

# AHRC DOCTORAL SCHEME APPLICATION FORM

2009/10 Competition

For students who are intending to undertake full-time or part-time doctoral research in the Arts and Humanities at The University of Manchester.

**CLOSING DATE: 1 APRIL 2009**

## How to complete the form:

Guidance on how to complete the application form is appended to this form. You should also download the Guidance Notes on AHRC-funded Schemes for further information on the background to the schemes, eligibility, assessment procedures and terms and conditions of the award. These are available at:

**[www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/ahrc](http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/ahrc)**

**Please complete all sections**

## PART I: ABOUT YOURSELF

### 1: Name of applicant

Title	Forename	Middle name(s)
Surname		

### 2: Address

**CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS** between January 2009 and October 2009, if different to that given on your University application form

Valid to:

Address	
Town	
County	Postcode
Country	
Telephone (inc STD code)	
Email Address	

### 3: Proposed study

Please give a brief title for your proposed programme of research

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#### 4: Case for support

Please make your case for support in the space below. Note: word limit is 1500 words. (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

Word count:

I confirm that the information I have provided in Part I of this form is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge at this date. I fully understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the relevant forms are submitted to the relevant school in due time and that any missing information may render my application incomplete and ineligible. I authorise the University of Manchester to disclose to the AHRC any information that is relevant to my application

Signature

Date

#### Acknowledgement of receipt

In order for us to notify you that your application has been received, **please attach a stamped, self-addressed postcard to your application form**. We strongly advise you to do this, as we will not be able to respond to telephone enquiries regarding confirmation of receipt. Please note that this postcard will confirm that your AHRC application has been received by the University, but it does not confirm that your application form is complete or that it is eligible. If you have requested acknowledgement of your application and you have not received one by the end of April, please contact us to check that the form was submitted on time.

## PART II: SUBJECT AREAS

The following is a list of all AHRC subject areas at the University of Manchester. Full and final details of the number of studentships available within these areas will be published by the AHRC in February 2009.

Please indicate, by ticking a box, the subject area in which you think your research falls. (If your research is interdisciplinary, please tick one or more boxes, as applicable.)

Your application will be forwarded to the relevant School.

- Archaeology
- Classics and Ancient History
- Dance, Drama and Performing Arts
- English Language and Literature (either Linguistics and English Language or English and American Studies)
- Film Studies and Television Studies (Cosmopolitan Cultures)
- German Language and Culture (German studies)
- History
- History of Art, Architecture and Design
- Iberian and Latin American Language and Culture (Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies)
- Interpreting and Translation (Translation Studies)
- Italian Language and Culture (Italian studies)
- Law
- Linguistics (Linguistics and English Language)
- Music
- Philosophy
- Religious Studies
- Russian, Slavonic and Eastern European Language and Culture (Russian and East European Studies)

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## PART III: YOUR REFERENCES

Please provide two references along with this application. These may be the same references as those submitted for your University application as long as they provide full details of your previous academic work and performance and demonstrate your preparedness for doctoral study. Please refer to the guidance notes attached for further advice on this.

# NOTES FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM FOR AN AHRC DOCTORAL AWARD

## Important points for applicants and referees

- You must have applied to the University of Manchester for admission onto the doctoral programme before you submit this AHRC application. Much of the information contained in your completed admissions form will be used to assess your AHRC application.
- General information on the AHRC's studentship competitions will be available on their website from December 2008.
- Ensure that you have downloaded the correct form from the University's website. There is a different form for each scheme (Professional Preparation Master's Scheme, Research Preparation Master's Scheme and Doctoral Awards Scheme). If you submit your application on the wrong form, we will not be able to accept it.
- **You may submit only one application for an AHRC Postgraduate Award per institution.** The exception concerns students who have been nominated for a Collaborative Doctoral Award, for a project studentship attached to an AHRC Research Grant for which their prospective supervisor has applied, and for a studentship attached to the Language Based Area Studies Centres. Such students may simultaneously submit an application in the BGP Competition. It is not permissible to hold two awards concurrently, so we ask such applicants to keep us informed of their intentions.
- **Although you may apply to more than one institution for a AHRC BGP award, you may only be nominated (i.e. put forward) by one institution. Should you be nominated by more than one institution your application will be rejected.**
- You must not submit the application directly to the AHRC. The University of Manchester has been allocated a number of studentships as part of the Block Grant Partnership scheme. Students will now apply directly to the University and successful candidates will then be nominated to the AHRC.
- All sections of the form must be word-processed using at least 10pt font. However, the forms cannot be submitted electronically
- The closing date for all applications is **5.00pm on 1st April 2009 and applications should be returned in hard copy (not emailed) to the School in which you intend to register.** Please see contact details on Appendix 2. **We require five photocopies of the AHRC application form (above).**
- Your application must also include the **relevant transcripts/certificates and two references.** These references may be the same as the ones submitted along with your University Admissions form. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted. Applications submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted.
- Details of how the applications will be assessed can be found in the guide for applicants available at: **[www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/ahrc](http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/ahrc)**

# THE APPLICATION FORM GUIDANCE

## PART I

### Questions 1 and 2: Name and Address

We need to be able to contact you between April and October. Under 'Correspondence Address' you should provide the address at which you can be contacted for the majority of this period, if this is different to the address you have given on the University application form. Should you be unavailable during this period, you may provide the name and address of someone who can correspond for you in your absence.

