



This document outlines the Leeds Trinity University Admissions Policy for Postgraduate Research students for 2016 entry. This policy is operated under the auspices of Leeds Trinity University's accreditation arrangements with the University of Leeds for research degree awards. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. Students studying for a research degree at Leeds Trinity University are registered here as students but their awards are conferred by the University of Leeds.

## **1. Principles**

Leeds Trinity University endeavours to ensure that the selection process provides equal consideration for all applicants. All selection decisions are made on the basis of merit and the ability of each applicant to meet the academic and non-academic criteria for admission.

The University's admissions policies for recruitment and admissions to postgraduate research programmes comply with relevant UK equality and anti-discrimination legislation, and are consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Chapter B11: Research Degrees, Indicators 5 and 6 (June 2012)).

## **2. Admissions Requirements**

### **2.1 Selection principles**

All research degree programmes within Leeds Trinity University aim to recruit the highest calibre students, with all places awarded on merit and an assessment of the ability of the candidate to successfully complete a postgraduate research degree. Leeds Trinity University will treat all applicants fairly and not discriminate unlawfully on grounds of marital status or civil partnership, gender, gender re-assignment, race (including colour, nationality, national origin or ethnic origin) disability, pregnancy and/or parental status, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, or political opinion.

### **2.2 Application process**

#### **2.2.1 How to apply**

Initial or general enquiries about postgraduate research study should be made to the Research Office at [pgresearch@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:pgresearch@leedstrinity.ac.uk) for the attention of the Postgraduate Research Tutor. Applications must be made using the University's Application for Research Degree Study form (available for download in the Research Degrees section of the Leeds Trinity website <http://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/research/research-degrees>). Applications must be sent by email to [admissions@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@leedstrinity.ac.uk). Student Administration will log applications centrally and then forward them for consideration by the Postgraduate Tutor, who will then make a recommendation in consultation with potential supervisors.

The completed application must be supported by the following documents:

- Copies of degree certificates - from all undergraduate and previous postgraduate courses (originals may be required to be presented prior to registration).
- Transcript of marks – from undergraduate and (if applicable) postgraduate courses.
- Confirmation of funding (within the application form) – details of any funding for fees and maintenance either applied for or confirmed, with supporting evidence as appropriate.
- English Language Certificate (International and EU students only – see section below).
- For international (non-EU/EEA) applicants, of copies of passports and visas.
- In the case of a candidate for a part time degree, the Postgraduate Research Tutor may require a written statement, signed by the candidate and his/her line manager, clarifying any impact of concurrent employment on the ability to conduct the proposed research.
- We also encourage applicants to include a covering letter with a personal statement outlining why they wish to undertake postgraduate research study, motivation, career ambitions, etc.
- Applicants must identify whether they are applying for full-time or part-time study.

Please note that it is very important that applicants identify a supervisor whose research links closely to the research project intended to be undertaken. We recommend that applicants make contact with the prospective supervisor to discuss project ideas to see if they would be interested in supervising the proposed research before submitting the application. The Research Degree Application form (section 9) requests an outline of the proposed research project and this will be an important aspect to be taken into account when deciding on the suitability of the applicant for research degree study.

If no supervisors with similar research interests can be identified, it will be unlikely that we would be able to offer a place to study for a postgraduate research degree. Students will only be admitted to research degrees where there is appropriate expertise and where supervision for the period of registration is available

Applicants are requested to arrange for references to be forwarded to the Student Admissions office as instructed on the application form. Acceptable reference statements from at least two academic referees are required before an application can be processed further. Candidates are strongly advised to check with their referees that they will be able to provide such statements before submitting their application.

If any further supporting documents or information are required from the applicant we will request these by email communication. If this information has not been provided following two further reminders the application will be rejected and the applicant's file will be closed.

### **2.2.2 General entrance requirements**

The typical entrance requirements for postgraduate research study at Leeds Trinity University are:

- a master's degree awarded by a UK university or a master's degree from a non-UK institution deemed to be of equal standing to a UK master's degree, and/or
- a first class or second upper class bachelor degree award from a UK university or a degree from a non-UK institution deemed to be of equal standing to a UK degree, or
- a professional qualification recognised as equivalent to a degree, and
- other qualifications and experience that have demonstrated that the applicant can meet the challenges and demands of the programme (Leeds Trinity University's policy for Recognition of Prior Learning can be found on the website) and
- at least two satisfactory written reports from academic referees. Verbal references will not be accepted. and
- availability of appropriate supervision expertise and experience for the proposed project for the duration of the candidature

Criteria for entry to certain research degree areas may vary and applicants are advised to check with the relevant supervisors prior to applying. For example, fitness to practice issues may form a key component of the candidature that involves working with patients, vulnerable adults and children. Any variations of entry criteria would need to be satisfied before an offer a place can be made. In the interests of safety, prospective candidates intending to perform research involving vulnerable groups may need to fulfil certain health requirements or be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, or other relevant checks.

