

VISITING RESEARCH STUDENTS POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Visiting Research Students can benefit enormously from their time at the Manchester Metropolitan University, both academically and personally; they can build relationships with experienced academic staff, other research groups as well as be an ambassador for Manchester Met in their own institution.

Admitting students under this policy can offer a number of opportunities for the University, such as being able to showcase our research capabilities and promote the University in the UK and overseas, and it may lead to reciprocal arrangements for our own students.

The nature of different opportunities for Visiting Research Students means that the experience of each student attending the University for a short period of time will inevitably differ across the University.

There are general administrative and support requirements when admitting Visiting Research Students to the University, which must be considered. These responsibilities, including those of the student, are outlined in the University's visiting research student policy.

1.1 Aims

This Visiting Research Student policy:

- a) defines the criteria for a Visiting Research Student
- b) provides policy and procedural information at the Manchester Metropolitan University in relation to the admission, progress and administration of Visiting Research Students
- c) is a resource to be used by academic and professional services staff and Visiting Research Students
- d) is part of the University's Postgraduate Research Regulations, Codes of Practice and accompanying guidance documents.

1.2 Definition of a Visiting Research Student

The term 'Visiting Research Student' is applied to students who have the following characteristics:

- a) A Visiting Research Student will be registered at another recognised institution in the UK, EU or Overseas on a research programme of study with an approved qualification, and whose short-term attendance for a defined period of time at the Manchester Metropolitan University will contribute to their studies.
- b) A Visiting Research Student will wish to undertake some aspect of research at the Manchester Metropolitan University.
- c) Except where stated otherwise, the minimum period of registration will be one month, with the Visiting research Student expected to attend for at least two weeks of this period, and the maximum will be no more than 12 months in total.

1.3 Those not accommodated within this policy are:

- a) staff of the Manchester Metropolitan University
- b) current students registered at the Manchester Metropolitan University
- c) short term visits from members of staff from external institutions or other universities, they should follow the visiting positions procedure

- d) students or visitors attending the University for the purpose of work experience of any kind
- e) visitors in any other capacity, such as postdoctoral fellows, those with a 'Visitor' status in HR (being neither staff nor a student)
- f) students coming to the University as part of formal partnership arrangements through the International Office
- g) students or visitors attending the University for research as part of Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught programmes
- h) external students requiring supervision
- i) students wishing to transfer to the University as part of their Principal Supervisor seeking employment with Manchester Met

2. DURATION OF ATTENDANCE AND MODE OF STUDY

The pattern of visits should be agreed in advance with the home institution and the Manchester Met Academic Mentor, but the total period of attendance at Manchester Metropolitan University will be for a period of between 1 to 12 months. Visiting Research Students may apply and be accepted for multiple visits, however, the Faculty has no obligation to accept subsequent applications for visits and due consideration should be given to the purpose of the visit, the research they are undertaking, the match to staff research, the duration being requested and visa restrictions.

Due to the nature of a Visiting Research Student's period of attendance, candidates should normally only be offered a place on a full-time basis and therefore full-time attendance is expected. Requests for part-time study will be granted at the discretion of the host Faculty. In line with UKVI procedures, an international visiting student must include an assessment of whether the visiting student's immigration status permits or precludes part-time study.

The admitting Faculty will communicate the attendance requirements when the student is offered a place. Due consideration should be given by the Faculty to the support requirements of the student, including academic support, pastoral care, monitoring and health and safety requirements.

2.1 The following attendance requirements apply to all Visiting Research Students

- a) Visiting Research Students will normally study on a full-time basis and are required to be present at the University for the duration of their period of stay.
- b) Visiting Research Students can apply to extend their stay at the University. The student can apply for an extension for up to 3 months, subject to visa requirements, with the length of stay not exceeding 12 months in total, which will incur additional pro-rata fees. This must be formally approved by the Head of Faculty Research Degrees and Head of School.

2.2 The following attendance requirements apply to international Visiting Research Students who require a visa to study in the UK [Please refer to <https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/international/visas-and-immigration/tier-4-visa/> for up to date guidance]

- a) Faculties must ensure that they have processes in place to monitor the attendance and engagement of any Visiting Research Students attending the University on a Tier 4 visa.
- b) Administrators should be using the relevant Graduate School template to monitor attendance.
- c) International research students currently studying at a 'host' institution in the UK on a Tier 4 visa, who wish to apply as a Visiting Research Student to study at the Manchester Metropolitan University, may do so as 'supplementary study' while retaining their Tier 4 visa at the 'host' institution. They do not need to apply for an additional visa. If the student wishes to do this, they should be encouraged to seek advice from the International Office at VisaCompliance@mmu.ac.uk
- d) The visitor (tourist) immigration route is not an appropriate immigration route for visiting research students. Anyone arriving under this route will not be admitted to the University
- e) Where the proposed research topic falls within a subject area requiring approval through the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) the applicant may be required to provide an ATAS before any short-term study letter can be issued. Where studying under an alternate immigration category, applicants may be required to provide an ATAS before being admitted to the University

2.2.1 International Visiting Research Students attending for less than 6 months

- a) Visiting Research Students who require a visa to enter the UK, and who wish to attend for less than 6 months can attend on a [Short Term Student](#) visa or apply for a [Tier 4 visa](#).
- b) Visiting Research Students staying for more than one month and less than 6 months, who are in the UK on a Short Term Student visa cannot extend their stay, change to a different visa category or undertake any work (paid or unpaid). They can however, return home and come back on a Tier 4 visa to become a Visiting Research Student for an additional 1 - 6 months stay. Visiting Research Students who require a visa to study in the UK who are applying to spend less than 6 months at the Manchester Metropolitan University will normally apply for a Short Term Student visa. The University will not automatically issue a Tier 4 CAS for students in this category. To enable the student to apply for a visa, a letter will be required from the host Faculty at the Manchester Metropolitan University, confirming the Manchester Metropolitan University sponsor number.

