

Postgraduate Law Research: How to Apply?



We accept applications at any time, though we strongly encourage research students to begin their studies at the start of the UK academic year (i.e. in September). There are, however, deadlines for applying for financial support. This section is designed to guide you through the application process and to help you identify funding opportunities.

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Step 1: Which degree?

We offer three different postgraduate research degrees:

- **PhD:** 3 years full-time, 6 years part-time
- **MPhil:** 2 years full-time, 4 years part-time
- **MJur:** 1 year full-time, 2 years part-time

PhD students are initially registered on the MPhil programme and are expected to submit a 10,000 word paper showing PhD potential between 9 and 18 months after registering at the School. Your registration is then transferred to 'full' PhD status and, following further work, a thesis of 80,000 words is submitted. Full-time students are expected to complete their work within three years.

The **MPhil** programme requires you to research and write a 60,000-word thesis under the supervision of a member of academic staff. Full-time students are expected to complete their thesis within two years.

The **MJur** programme requires you to research and write a 40,000-word thesis under the supervision of a member of academic staff. Full-time students are expected to complete their thesis within one year.

Step 2: Do you meet our entry requirements?

- *Either* a first class or upper second class UK honours degree in law (or a subject related to the proposed area of research) or overseas equivalent, or a lower second class degree in law (or overseas equivalent) plus a masters with an average above 60%.
- IELTS 7.0 or equivalent if English is not your first language

Step 3: Contact a member of staff

Once you have identified the subject area that you want to research, we recommend that you contact a member of our staff with appropriate expertise to discuss your proposed research. **Please contact only one member of staff in the first instance;** if necessary, we will redirect your email to a member of staff with expertise more directly relevant to your proposed research. If you are unsure which member of staff to approach, please contact law-phd@contacts.bham.ac.uk (<mailto:law-phd@contact.bham.ac.uk>) for advice.

This is a pre-application step to help us match your research interests with our expertise. We will give you a preliminary view about whether you proposed research and academic background is a good fit with the School's research strengths. If there is a good fit between your proposed research and our research strengths, we will give you advice on a draft of your research proposal before you make a formal application. We will also help you to identify funding opportunities.

When contacting a member of our staff, it would be helpful to include the following:

- **A draft research proposal** (</schools/law/courses/research/research-proposal.aspx>) or a summary of your research ideas.
- Details of university-level qualifications and any relevant professional experiences
- Details on how you propose to fund your research.

A list of **our research strengths can be found here** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/research/law/law.aspx#ResearchInterestsTab>).

You can also consult individual staff **profiles** (</schools/law/staff/index.aspx>) to find more about our research interests as well as our contact details.

Step 4: Explore funding opportunities

There is a wide range of funding opportunities available to students interested in pursuing postgraduate research at Birmingham Law School—but it is vital that you explore these opportunities early. For more information, including details of funding deadlines, see [here](/schools/law/courses/research/scholarships.aspx) (</schools/law/courses/research/scholarships.aspx>).

Fees for 2015/16

- Home/EU: £4,090 FT, £2,045 PT
- Overseas: £13,195 FT, £6597.50 PT

Step 5: Submit a formal application

Applications are submitted **online** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/postgraduate/apply-pg/index.aspx>). Applications are made directly to the University of Birmingham by using course finder and clicking on the course you wish to apply for. To complete an online application, you will require the following:

- [A research proposal \(/schools/law/courses/research/research-proposal.aspx\)](/schools/law/courses/research/research-proposal.aspx)
- Copies of university transcripts
- Two references from referees who are able to comment on your academic and professional background
- Certificates to show competence in the English language (if English is not your first language).
- A personal statement of no more than one side of A4 in length explaining why you are interested in studying on your chosen programme.

It normally takes us 8-12 weeks to make a decision as we select students with care and your application is likely to be considered by several members of academic staff. If you have followed the steps above, however, we are likely to arrive at a decision much more quickly. During the application process, we may ask you to refine or reformulate your proposal in the light of comments from staff involved in assessing your project. You may also be invited for an interview. If you have any questions on the application process, please contact law-research@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:law-research@bham.ac.uk>)

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