Postgraduate Taught and Research Students (AIFTR)* issued by the University of Plymouth Registry and The Graduate School. People are encouraged to contact the University Disability Assist Service if they are not sure whether they have a disability.

2.2. Applicants declaring criminal convictions

While we would not wish to disadvantage an ex-offender, there will be occasions when an academically suitable applicant will be refused entry; for example, if the requirements of an external body prohibit the admission of ex-offenders or if the applicant poses a risk to other people. Procedures are documented in *Admissions and Information Folder Postgraduate Taught and Research Students (AIFTR)* issued by the University of Plymouth Registry and The Graduate School.

3. MONITORING

Academic Board monitors the University's Admissions Policy through its committee, the Graduate Committee.

4. QUALIFICATIONS FOR ENTRY (POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH)

The standard entry requirements are:

- ◆ a masters degree by a U.K. university or a degree of a non-U.K. institution deemed to be of equal standing to a UK degree, or
- ◆ a first class or second upper class first batchelor degree award by a U.K. university or a degree of a non-U.K. institution deemed to be of equal standing to a UK degree, or
- ◆ a professional qualification recognised as equivalent to a degree, or
- ◆ other qualifications and experience that have demonstrated that the applicant can meet the challenges and demands of the programme, and
- ◆ two satisfactory reports from academic referees. Verbal or e-mail references may not be accepted.

Applicants may also be asked to provide an example of written work.

An applicant may not be admitted to a programme of study and research leading to a research degree unless the applicant has been accepted by the Faculty in which he/she proposes to study. The Local Research Coordinator and/or Head of School and/or Dean of Faculty should have satisfied the Graduate Committee of the applicant's fitness to pursue such study and research and of the School's and/or Faculty's ability to provide all necessary facilities.

4.1. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

Applicants who do not possess the level of qualifications outlined above may nevertheless be eligible for admission to a postgraduate research degree on the basis of previous work experience or training. Applicants would be expected to demonstrate their capacity to benefit from research training. The admission of such applicants is subject to the approval of the Associate Dean or equivalent with responsibility for Graduate Students within the Faculty to which the prospective student has applied.

4.2. English Language Requirements

For candidates whose first language is not English, evidence is required of spoken and written ability in English through tests such as IELTS (normally minimum score 6.5) or TOEFL (normally minimum score 575 paper version or 232 computer-based version). Exceptions to such a requirement may arise where the candidate has recently studied for another degree or worked in a country where English is the common language;

Equivalencies are detailed in *Admissions and Information Folder Postgraduate Taught and Research Students (AIFTR)* issued by the University of Plymouth Registry and The Graduate School.

4.3. Non-UK Qualifications

The University Central Admissions Team provides advice on, and maintains oversight of, the acceptability of any non-UK qualification offered for entry. The University subscribes to the NARIC overseas qualifications advisory service.

5. INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO APPLICANTS

Applicants will normally be initially registered for an MPhil degree or an indeterminate 'Higher Degree by Research' (MPhil/PhD). If the latter there will be a decision on a transfer to MPhil or MPhil/PhD registration normally after 18 months of the beginning of the course (24 months for part time registrations).

Research programmes normally begin at three fixed times of the academic year, 1st October, 2nd January and 1st April. There are no application deadlines.

1+3 students and Integrated (or New Route) PhD students may only start at the beginning of the academic year.

The University aims to provide accurate and timely information and advice to prospective students. All applications should normally receive a response (at minimum an acknowledgement) within 5 working days of their receipt in the University.

Applications will normally be considered by two members of academic staff before an offer is made. Applicants may be interviewed, if necessary by telephone, as part of the selection process. The purpose of the interview is to assess the suitability and motivation of the applicant for the research project proposed.

Students will only be admitted to research degrees where there is appropriate expertise and where supervision for the period of registration is available.

All applicants will be informed of the University's decision in writing. Successful applicants will receive a formal offer letter setting out the programme of study, year of entry, fees to be paid, and any conditions that Faculties or Schools wish to be applied. Applicants will be asked to sign and return a form indicating that they accept the conditions and details set out in the offer letter.

6. COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Applicants with complaints about the admissions process are advised to write to the Dean of the relevant Faculty or The Graduate School.

7. CONTRACT OF ADMISSION

The University's rules and regulations are incorporated into the contract made with the student. All students are required, as a condition of enrolment, to accept those rules and regulations, which are set out:

- ◆ in the Student Handbook,
- ◆ in the Research Degrees Handbook,
- ◆ on the University's website and available on request from the Faculties or The Graduate School.

Any offer of a place made by the University is made on the basis of the applicant's:

- ◆ acceptance of the University's rules and regulations as published and amended from time to time,
- ◆ acceptance of the Regulations and Code of Practice set in the Research Degrees Handbook (updated annually),
- ◆ acceptance of the following statement:
The University Prospectus describes the postgraduate programme of study offered by the University. Further documents will be issued to students to describe the educational services offered by the University, in particular the Code of Conduct and details of enrolment and assessment. These are contained in the "Student Handbook", the "Research Degree Handbook" and the "Quality Procedures for Research Degrees". The University undertakes all reasonable steps to provide the educational services described in the Prospectus and in the documents described but it does not guarantee the provision of such services. Should industrial action or circumstances beyond the control of the University interfere with its ability to provide educational services, the University undertakes to use all reasonable steps to minimise any resultant disruption.
- ◆ undertaking to pay the fees required for the course and any other fees for services offered by the University and accepted, such as accommodation, bench fees, etc., and
- ◆ statements made on the application form, where the discovery of false statements or omissions may lead to the offer being withdrawn (or in the case of students enrolled, to their being required to withdraw).

If you would require any part of this document in an alternative format, please contact The Graduate School

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