



# **Postgraduate Research Code of Practice**

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Postgraduate Research Degrees Admissions Policy and Procedures**

**2023/24 entry**

Effective for all students applying for programmes beginning in and from  
the academic year 2023/24

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Policy forms part of the University's Postgraduate Research (PGR) Code of Practice. In addition to the PGR Code of Practice and its other Appendices, other University (UoL) policies, procedures and documents which may be relevant to this Policy are as follows:
- Ordinances governing Postgraduate Research degrees listed in 1.2 below
  - Policy on UKVI Compliance (Student Route)
  - PGR Student Handbook
  - Student Complaints Procedure
- 1.2 This Policy covers the following research programmes:
- Doctor in Philosophy (PhD)
  - Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
  - Doctor of Medicine (MD)
  - Campus-based Professional Doctorates
- 1.3 Online Professional Doctorate programmes are governed by the Online Professional Doctorate Frameworks, [Appendices 12a and 12b of the PGR Code of Practice](#).
- 1.4 Joint or dual awards are governed by the individual award agreement.
- 1.5 Visiting Research Students are governed by the PGR Policy and Procedure for Visiting Research Students, [Appendix 13 of the PGR Code of Practice](#).

This policy does not cover postdoctoral research work.

## **2 General Principles**

This Admissions Policy is intended to provide information on the principles and procedures which we apply to applications for postgraduate research study. It provides general guidance on the personal, professional and educational experience and qualifications required for admission as a postgraduate research student of the University, including English language requirements. It outlines the University's approach to a number of matters relating to the processing of applications, and explains the institutional, national and legal context within which the admissions function operates. The Policy should be read in conjunction with other material published by the University both in hard copy and online, including the University's Postgraduate Prospectus. You may view the [online prospectus here](#).

Additional information is also provided to students via the [PGR Handbook](#).

## **3 National and Legal Context**

The University of Liverpool is committed to promoting an environment which:

- Recognises and values people's differences
- Capitalises on the strengths those differences bring to the institution
- Supports all staff and students in maximising their potential to succeed

### **3.1 Equality Act 2010**

Our approach to admissions takes into account the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The University is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation, where all members of its community, including those that seek to apply to the University, are treated with respect.

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)
- gender
- religion, belief
- sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)

In addition to the statutory duties imposed by the Equality Act, the University is also guided by the principles set out in a number of Government-led reviews of Higher Education, and in particular the Report of the Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group, chaired by Professor Steven Schwartz ('the Schwartz Review'), published in September 2004. Although the Schwartz Review focused on admissions to undergraduate programmes, the principles of fair admissions which it established apply equally to postgraduate admissions and our policy is therefore guided by the principles articulated within it. The Schwartz Review is available online at: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5284/1/finalreport.pdf>

More detail about the ways in which we positively promote equality and diversity may be found in our [Diversity and Equality of Opportunity Policy](#).

### 3.2 Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)

Our admissions policy complies with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The Quality Code is available online at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/the-existing-uk-quality-code/part-b-assuring-and-enhancing-academic-quality>

### 3.3 UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)

The University is licensed by the UK Home Office to act as a sponsor of international students for visa purposes. By issuing a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) to a student, the University is stating that it wishes for the student to be granted permission to enter and remain in the UK for these purposes.

As a licensed sponsor of international students, the University has specific duties and responsibilities to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) which it must discharge under the terms of its licence. The Policy on UKVI Compliance (Student Route) prescribes how the University intends to discharge these responsibilities; please refer to <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/policies-procedures/>

### 3.4 Competition & Markets Authority (CMA)

The CMA publishes detailed advice for universities and their students on their respective responsibilities and rights under consumer protection law in relation to the provision of educational services. While acknowledging this information is focused on undergraduates, the University applies the same principles to all students. Guidance documents are available on the CMA

website: please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers-and-students>

## 4 University Context

The University's Strategic Plan includes a commitment to increase the number of postgraduate research students at Liverpool. In reaching this goal, we are committed to maintaining high standards in the operation of our recruitment and admissions procedures.