### **2.3 Application deadlines**

Applicants for studentships are required to apply before the relevant closing dates stated in the advertisement. Self-funded applicants can apply at any time. International applicants are advised to apply no later than the end of May in the year in which they wish to enrol, to ensure they have sufficient time to obtain a visa and prepare for arrival in the UK.

### **2.4 International (including EU) students**

All applications from international students are considered in line with our standard entrance requirements. If English is not your first language proof of English Language proficiency will be required, normally through completion of a recent degree programme conducted in the English language or from a UK Home Office approved English language test. The minimum levels in approved tests for Leeds Trinity University are as follows:

IELTS (Academic) overall score of 6.5 with at least 6.0 in each component, although for some Departments/disciplines a higher level of language competence may be deemed necessary.

The University subscribes to the NARIC overseas qualifications advisory service. Prospective applicants who wish to discuss whether their qualifications will meet the necessary entry criteria should contact the Leeds Trinity University Admissions Team in Student Administration directly.

Further information for prospective international applicants can be found on the Leeds Trinity University website <http://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/international>.

### **3.0 Selection process**

Academic grades normally form only one part of the final decision and the following sections give examples of how applicants may demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge and attributes that we believe will enable them to become a successful student at Leeds Trinity University. Applicants for studentships will be shortlisted for interview based on the criteria outlined in Section 2.2.2 above, by a panel consisting of the Postgraduate Research Tutor, Director of Research, Proposed Supervisor and Head of School.

#### **3.1 Interviews**

All short-listed candidates (for studentships) and self-funded candidates are interviewed. This is to allow us to further assess the applicant's aptitude and potential. Applicants invited to interview will receive a letter of invitation from Leeds Trinity University to attend an interview on a specific date. We will do our best to accommodate requests for an alternative date. Interviews will normally be conducted by the Director of Research (or equivalent Senior Academic), the Postgraduate Research Tutor and the Lead Supervisor. The interviews are designed to assess the relevance of any prior learning with particular emphasis on research skills, motivation and ability to complete the research degree and where appropriate English Language skills. Interviews may take place via a number of alternative means depending on the circumstances of the applicant. For example, interviews may take place on a one to one basis or via Skype, video conferencing or telephone particularly for overseas applicants. Interviews will typically last thirty minutes.

#### **3.2 Offers**

Offers are made after the University of Leeds accepts our recommendation through the Leeds Trinity University Postgraduate Research Tutor. Offers are made on the basis of the merit and the ability of each applicant to meet the academic and non-academic criteria for admission to the relevant research degree. Offers are made based on the information supplied on the application form and receipt of at least two satisfactory references, adequate interview performance and, if applicable and where required, proof of English Language ability as detailed in section 2.4.

#### **3.3 Unsuccessful applicants**

Feedback on unsuccessful applications will not normally be provided unless candidates are shortlisted for interview. Applicants called to interview but who are unsuccessful may wish to request feedback. All requests for feedback must be made in writing to the Postgraduate Research Tutor. Feedback in the form of a brief summary will then be provided within 14 days by the Chair of the Interview Panel. The detailed comments or scores of individual panel members assessing applicants will not be made available to applicants themselves or to third parties.

The files of unsuccessful applicants will be retained for 1 year from the date of rejection, and can be reopened if appropriate, e.g. if candidates obtain funding, reapply for studentships or identify supervisors. If applicants want to re-open their file after 1 year, they will be asked to reapply as the information held will be out of date.

Leeds Trinity University will not consider further applications from prospective research degree candidates whose applications have been rejected on two previous occasions.

