Postgraduate research programmes

At Birmingham we offer a wide range of research options leading to different qualifications. All our research degree courses offer research skills training to make sure you're well-equipped to realise your potential as a researcher here. During your research you will have access to a range of tailor-made services to support your study, develop your skills and strengthen your career prospects.

Open all sections

Information and advice

Our Research Student Administration team is here to answer all your questions about the rules and regulations governing doctoral research at the University of Birmingham, including how to present and submit your thesis, how to prepare for your viva and how to request a leave of absence or an extension.

Postgraduate Researcher community

Participate in, and contribute to, the organisation of University-wide events such as the annual Research Poster Conference. These events celebrate the achievements of Birmingham's postgraduate researcher community, giving you a chance to meet other researchers and promote the exciting research taking place at the University.

University Graduate School

We understand our students and researchers all have differing needs, and we flexible, accessible services designed to meet these needs. The University Graduate School supports our postgraduate researcher (PGR) community, ensuring you are equipped to do the highest-quality research during your time at Birmingham, leaving with the necessary skills to pursue your chosen career.

Our dedicated Skills Development programme is here to help you become an effective researcher, develop your transferable skills and enhance your CV. Whether you need to practice for a conference presentation, improve your writing skills or get to grips with project management, you'll find courses and events to help you successfully complete your research degree.

ESRC Doctoral Training Centre

The ESRC Doctoral Training Centre (DTC) is one of 21 such centres across the UK, selected on the basis of research excellence, excellent environments for doctoral research and having a critical mass in the social sciences. It demonstrates our commitment to supporting the skills development of students undertaking PhDs. Each year we aim to award at least 14 ESRC studentships across a range of different subject pathways.

As a DTC we are also involved in providing advanced training in research methods, and making it available to the doctoral research community and beyond, including:

- **Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Research Methods and Skills (PGCARMS)** provides enhanced advanced training in research and transferable skills to social science doctoral researchers, with candidates completing 60 credits of advance training modules (including formally taught short courses in advance research methods, internships on research projects and volunteering placements, plus credit-bearing central provision in advanced transferable skills areas such as entrepreneurship and research consultancy).

  This is an innovative new approach to doctoral researcher development PGCert of its kind in the UK and it is available exclusively for University of Birmingham doctoral researchers. Completion of PGCARMS is compulsory for DTC students.

- **Advanced training** offers our DTC students access to a range of advanced training at other DTCs via the **National Centre for Research Methods website (http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/)** . All our DTC students are eligible to apply for a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG), please **e-mail Rachel Patti (mailto:r.c.patti@bham.ac.uk)** to find out more.

Online courses

As a postgraduate researchers you need to balance your research with your other commitments, and at this stage of your studies you will want to be able to control and manage your own development. Our online courses, including Project Management, Ethics for Researchers, Career Development and Viva Preparation, allow you to learn at your own pace and to suit your own schedule. Our Doctoral Researcher Essentials induction package provides an online guide to your first year as a doctoral researcher, a particularly valuable tool if you starting your PhD degree in-year.

Training to teach

Most schools and departments at the University offer opportunities for postgraduate researchers to teach, providing valuable experience, transferable skills and a source of income. The University provides a range of development opportunities and support for PGRs that teach, including:

- **Introduction to Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILT001)** addresses core aspects of teaching, underpinning any subject or context specific training you are taking within school settings. This series of half-day courses covers the full range of teaching and learning support activities undertaken by postgraduate researchers. Part one provides a general introduction to teaching, and you need to attend this course before progressing onto the second part of the programme, which comprises a selection of courses to help you develop their skills in ways that relate to their individual teaching responsibilities. You can also take a Pathway Module which leads to associate membership of the Higher Education Academy and attend an annual Learning and Teaching Conference for all doctoral researchers that teach.

Learning resources for research

Postdoctoral students can access a wide range of learning resources via our libraries and resource centres. You can also take advantage of a wide range of supporting services and resources to guide your research.

Electronic resources

Our web portal my.bham.ac.uk will provide you with a wide range of integrated services including email, access to e-learning systems, library account details and collaborative group spaces for social and study activities. You can access a range of services such as:

- Electronic databases and journals on the e-library
- Online library catalogue of printed collections
- One-to-one information clinics for doctoral researchers to support individual learning needs
- Subject and database guides to help identify useful information sources
- Skills guides to help you get the most out of your research
- A range of library services by telephone or online

Computing

There are dedicated computer clusters for doctoral researchers in locations right across campus, as well as computing facilities within libraries, schools and departments. Assistive software is installed in almost all of our computer clusters, as well as in the assistive technology booths within the main library. As a researcher, you can also access the high-performance research computing facility BlueBEAR which, together with the Visualisation Centre, forms part of the Birmingham Environment for Academic Research (BEAR). Throughout your studies you'll have free access to email and the internet, and there are two dedicated computing helpdesks which you can contact about general computing issues.

Accessing resources

It's important that you can access our information resources quickly and effectively, and there are a range of services to help you do this, including access to a broad spectrum of electronic databases and journals on the e-library and our online library catalogue of our printed collections. We support your individual learning needs through one-to-one clinics with our subject specialist staff. Subject and database guides help you identify useful information sources, while a series of skills guides support you in getting the most out of your research.

Career and business skills

Our Careers and Employability Centre offers a range of skills training courses designed for postgraduate researchers looking to find their niche in the jobs market. Initiatives such as our Enterprise Summer School and Talent Pool offer practical opportunities for you to gain an understanding of business and develop your entrepreneurial flair during your time at Birmingham.

Birmingham postgraduates are highly sought after by employers and most find employment soon after gaining their degree – on average, 92% of our postgraduate students are employed within six months of leaving the University.

Our Careers and Employability Centre offers support and expert career advice tailored to meet the diverse needs of our postgraduate researcher community. We provide a range of resources and services to help you identify your career aims, contact prospective employers, and develop your skills. Our extensive links with major employers mean that you have access to the most up-to-date information to enhance your employment prospects.

Our research programmes

The University of Birmingham offers the following types of research programmes:

Doctoral research programmes

On these programmes you will undertake significant research culminating in a thesis that makes an original contribution to knowledge and is worthy of publication, whilst working closely with your supervisor. We offer the following programmes (for more information click the links below):

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) with Integrated Study
- Professional Doctorates
- Doctor of Engineering (EngD)
- Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)
- Doctor of Medicine (MD)

Masters Research programmes

These programmes aim to provide you with research training that fosters the development of independent research skills, and as a potential preparation for doctoral level study. We offer the following programmes:

- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Master of Research (MRes)
- Master of Music (MMus)

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