We recognise the importance of implementing policies for the recruitment, selection and admission of students that are fair, clear, explicit and consistent, and our postgraduate admissions procedures are designed to ensure that applicants are treated wholly on the basis of their achievements and potential to complete successfully their chosen research project.

## 5 Admissions Roles and Responsibilities

Postgraduate research support is managed at Institutional level by the Research Degree Administration Team, the Academic Quality and Standards Division (AQSD) and the Student Administration and Support Division (SAS). Each Faculty has its own Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research responsible for all PGR matters. They are led by the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor to the Pro Vice Chancellor for Research and Impact.

The **Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation team** are responsible for:

- Managing the initial postgraduate application process
- Liaising with admissions staff throughout the University
- Monitoring applications and statistical trends
- Promoting awareness of Liverpool's programmes of study to prospective students
- Advising prospective students on matters relating to admissions procedures alongside the Institutes/Schools/Departments
- Providing advice to Institutes/Schools/Departments on the equivalence of non-UK qualifications
- Providing training on system and sector changes or updates to Institute/School/Department Postgraduate Research Administrators and Institute/School/Department Directors of Postgraduate Research
- Supporting Institute/School/Department Postgraduate Research Administrators with non-standard admissions queries
- Managing the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) and Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) procedure

The **Dean of Institute/School/ Department** is responsible for:

- The appointment of admissions staff in their School/Institute
- Providing annual updates to Faculty on Institute/School/Department provision

The **Institute/School/Department Director of Postgraduate Research**, in consultation with the Dean of School/Institute, is normally responsible for:

- Determining the academic standard of entry for postgraduate research degree programmes
- Ensuring that the selection and admissions policies and procedures are consistently applied
- Providing advice and guidance to potential applicants
- Providing information on funding opportunities
- Signing offer letters or overseeing alternate signatories

- Monitoring the implementation of the QAA Quality Code.

The **Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research** is responsible for:

- Overseeing all matters relating to postgraduate research admissions in the Faculty
- Ensuring compliance with the University's research strategy in relation to postgraduate research admissions
- Oversight of adherence to the QAA Quality Code.

The **Institute/School/Department Postgraduate Research Administrator** in consultation with the Institute/School/Department Director for Postgraduate Research is responsible for:

- Administratively managing the postgraduate research application process
- Advising prospective students on matters relating to admissions procedures
- Providing an assessment to supervisors of applicants academic/English qualifications using resources such as UK NARIC
- Producing and dispatching offer letters
- Responsible for initiating the ATAS and CAS procedure that is managed by the Admissions Team in ERMC
- Monitoring applications and statistical trends

The **Academic Quality and Standards Division** is responsible for:

- Providing advice and guidance on research ordinances, regulations, the PGR Code of Practice, Frameworks, Policies and Procedures governing Postgraduate study

The **Research Degree Administration Team in SAS** is responsible for:

- Administration of studentship and scholarship maintenance payments

The **Student Fees and Funding Team in SAS** is responsible for:

- Central administration of Research Council and grant funded studentships

## 6 General Entry Requirements

We update our entry requirements on an annual basis in the light of changing academic requirements. Inevitably this means that sometimes our requirements do not reflect the information published in the hard copy of our Postgraduate Prospectus and Institute/School/Departmental brochures. We therefore recommend that applicants look at the information in the course listings in our [online prospectus](#) as the source of the most up-to-date information.

Alternatively, applicants can contact the relevant Institute/School/Department Director of Postgraduate Research or Postgraduate Research Administrator.

### 6.1 Academic Requirements

Applicants for postgraduate research study at Liverpool are normally expected to hold a UK first degree with a First Class or Upper Second Class degree classification, or a Second Class degree plus a Master's degree. Equivalent international qualifications are also accepted, and their equivalence will be evaluated on the basis of the information provided by the European Network of Information Centres (ENIC) formerly NARIC as well as internal guidance based on our experience of a qualification's suitability as a preparation for our programmes.