### **3.4 Complaints**

Leeds Trinity University will consider all applications fairly, and consistent with the procedures outlined in this document. In line with our Applicant Feedback and Complaints Procedure, there is no right of appeal against an academic decision not to offer an applicant a place at Leeds Trinity University. However an applicant may wish to raise a complaint related to the admissions process and associated procedures. Applicants who wish to raise a complaint relating to these stated circumstances should contact the Assistant Academic Registrar (Student Admissions) via email, detailing the nature of their complaint. The complaint must normally be made within 14 working days of receipt of a letter of rejection. On receipt of a complaint, the Assistant Academic Registrar will review the application process and will write to the applicant giving grounds for their decision.

Applicants who have complained to the PGRT and remain dissatisfied may submit their complaint to the Academic Registrar. The findings of the Academic Registrar shall then be final.

### **3.6 Disabled applicants**

Leeds Trinity University welcomes applications from disabled people<sup>1</sup>. The University will make reasonable adjustments, to help ensure that disabled applicants have full and equal access to our admissions procedures and programmes. The judgment about an individual applicant's academic suitability will be kept separate from any consideration of the applicant's disability-related support requirements.

Applicants are invited to indicate their disability status on their application form and we strongly encourage applicants to disclose any disability. Where candidates choose not to disclose their disability this may make it more difficult, or in some cases impossible, for the University to make reasonable adjustments. Once an application has been submitted Disabled applicants are also advised to contact the University's Dyslexia and Disability Support Team (<http://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/services/disability/pages/default.aspx>), to discuss any support requirements they may have in relation to the programme for which they have applied.

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<sup>1</sup> Leeds Trinity University endorses the social model of disability and in line with the definition under the Equality Act 2010 define 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 of that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This definition of disability includes long-term medical conditions such as cancer (from the point of diagnosis), epilepsy, diabetes, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME and HIV/AIDS amongst others.

The admissions process is covered by the Leeds Trinity University Policy on Equality and Diversity which is available from the corporate documents section on our external webpage: <http://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/Key%20Documents/Equality%20and%20Diversity%20Policy.pdf>

### **3.7 Applicants with a health-related issue or other mitigating circumstance**

This section deals with health-related issues, which are distinct from disability-related issues. Applicants with a health-related issue should contact the Postgraduate Research Tutor as soon as possible if their health is likely to impact on their ability to engage with the admissions process.

If a candidate feels that their prior ill-health – or personal circumstances other than ill-health (for example, bereavement or other difficult home or family circumstances) – may have affected their previous education, or the grades they received in past examinations, then they are also welcome to contact the Postgraduate Tutor to discuss this further.<sup>2</sup>

All formal requests for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account in the admissions process should be supported by a full declaration about the nature of the circumstances.

### **3.8 Criminal convictions**

Leeds Trinity University has a policy statement on students with criminal records, which can be accessed from our website at

<http://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/Key%20Documents/DBS%20Recruitment%20of%20Ex-Offenders%20Policy%20Statement.pdf>.

This policy includes applicants seeking admission. It should be noted that if an applicant is required to disclose a criminal offence and fails to do so this will generally be considered a very serious matter and is likely to lead to their application being rejected or, if already admitted, to their registration at the University being revoked.

Having a prior criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being offered a place; this may depend, for example, on the nature, timing and relevance of the criminal offence in question. Leeds Trinity University may request further information about the nature or context of an applicant's criminal record. 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 research to be undertaken requires the candidate to work with vulnerable populations.

### **3.9 Monitoring**

Leeds Trinity University's Academic Board and University of Leeds' Graduate Board review the Postgraduate Research Student Admissions Policy on an annual basis.

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<sup>2</sup> In contrast with disability issues, health issues are generally shorter-term (lasting less than 12 months) and have a less significant impact on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The operation of the Admissions policy is also monitored via the Research Degrees Sub-Committee and the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

#### **4.0 Contract of Admission**

Both Leeds Trinity University and the University of Leeds (as the awarding body) 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 Leeds Trinity Research Student Handbook, available on the Leeds Trinity University website:

<http://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/Key%20Documents/Research%20Student%20Handbook%202015-16.pdf>.

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

- acceptance of the University's rules and regulations as published and where periodically amended;
- acceptance of the Regulations and Code of Practice set in the Research Student Handbook (updated annually);
- undertaking to pay the fees required for the course (if applicable) and any other fees for services offered by the University and accepted, such as bench fees, overtime fee etc;
- 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).

#### **5.0 Contact details**

##### **Application enquiries**

Applications and admissions enquiries about research degrees at Leeds Trinity University should be directed to the Postgraduate Research Admissions team at [admissions@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@leedstrinity.ac.uk).

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