2.2.2 International Visiting Research Students attending for more than 6 months

- a) Visiting Research Students who require a visa to enter the UK and who wish to attend as a Visiting Research Student for between 6 months and 12 months will need to apply for a Tier 4 visa. They will be sponsored by the Manchester Metropolitan University and will fall under our obligations for Tier 4 monitoring and attendance.
- b) Where the proposed research topic falls within a subject area requiring approval through the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) the applicant may be required to provide an ATAS before any CAS number can be issued. Where studying under an alternate immigration category, applicants may be required to provide an ATAS before being admitted to the University.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES FOR VISITING RESEARCH STUDENTS

3.1 Pre-Application Process

a) Prospective Visiting Research students should consult <https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/research/research-study/> and contact the relevant PGR Coordinator and/or Academic Mentor of interest, to discuss possibilities within their department. Students should normally be encouraged to approach a potential Academic Mentor with a research proposal and CV before they make a formal application to attend. The Academic Mentor should consider the benefit to the University and what the student will gain from the period of attendance. If the Academic Mentor is confident there is mutual benefit, the student will be asked to complete Manchester Metropolitan University's application form for visiting students.

3.2 Application Process

a) Students wishing to be considered for a Visiting Research Student period of study must formally apply through the visiting research application form. As part of the application process they will be asked to provide:

- a confirmation of study letter from their current institution. The letter must provide written consent from the student's home institution and confirm that the period of study and research topic is relevant to the student's current study
- two academic references
- a copy of an undergraduate / postgraduate degree certificate
- evidence that they meet the University's standard entry requirements [including English Language proficiency](#) (International students will be required to demonstrate English language ability to apply for a visa)
- Proposal of what they intend to do whilst here

b) Applications from Visiting Research Students will need to be approved by the Head of Faculty Research Degrees and Head of School.

c) The offer letter sent to the Visiting Research Student should include information on fee requirements as stated on the [postgraduate research fees webpages](#), the attendance dates of the visit, the mode of study, and, the student's named 'academic mentor' (as outlined in section five).

3.3 Registration of Students

Once the Visiting Research Student has completed registration they will have the following services available to them for their period of stay at the Manchester Metropolitan University:

- A named academic Mentor who is their point of contact throughout their period of stay
- a swipe card to be able to access buildings and the library facilities
- access to IT facilities
- access to specialist equipment appropriate for their research [this needs to be agreed at acceptance stage including explicitly stating if additional costs will be incurred]
- access to the University's PGR training and development workshops and events subject to availability

3.4 Record management

- a) Visiting Research Students will be administered in the University student record system
- b) The University system will have a registration record with the start and end dates of the registration period recorded
- c) A confirmation of attendance letter and certificate of attendance can be provided by the Research Degrees Team to the Visiting Research Student at the end of their stay

4. FEE ARRANGEMENTS

- a) Overseas, UK and EU Visiting Research Students will be charged the Visiting Student fee as stated on the [postgraduate research fees webpages](#).

5. Academic Mentor Responsibilities

Visiting Research Students must have a named Academic mentor for the duration of the visit, and this should be communicated to the candidate at the time of making an offer of a place.

The Mentor is required to:

- a) Have regular contact with Visiting Research Students, at least on a monthly basis and record attendance according to the University's process for monitoring the attendance of Visiting Research Students. Any absences should be reported directly to the Head of Faculty Research Degrees.
- b) Agree a clear set of aims and objectives for the Visiting Research Student for the period of their stay and agree this as part of the admissions process.
- c) Ensure Visiting Research Students are aware of university and departmental regulations including that if the visiting research student is from outside the EU/EEA they must also attend International Check-In at the Student Services Centre to have their passport and visa information scanned.
- d) Provide an induction to the University/Faculty
- e) Ensure Visiting Research Students have completed any health and safety requirements

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VISITING RESEARCH STUDENT

- a) Visiting Research Students are expected to attend School and Faculty events and be in attendance at all times during the entire duration of their visit. Whilst it is understood that there may be short absences for conferences and other events, the Faculty must be the primary base during the visit.
- b) Visiting Research Students should participate in local seminars and meetings as appropriate.
- c) Visiting Research Students must adhere to the University health and safety policies and adhere to the Student Code of Conduct of the Manchester Metropolitan University.
- d) Visiting Research Students are responsible for keeping in touch with their Academic Mentor for the duration of their stay.
- e) Visiting Research Students from outside the EU/EEA must also attend International Check-In at the Student Services Centre to have their passport and visa information scanned.