We require all applicants for postgraduate programmes to demonstrate a good general education, which includes acceptable levels of literacy and numeracy, normally equivalent to at least grade 4 or grade C at GCSE in English and Mathematics.

Information on the qualifications that may be acceptable for a particular project can be obtained from School/Institute postgraduate admissions policy statements, available from individual Schools/Institutes or from the [University website](#). The minimum acceptable academic qualification is at the discretion of the Institute/School/Department Director of Postgraduate Research and in some cases the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research.

International applicants may also seek advice on the non-UK qualifications that may be acceptable for entry from the central Admissions team based in ERMC, either by visiting [www.liv.ac.uk/international](http://www.liv.ac.uk/international) or by email at [pqrecruitment@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:pqrecruitment@liverpool.ac.uk).

## 6.2 English Language Requirements

All students at the University of Liverpool, both from the UK and overseas, are expected to be able to demonstrate proficiency in English, normally demonstrated by holding a satisfactory English language qualification.

Students from the UK will normally be expected to have a GCSE in English at grade 4 or above, or an equivalent qualification.

For students whose first language is not English, the University's minimum requirements are the IELTS test with a minimum overall score of 6.5, and no less than 5.5 in each of the sub-tests (reading, writing, speaking and listening) or an equivalent qualification. This is the **minimum** requirement for admission to the University and many of our programmes will require higher scores than this, and may also require higher specific grades in each of the sub-tests.

Full details of the University's English language requirements and tests which satisfy our entry requirements may be found on our [website](#).

Students from some majority English-speaking countries are not required by UK Visas and Immigration to demonstrate a formal qualification in English in order to obtain their visa. The list of countries concerned is attached as Annexe 1. However, our academic Institutes/Schools/Departments may still require applicants from these countries to provide an IELTS test score or other satisfactory qualification to demonstrate their proficiency in English and ability to cope with the linguistic demands of their course.

Overseas PGR applicants who have satisfied all the other requirements of entry but have not achieved the required standard of English language proficiency may be made an offer conditional upon completing a pre-sessional programme of English language study (i.e. a programme that takes place before the start of the academic year). The length of the programme will be decided in consultation with staff in our English Language Centre Admissions Team. Further information on our pre-sessional and in-sessional (i.e., taking place alongside your studies during the academic year) English language courses on the [English Language Centre website](#).

## 7 Admissions Procedures



## 7.1 Making an Application for Postgraduate Research Study

We seek to admit students who are able to benefit from the research opportunities available at Liverpool. Applications will be assessed primarily on the basis of prior and predicted academic achievement. It is therefore important that applicants complete the form fully without any omissions. In assessing applications, we may take any or all of the information available to us into account. Assessment for admission to particular programmes may also draw on a variety of methods of assessment over and above the information on the application form, including interviews.

## 7.2 Direct Applications

All UK-based students and many international applicants will make a direct application, i.e. you apply to us directly using our online application form. More detail on how to apply directly is given later in this section.

## 7.3 Agency Applications

Some international applicants may choose to apply via one of our representatives overseas, sometimes referred to as Agents. These representatives have been appointed by the University of Liverpool to represent us in various countries where there are significant numbers of students who wish to study in Liverpool. They will explain the courses we have on offer and will be able to advise on whether a student's academic background is suitable for the course they are interested in. They will also be able to help with completing the application form and will act as a correspondence address. However, it should be noted that agents may make a charge for the services they provide.

The University of Liverpool will give applications received directly and via its agents the same consideration, so it is entirely up to the student whether they decide to use the services of one of our agents or not. A list of the representatives working for us may be obtained from: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/international/countries> clicking on the flag for their home country, students will be able to see a list of the representatives we have working for us in that country.

Further information about the way in which Liverpool selects and manages the relationship with its agents may be found at: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/study/international/contact-us/agents/>

## 7.4 Completing the Application Form

Regardless of the route of initial enquiry about studying at Liverpool, all prospective research students are required to apply formally for admission as a student of the University. The means of applying is via our [online application form](#).