### Questions 3 and 4: Description of Your Proposed Course

Please give the title of your proposed programme of study. This section plays a key part in the assessment of your application. We recommend that you discuss the content of this section with your proposed supervisor. The assessors are looking for evidence of high quality and strong potential for postgraduate study. Enthusiasm and interest are important, but panel members are interested in:

- evidence of intellectual purpose and originality
- details about your reasons for, and approach towards, undertaking your proposed study
- a good awareness of the research context.

You need to present your case clearly and concisely. Use the subheadings below to set out as clearly as you can the work you intend to undertake. You do not have to address every point listed below; this is intended as a guide to help you structure your case.

- Space is limited so take care not to repeat information. You must keep to the word limit of **1500 words**. You should include the number of words in your case for support in the box provided. If you exceed the word limit your application will be made ineligible, as this would be an unfair advantage over other applicants.
- **Your reasons and purposes for undertaking this project:** state briefly what the key area or issues of your project will be and why you wish to pursue this research project. How does your proposed work relate to what you have studied already? Where there is a significant overlap between your Master's dissertation (if you completed one) and your doctoral study, you should demonstrate clearly how the project goes beyond your Master's study and state clearly the added value of continuing to research in this area. This does not mean that the assessors expect your research programme to be in the same area as your previous study, but they will need to know that you have sufficient experience to complete your project. Finally, you should say how your doctoral study relates to your eventual career aims.
- **Your research project:** give a brief synopsis of your proposed research project. In a competition as fierce as this, how you make your case for support is crucial, so you should use clear and concise language, avoiding jargon. Bear in mind that the assessors might not be experts in your particular specialist field.

The main thrust of this section should be the research problems or questions you intend to address in your doctoral study. These should be clearly defined in your proposal. You should describe:

- the research problems or questions you intend to address

- the research context (background) in which those problems or questions are located. In describing the context, you should refer to the current state of knowledge and any recent debate on the subject
- the particular contribution to knowledge and understanding in this area that you hope to make. You should explain why the work is important. The fact that an area has not been studied previously is not, in itself, a case for the work to be supported. We are also seeking a description of relevance beyond the development of your own skills or experience, though this is important too
- the methods and critical approaches that you plan to use to address the problems or questions you have set. We don't just need to know what you are going to work on, we need to know how you plan to go about it
- the sources that you will use, if appropriate. You will need to state where these sources and materials are located and how these will be accessed. For example, if you are undertaking an archaeological project, do you need a permit to access a particular site, and how will this be obtained? It is sometimes helpful to put forward alternative strategies or approaches if you are aware that problems might arise
- you should say, as far as you can, how the project will develop or how you will structure the work over the period of the award.
- you should identify and address any ethical issues relating to the research project.
- **If you have already begun your doctoral study**, it is important that you give some indication of the work you have undertaken to date, e.g. information on any chapters or major pieces of work you have completed.
- **Preparation and previous experience:** you should give a brief indication of any previous experience or preparation that is relevant to your proposed doctoral study. For example, you may wish to highlight key areas of your Master's study. Where applicable, you should also include training and preparation, additional to the formal undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications already listed, which is relevant to your proposed study
- For practice-led subjects, you should include details of your professional or work experience (including relevant voluntary work or exhibitions), as the panel will be looking at your track record. For example, if your application is for doctoral study in creative writing, please describe the kind of writing (published or unpublished) you have undertaken. If your work experience was completed over several short periods, it would be helpful to give an overall number of weeks or months, e.g. 3 months' gallery experience (this information should match that provided in response to question 5).

## PART II: SUBJECT AREA PANELS

- You should indicate which subject area your research will fall into and this will determine which Subject Panel will be responsible for considering your application. The arrangement of these panels reflects the allocation of studentships the University expects to receive from the AHRC. Final and full details of this allocation will be made available to institutions in February 2009.
- Applications will normally be directed to one panel only. However, in exceptional cases, a subsidiary assessment is required from a second panel.

## PART III: REFERENCES

You should provide two references along with your application. These may be the same references you submit with the standard University application form. However, as the competition for these awards is so fierce, you are strongly advised to ask your referees to consider the following notes.

- Referees should be able to comment in detail, and impartially, on the applicant's recent work and his/her preparedness for doctoral study. The University's assessors are seeking information that will help them distinguish between the many very high calibre students who apply for doctoral awards. **References that do not provide a detailed appraisal of the applicant's academic development and suitability for his/her proposed study, but are simply a general statement of support, may disadvantage even the strongest applicant.** It is helpful to the panel if you provide evidence both of the skills that the applicant possesses and, importantly, how they relate to the proposed study (as described in the applicant's case for support).
- Professional referees should state how long the applicant has worked with them and in what capacity. You should detail the type and range of duties that were performed, and how this may have prepared the applicant for the proposed study.