There is currently no charge for making an application for postgraduate research study to the University of Liverpool.

The online application enables the student to attach scanned copies of supporting documents, such as a transcript and a research proposal, without which the application is not regarded as complete. Academic Institutes/Schools/Departments may not be able to make a decision on the application until they have these documents, so it is important to ensure that they are attached at the time the application is submitted.

## **8 Application Processing**

Initial processing of postgraduate research applications is carried out by the Admissions Team within the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation team. The application process is the same regardless of whether applicants wish to study full-time or part-time.

### **8.1 Acknowledgements**

When the Admissions Team receives the application, they will send an email to the applicant acknowledging its arrival.

### **8.2 Applications Made via the University's Representatives Overseas**

If the applicant has applied through one of the University's authorised representatives overseas, their application will be sent by the representative to the Admissions Team, who will acknowledge the application via the representative.

### **8.3 Documents Required as Part of the Application**

The online application form requires applicants to attach scanned documents (in pdf, Word or jpeg formats) to their application, and we strongly encourage applicants to ensure they have attached all the required documents to their application before submitting it online. After the application is submitted it is not possible to attach documents to it. Where an applicant needs to send documents after submission of their application, they should send these directly to the academic department they are applying to.

In order for the application to be considered complete, we will need to see copies of the following documents:

#### **Evidence of Higher Education and/or Professional Qualifications**

If the applicant has already completed their degree or equivalent professional qualifications, they should upload a scanned copy of their final degree certificate with their application form.

#### **Academic Transcripts**

Transcripts should provide full details of the degree result obtained as well as the grades or marks obtained in each module or unit of the degree. If the degree is not yet completed, the applicant should submit a transcript showing the marks achieved to date. If the applicant's studies have not yet been completed, any offer that is made will be made subject to satisfactory completion of the degree and the achievement of a specified grade or mark. Where an applicant's transcripts are not in English, they must be accompanied by a formal certified translation into English by the awarding institution.

#### **English Language Qualifications**

Copies of the applicant's IELTS test certificate or other approved English language qualification should be submitted with the application. If we do not have evidence of an applicant's proficiency in English, we may make an offer conditional upon their achieving a specified grade in an approved English language test, usually IELTS if their first language is not English.

Please note that IELTS test results are valid for two years only and we will not accept test scores which are more than two years old. The University does not combine IELTS tests. Further information regarding English language qualifications can be found in section 6.2.

### **References**

Applicants should provide details of two referees who are not related to them and who are able to comment on the applicant's academic ability to cope with the programme applied for. Referees will be directed to a secure web server where they will be able to upload a copy of their reference. For programmes where work experience is a requirement, applicants may be asked to provide a reference from their employer.

These documents are required by the University in order for the application to be regarded as complete.

## **8.4 Verification of Qualifications**

It is important for the University to be able to ascertain that applicants have achieved the results that they need to meet the terms of any offer we may make. For this reason, staff in the Admissions Team within Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation and within academic Institutes/Schools/Departments will take steps to verify the qualifications that applicants are offering, and may seek clarification from applicants if necessary. We will routinely approach the awarding bodies for English language qualifications to seek confirmation of overseas applicants' level of English.

Although the University will make offers on the basis of copies of documents, applicants will need to bring original copies of these documents for us to check during the registration process. International students in particular should note that officials from UK Visas and Immigration may ask to see original documents when they arrive in the UK.

## **8.5 Determining Fees Status**

When we have received the application, we begin the process of determining whether or not we are able to make an offer of a place. Part of this process involves determining the applicant's status for tuition fee purposes. This will determine whether the applicant will be charged fees at the rate payable by students from the UK or at the 'overseas' rate.

Staff in the Admissions Team will normally determine the fee status from the information provided on the application form. If the fee status is unclear, we will send a copy of our Fee Status Questionnaire, which should be completed by the applicant and returned to the address shown on the form. If we send a copy of this form it is essential that it be returned to the University as soon as possible, since applicants will be defaulted to 'overseas' status for tuition fee purposes and charged fees at the higher rate unless the form is returned and we are able to make a final determination of the fee status.

Fee status is not wholly dependent on nationality and can be complex to determine. Applicants who are in any doubt about their fee status can contact the Fee Assessment Officer by emailing [feestat@liv.ac.uk](mailto:feestat@liv.ac.uk). Further information about fee status is available from the [University website](#).

## **8.6 Criminal Convictions**

As part of its duty of care to members of the University community, it is the policy of the University to ask applicants who are applying for a clinical programme, working or studying with vulnerable groups or where they are accessing University accommodation whether they have any relevant criminal convictions at the time when they are made an academic offer or when they apply for accommodation, and to ask for further details of any convictions which are disclosed.

Where an applicant discloses a relevant conviction, procedures vary slightly depending on the programme of study. For non-clinical subject areas, when we have received details of the conviction and its consequences in terms of any sentence served or caution received, a Risk Assessment Panel will undertake a risk assessment to determine whether there is a risk of harm to others before deciding whether an application may proceed. The application process will be suspended while information is gathered about the conviction. The Risk Assessment Panel will normally consist of the Director of Student Administration and Support or their nominee, the Director of Legal, Risk and Compliance or their nominee, the Head of Admissions Policy and Strategy and the Dean of the academic Institute/School within which the applicant wishes to study or their nominee. Full details of the procedure for handling applications from individuals who declare a criminal conviction may be found at:

[Policy on requesting Criminal Conviction data from applicants to the University \(liverpool.ac.uk\)](http://liverpool.ac.uk)

For certain clinical courses there are separate requirements for applicants to be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, in order to determine fitness to train and practise. Further details may be found on the relevant academic Institute/School/Department website.

## 8.7 Applicants who are in Debt to the University

Following receipt of an application, the Admissions Team will check whether the applicant has previously studied at the University and whether they have any outstanding debts.

Applicants applying for a postgraduate programme who have previously studied at the University of Liverpool and who have left with an unpaid debt will be required to pay all outstanding debts before their application can be processed for a postgraduate research programme.

## 8.8 Consideration of Applications in Institutes/ Schools/ Departments

After the application has been received and acknowledged by the Admissions Team, it will then be sent electronically to the relevant academic Institute/School/Department for consideration.

Some individual Institutes/Schools/Departments may request additional information after the application has been submitted. Examples of such information include portfolios, examples of the applicant's written work, essays, or pieces of music, etc.

Admissions decisions are made on the basis of a thorough review of the application papers and references by all potential supervisors and the Institute/School/Department Director of Postgraduate Research. Informal interviews may be conducted as part of this initial review. Before any formal offer of study can be made, all candidates will be interviewed in accordance with the University's procedures. Interviews will be conducted by either the potential supervisors, the Institute/School/Department Directors of Postgraduate Research and/or by a small panel of other appropriate interviewers. Interviews will normally be face-to-face, however, in cases where this is not possible (e.g. in the case of some overseas applicants) efforts will be made to use a conference telephone call or online interview.

## 8.9 Offers

For an application to be successful, it must be endorsed by the proposed supervisory team and the Institute/School/Department Director of Postgraduate Research. Successful applicants are issued with a formal offer letter by the Institute/School/Department. This offer letter may be conditional or unconditional, dependent on individual circumstances e.g. funding; qualifications etc. Offer letters will include details such as the name of the programme of study, supervisory arrangements, expected start and end dates, details of the fee liability and funding (where applicable).

## 8.10 Tuition Fees

The offer letter will state the annual tuition fee for the programme and whether this is fixed or subject to change annually. This fee will apply while the student is normally registered. The initial tuition fee will be calculated on a pro rata basis until the end of the academic session.

Where a tuition fee has not been confirmed for the session the applicant is applying to enter the University, an offer letter may be issued that states the previous year's fees as an indication of the cost of the programme. In this instance, this will be clearly identified to the applicant. A replacement offer letter will be issued to the applicant upon confirmation of the tuition fees for the year of entry.