Please comment under the following headings:

### Previous performance

- Please provide a realistic appraisal of the applicant's abilities based on your assessment of his/her academic and, where relevant, professional performance to date. Include comments on the applicant's overall performance in his/her degree (or degrees, if you have taught him/her at undergraduate and Master's level), and his/her performance on individual modules or courses. Where appropriate, you should draw on the comments of external examiners or other external contacts. Where the applicant has a joint degree, please include performance in both disciplines. For assessment purposes, it is important that all marks are given and not only the ones related to the subject applied for.
- The assessors are interested in such qualities as the applicant's conceptual ability, ability to solve problems, independence of mind, potential to develop innovative methods, communication skills, organisational abilities and, where relevant, his/her practical or technical capabilities. Please give examples to illustrate your comments.
- For **professional referees**, please draw on your experience of the applicant's work to give an appraisal of his/her professional performance to date. Please highlight the applicant's strengths in the area in which he/she plans to study and note any weaknesses the applicant may have. Please give examples to illustrate your comments.

### Preparedness for doctoral study

- The assessors need to know how well prepared the applicant is for doctoral study and whether he/she can bring it to completion.
- Please give your assessment of the applicant's motivation and commitment, his/her capacity for working independently on the project throughout, and the

likelihood of the applicant completing the project successfully. You should also mention any relevant intellectual, practical, technical or professional skills the applicant possesses that you have not already highlighted. You should say how the proposed research project relates to the applicant's experience to date, and to his/her future plans. You should make your comments in the context of the applicant's proposed programme of work as the assessors will be looking at the applicant's preparedness for doctoral study, not just at his/her abilities more generally. You may wish to address questions such as how the applicant has developed and improved during his/her undergraduate or postgraduate career.

- If the applicant is currently undertaking a Master's degree, and if you are permitted to do so, please include details of any formal assessments of his/her Master's work. This information should link in to the predicted grade that you have indicated.
- If the applicant has commenced his/her doctoral study, please include details of his/her progress to date. You should give an assessment of the applicant's progress and say on what basis this assessment has been made. For example, there may have been formal monitoring or a review of the applicant's work upon which you can draw.
- **Professional referees** should also comment on the applicant's professional commitment, motivation and potential. It would be helpful to say how the professional experience the applicant has gained has built on his/her academic studies, and how it will prepare him/her to pursue his/her research and meet his/her long-term career aims.
- If it is likely that the assessors will be unfamiliar with the research or professional environment to which your comments refer, please ensure that you provide sufficient background to enable the panel to place your comments in context.
- If the applicant has already studied at postgraduate level, please give examples of how this study has prepared the applicant to undertake doctoral research. If the applicant has no experience at postgraduate level, please comment on his/her preparedness to move directly to doctoral research without an initial year of Master's-level training
- It would also help the assessors if you could mention any additional training that the applicant will need in order to successfully complete his/her doctoral studies. Are there particular aspects of the proposed study of which the applicant has had no, or little, experience? For example, the applicant may require language training in order to work on original source material, or IT training to access particular datasets. Constructive observations about training needs will not disadvantage the candidate since the acquisition of new skills is an important part of a doctoral student's training and development.
- Where the degree has not already been awarded, please complete the box that asks for a forecast of the likely Master's degree result. This is important information for the assessors.

## APPENDIX 1: LIST OF KEY CONTACTS

### The University of Manchester AHRC contacts

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#### School Postgraduate Research Administrators

##### School of Arts, Histories and Cultures

Jo Marsh tel 0161 275 2603

##### School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures

Sara Latham tel 0161 275 3602

##### School of Social Sciences

Bernadette O'Connor tel 0161 275 4627

##### School of Law

Stephen Wadsworth tel 0161 275 7554

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#### School Postgraduate Taught Programmes

##### Administrators

##### School of Arts, Histories and Cultures

Carly Bibby tel 0161 275 8980

##### School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures

Sara Latham tel 0161 275 3062

##### School of Social Sciences

Bernadette O'Connor tel 0161 275 4627

##### School of Law

Stephen Wadsworth tel 0161 275 7554

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#### Faculty of Humanities PGR Administrators

Nichola Ellis tel 0161 275 3038

Jo Kaiserman tel 0161 275 0287

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#### Faculty of Humanities Taught Programmes

##### Administrator

Lisa McAlesse tel 0161 275 0251

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#### Student Services Centre

tel 0161 275 5000

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#### Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

AHRC Whitefriars Lewins Mead Bristol BS1 2AE

tel 0117 987 6500

fax 0117 987 6600

[www.ahrc.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx)

[enquiries@ahrc.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@ahrc.ac.uk)

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