The full list of Home fees is available at: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/feespayment/tuition/>

The full list of International fees is available at:

<https://www.liv.ac.uk/study/international/tuition-fees-and-scholarships/pgr-fees/>

## 8.11 Research Support Fees

In some Institutes/Schools/Departments, additional fees are charged to cover direct costs related to the project, such as consumables. Where a research project will attract such fees, these will be detailed in the formal University offer letter, together with a breakdown of the costs.

## 8.12 Fee Liability and Payment of Fees

In accepting an offer of a place on a postgraduate research programme, the applicant agrees to accept the liability for tuition and research support fees upon registration. The applicant may choose to fund their studies through sponsorship, scholarship, private funding or a combination of sources. Upon registration, the student becomes fully liable for their tuition and research support fees and will be expected to make payment or confirm arrangements for payment of the annual tuition fee in a timely manner. For subsequent years, tuition fees are levied each year in October at the beginning of the academic session. In the event of a sponsor or other source defaulting on fee payments or cessation of scholarship funding prior to their research being completed, the student retains the liability for their fees and will be expected to make arrangements accordingly.

Full details of the arrangements for payment of fees may be found in the University's Fee Payment Policy, which is updated on an annual basis. The latest version of the Policy may be found at: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/feespayment/>

## 8.13 Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

The Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) is a UK-government verification scheme for international students. Having an ATAS clearance certificate is mandatory for some postgraduate research students who require Entry Clearance to come into the UK. Applicants who are seeking to study for research degrees in the following subject areas may be affected:

- Medicine
- Biological Sciences
- Veterinary Science
- Physical Sciences
- Mathematical Sciences
- Computer Science
- Engineering
- Technology disciplines

Where an applicant's research project comes under the ATAS scheme, the Institute/School/Department will send them details regarding how to apply for ATAS approval with the offer letter.

However, it is the applicant's responsibility to check if the ATAS scheme applies to them, as they will be unable to obtain a visa if they need an ATAS certificate and do not have one. More information is available at: [www.liv.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/applying/atas/](http://www.liv.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/applying/atas/)

## 8.14 Visas/CAS Statements

The UK government operates a points based immigration system for all overseas students. Further details at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

The University is licensed with the Home Office as a Student visa Sponsor. The University aims to provide a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) in good time for the visa application but in doing so relies on the applicant taking responsibility for:

- making a timely application for admission including complete details of all previous study and periods of study in the UK
- responding fully and in good time to accept the offer
- responding fully to requests for any further information, such as passport details
- providing the University with an appropriate email address to which the CAS will be issued.

In order to comply with the relevant United Kingdom legislation and immigration regulations, the University will notify the immigration authorities, where relevant, of any non-arrival, or late arrival, of an applicant and of any subsequent changes to a student's registration status. The University reserves the right to refuse admission should an applicant be found not to be in a position to meet all UK visa requirements for the anticipated full duration of their programme of study.

All applicants requiring a visa to study in the United Kingdom must not currently be, nor have ever previously been, in the United Kingdom for any purpose without valid immigration permissions. If, either during the process of admitting a student or subsequent to that student enrolling upon their programme of study, the University is informed that the applicant/student is (or has previously been) in the United Kingdom without such valid permissions, it may be required to inform the immigration authorities and/or withdraw the offer of a place and/or withdraw its sponsorship of the individual's visa.

The University may need to review this policy in light of changes to Home Office Student visa policy in order to remain compliant with Sponsor duties. This may result in changes to matters such as the evidence required for English language proficiency at short notice. Where changes are necessary due to Home Office changes the University will endeavour to contact all applicants holding an offer and on whom the change will impact, within 6-8 weeks.

The University will generate Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) when applicants are firmly holding an unconditional offer of a place, which they have accepted and the University has received documentary evidence of the qualifications they hold.

**Applicants should be aware that they will be required to produce copies of their certificates when they arrive to register at the University.**

The University undertakes to do all it can to ensure that applicants have the appropriate documentation to apply for their visas in good time. More information may be found on the UK Visas and Immigration website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

***Important: If the applicant uses a CAS issued by the University of Liverpool to obtain their visa, they are committed to taking up their place at Liverpool. They cannot use a CAS issued by the University of Liverpool and then change their mind about where they want to study.***

## 8.15 Provision of Feedback

Unsuccessful applicants may ask for feedback on why their application was not successful. Applicants are asked to put any such request in writing (email or letter). Applicants should note, however, that it is not always possible to give more than very general advice about how to improve an application for the future.

## 9 Applicant conduct

The University of Liverpool is committed to ensuring that any interaction with an applicant or their representative, is conducted in a professional manner and it expects that any communication from an applicant or their representative is conducted in the same way.

Applicants and their representatives should note that the University will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour or language towards its employees during the admissions process. Hostile, or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing, including excessive levels of contact, will be viewed seriously and may adversely affect the consideration of an application, appeal or complaint. The University will normally alert an applicant or their representative that their behaviour or language is inappropriate and that action is being considered, but where the behaviour or language is particularly inappropriate no warning need be given before action is taken. Such action may include the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of an application.

## 10 Data Protection

By submitting an application, whether online or in hard copy, applicants give permission to the University to process their personal data for the purposes of managing the University's selection and admissions procedures and for the University to use this data for maintaining its student records. This information is also used to make statutory returns to bodies such as the Office for Students (OfS). More information about the way in which we use your data may be found in our Admissions Privacy Statement at: [https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/legal/data\\_protection/privacy-notice/admissions-privacy-statement/](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/legal/data_protection/privacy-notice/admissions-privacy-statement/)

Data collected during the admissions and registration processes will be used for the purposes of maintaining student records, managing processes in relation to academic progress, providing personal and academic advice and support, managing accommodation services and providing

access to the Library and sports facilities and the facilities in The University of Liverpool's Guild of Students.

The University complies with the Data Protection Act (1998) and with the General Data Protection Regulation with regard to handling applicant data.

## **11 Fraudulent Applications/Documents**

By applying, either online or in a hard copy, you are confirming that the information you have provided, and any accompanying documentation supporting your application, is true, complete, accurate and your own work (including the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) software, such as ChatGPT, without appropriate acknowledgement of its use), as are subsequent communications from you to the University. The University is not prepared to accept applicants who misrepresent or give false information about themselves. Where an applicant has omitted to provide all relevant information on their application form (including, but not limited to, qualifications commenced but not completed, qualifications resulting in a fail grade, exclusions) its similarly reserves the right to withdraw any offer made and prevent future applications.

If the University suspects that an applicant has provided false, plagiarised or misleading information, we will carry out an investigation to determine whether these suspicions are justified, and we reserve the right to record an unsuccessful decision or withdraw any offer that might have been made. The investigation may include the use of third-party verification systems and software.

## **12 Appeals and Complaints**

Although the University strives to maintain the high standards that it has set itself in dealing with admissions, we recognise that things do sometimes go wrong and that applicants may feel that they have grounds for a complaint or an appeal.

For the purposes of this policy, an **appeal** is defined as a request by an unsuccessful applicant for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision. Such appeals will normally be allowed only if there is evidence of a procedural irregularity in the decision-making process.

A **complaint** is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with the way in which the University's admissions policies or procedures have been applied to reach an admissions decision.

Please note that a complaint or appeal which merely seeks to dispute the academic judgment of the selector will not be allowed.

Further information on the University's Admissions Complaints and Appeals procedure may be found at: [https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/postgraduate-taught/applying/taught\\_policies/](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/postgraduate-taught/applying/taught_policies/)

## **13 Ordinances and Regulations**

Full details of the Ordinances and Regulations which relate to admission as a postgraduate student are contained in the University's Calendar, available on our website at: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/governance/programme-ordinances/>

## **14 Monitoring of the Admissions Policy**

This policy is monitored by the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation (SRAWP) and AQSD Departments and is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.



## **15 Data Protection and Competition Markets Authority (CMA)**

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Data collected during the admissions and registration processes will be used for the purposes of maintaining student records, managing processes in relation to academic progress, providing personal and academic advice and support, managing accommodation services and providing access to the Library and sports facilities and the facilities in The University of Liverpool's Guild of Students.

The University complies with the Data Protection Act (1998) and with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) with regard to handling applicant data.

### **15.1 Competition Markets Authority (CMA)**

The CMA sets out your consumer rights as an applicant. There are three key consumer law issues for students/applicants:

Information provision – universities need to provide up front, clear, unambiguous and timely information.

Terms and conditions – universities' terms and conditions that apply to students need to be fair. Complaint handling process and practices – universities need to ensure their complaint handling processes and practices are accessible, clear and fair to students.

For further information on CMA:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers-and-students>

## **15 Terms and Conditions**

Applicants and their educational representatives should be aware that when they sign the application form, whether online or in hard copy, they acknowledge the content of this policy and are specifically agreeing to the following:

- that the information contained within the application is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge
- that the applicant is aware that if they have made an application via one of the University's educational representatives overseas they are themselves responsible for any information that the representative provides to the University on their behalf
- that the University will process personal data contained in the application form, or other data which the University may obtain from the applicant or other sources. Applicants agree to the processing of such data for any purpose connected with their studies or their welfare and safety, or for any other legitimate interest
- that, where appropriate in order to process an application for study, the University will share personal information with other relevant organisations, which may include: Kaplan,

**POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CODE OF PRACTICE – APPENDIX 1**  
**Postgraduate Research Degrees Admissions Policy and Procedure**  
**Effective for all students applying for programmes beginning in 2023/24**

Xi'an Jiaotong – Liverpool University (XJTLU), partner institutions, UK Visas and Immigration, the applicant's educational representative, sponsors and referees

- that the University will keep application data for up to six years if the application is unsuccessful
- that if the application is successful the University will at that point provide further notification of how the data that has been provided will be used and stored
- that applicants have the right to access, rectify, erase, restrict or object to processing of their data. If you are not happy with the way your data has been processed in the first instance you should contact the University of Liverpool Data Protection Officer at [LegalServices@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:LegalServices@liverpool.ac.uk). If you remain dissatisfied, you may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office at the following postal address or via <https://ico.org.uk/>:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

- that the University will require any student who has previously studied at the University of Liverpool and who left with an unpaid debt to make arrangements for the repayment of that debt before they can be accepted onto a postgraduate programme;
- that if the University suspects that an applicant has provided false or misleading information, it will carry out an investigation to determine whether these suspicions are justified, and reserves the right to record an unsuccessful decision or withdraw any offer that might already have been made. The University may also refuse to accept a subsequent application from students who have provided false or misleading information in the past;
- that occasionally, for reasons beyond its control the University may be unable to run a programme that has been advertised for any given academic year. Where this occurs and there are applicants who have applied and/or been made an offer for that programme, the university will make every effort to provide an alternative programme to these applicants.

## 16 Sources of Further Information

- [International Advice and Guidance](#)

Any queries about this policy may be directed to:

Ms Judith King  
Associate Director, Admissions  
Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation  
University of Liverpool  
Foundation Building  
765 Brownlow Hill  
Liverpool  
L69 7ZX

Email: [judeking@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:judeking@liverpool.ac.uk)

## **Annexe 1**

Students who are nationals of countries defined by UK Visas and Immigration as ‘majority English-speaking’ are not required to demonstrate a formal qualification in English in order to obtain their visa. The relevant countries are:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia
- The Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Canada
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Jamaica
- New Zealand
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United States of America

Nationality will be confirmed using the applicant’s passport.

Those who have previously completed an academic qualification equivalent to a UK degree which was taught in what we call a ‘majority English-speaking’ country (within two years of the start date of the programme at UoL):

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Ireland
- Jamaica
- New Zealand
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United States of America