

Postgraduate Research Studentships: Conditions of Award

Applicable from September 2025 to Present

Title: Postgraduate Research Studentships: Conditions of Award					
Version	Issue Date	Revision description	Author	Approved by & date	Next review date
1	September 2023		Clare Altham	Academic Quality and Standards Committee: May 2023	May 2024
2	September 2024	Various updates to include information which has been removed from the Offer Letter, to reflect additional terms and conditions for the Doctoral Training Centre for Industry Collaboration, to rename “consumables” allowances Research Training Support Grants (RTSG) and to add more about its purpose and use, to add a Placements section, and to confirm other terms and conditions which had not been explicitly stated in this policy before. The policy now also mirrors standard UKRI requirements and provide much more detailed and auditable criteria for students (and their supervisors) in receipt of this funding.	Clare Altham	Academic Quality and Standards Committee: May 2024	May 2025
3	September 2025	A7; B1.3; B5: C4: Additional detail to mirror changes made to the UKRI Standard Terms and	Clare Altham	Academic Quality and Standards Committee: July 2025	May 2026

		<p>Conditions of Training Grants from Oct 2025</p> <p>B7.12: Additional detail: a stipend will be curtailed if a student starts a period of full-time employment at the University, for example as a Research Assistant. (This mirrors UKRI's condition that students in FT employment are not eligible for a stipend).</p> <p>B5: Introduction of leave allowance for care responsibilities for University-funded studentships to mirror changes made to the UKRI Standard Terms and Conditions of Training Grants from Oct 2025.</p>			
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Purpose of procedure	<p>These conditions of award apply to all University funded research studentships including fully funded studentships, fees-only studentships, and maintenance stipend only studentships.</p> <p>Regulations relate to starting sates and duration of the Studentship, absence, employment, Maternity/Adoption/Paternity/Shared Parental Leave, holidays, continuation and termination of awards, and payments in respect of studentship awards. Conditions of award may vary for international students as detailed in the policy.</p>
Internal services involved in authorship & implementation	Research and Enterprise Services
Related University regulations, policies & guidance	Academic Regulations: Postgraduate Research

Procedure lead	Director of Research and Enterprise Services
Equality impact assessment date	Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)
Data protection impact assessment date	Information Governance - Home

UNIVERSITY OF LANCASHIRE
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTSHIPS: CONDITIONS OF AWARD

A. GENERAL

1. Students in receipt of a University Studentship should familiarise themselves with the University's Terms and Conditions and Academic Regulations, available at [Student contracts – postgraduate research](#)
2. The following conditions of award apply to all University funded research studentships including Doctoral Training Centre for Industry Collaboration studentships, fully funded studentships, fees-only studentships, and maintenance stipend only studentships. The type of studentship will be confirmed to students in the Offer Letter
3. These conditions of award may vary when an award is funded either wholly or in part by an external organisation. In such cases, the terms and conditions of the external funder and/or any related contractual arrangements will prevail. Students should familiarise themselves with these terms and conditions where applicable.
4. Students who receive UKRI funding should familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions of the relevant Research Council: [UKRI Training Grant Terms and Conditions and Grant Guidance](#)
5. A University of Lancashire Studentship cannot be held at the same time as another award designed to provide maintenance and fees for postgraduate study unless special approval has been obtained from the Research Degrees Board. Anyone who acquires such an award while already holding a University Studentship will be disqualified from the University Studentship from the date on which the award becomes payable and section B. 7.12 below will apply if the student is overpaid.
6. Students are required to attend the University or to do fieldwork for at least 44 weeks in every 12 months (or pro rata for awards for shorter periods).
7. Both Home and International student in receipt of a full studentship must be resident in the UK for the majority of their studies and any time spent overseas should be for the purpose of fieldwork/long-term attachment. Students are responsible for ensuring they meet any local legal requirements on them.

8. Full-time students are expected to live within a reasonable travel time of the University to ensure they can maintain regular contact with their supervisors and the University. This is to ensure students are able to access the full support, training, and facilities available to them. The only exceptions to this will apply during periods of absence that are an agreed and essential part of study, e.g. conference attendance, study visits, or professional internships or placements. If a student chooses to live outside daily travelling distance the student will be liable for any costs incurred in travelling to the University including compulsory events such as induction and research skills training as well as supervision.
9. A University Studentship cannot be applied retrospectively and cannot be transferred to another institution.
10. Conditions of award may vary for international students. Students who require a Tier 4/Student visa should seek additional guidance from the Student Immigration and Compliance Team. (SICTSupport@lancashire.ac.uk)
11. The University reserves the right to amend these Conditions of Award at any time.

B. REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE TENURE OF UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE STUDENTSHIPS

1 Starting Dates and Duration of the Studentship

- 1.1 Studentships will take effect, and payment will be made, from the date stated in the Offer Letter on completion of enrolment. Under some circumstances, the University may consider extending an award to compensate for time unavoidably lost. It should be noted that awards cannot be extended when, for example, it has proved difficult to complete the project within the period of the Studentship.
- 1.2 The maximum duration of the Studentship will be set out in the Offer Letter.
- 1.3 If the thesis has not been submitted by the end of the Studentship, students will be responsible for payment of their own maintenance costs and tuition fees for the remaining period of their programme of study. The tuition fees for this period are noted in the Offer Letter. Stipend extensions will not be provided for a period after the student has submitted their thesis or equivalent.

2 Absence

- 2.1 Maintenance grant payments will be stopped during any period of unauthorised absence in excess of two weeks except in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.2 Maintenance grant payments made during a period of unauthorised absence will be recovered from the student.
- 2.3 Periods of illness up to 7 days can be self-certified; longer periods must be supported by a medical certificate and reported to the Director of Studies. Return from such absence must also be reported to the Director of Studies.
- 2.6 Payment of the Studentship may continue for absences covered by a medical certificate for up to 13 weeks within any 12-month period.
- 2.7 If a period of illness lasts for more than 13 weeks, students must apply for an interruption of studies for the period beyond 13 weeks which will include suspension of their studentship award. An extension commensurate to the period of absence will be granted to the student's period of funding on their return to study.
- 2.8 Stipend payments will not normally be available during a period of interruption. Exceptionally, on application, the University may agree to extend funding during a period of authorised interruption.
- 2.9 Where the Studentship is fully or partly externally funded, approval for any extension of the duration of the Studentship or additional funding due to a period of authorised interruption is subject to the sponsor's consent.

3 International Students

- 3.1 For International students whose right to remain in the UK is by virtue of a Tier 4 Student visa, any interruption of studies for the purposes of maternity/paternity leave and for sickness leave is subject to any restrictions on remaining in the UK and the legislation and guidance relating to the granting of the Tier 4/Student visa.

4 Employment

- 4.1 Students in full-time employment are not eligible for a stipend.
- 4.2 The University does not permit holders of full-time Studentships to undertake more than a day of paid employment per week or to take up paid teaching or demonstrating work exceeding an average of 6 contact hours per week during term time. Any paid work must not adversely affect the student's programme of study.

5 Maternity/Adoption/Paternity/Shared Parental Leave

- 5.1 Research students are allowed up to four months paid maternity/adoption leave without abatement of the maintenance grant. Applications should be made in advance through the Research Degrees Tutor via an Interruption of Study application.
- 5.2 There is no limit to the number of Maternity/Adoption/Paternity leave that can be taken during a Studentship.
- 5.3 Students may take additional leave of up to one month per year in order to provide care to a child for whom they are a parent/carer. No stipend may be drawn during this period, but the end date of the studentship should be modified accordingly. Alternatively, the studentship can be suspended.
- 5.4 An individual risk assessment should always be completed by a student who is pregnant, breastfeeding, or given birth in the last 6 months.

6 Holidays

- 6.1 The period of award for a Studentship provides for annual leave during the programme subject to the approval by the Director of Studies. A maximum of eight weeks annual leave including public holidays and University closures, may be taken in each year of the Studentship, and pro rata for parts of a year subject to prior agreement with the student's supervisor.

7 Continuation and Termination of awards

- 7.1 A studentship may be terminated at any time at the discretion of the University of Lancashire for the following reasons:
 - Failure by the student to start the programme on the start date specified in the offer letter or complete enrolment by the notified deadline.
 - Withdrawal by the student in accordance with the published procedure.
 - A full-time student takes up employment full-time or part-time in excess of the one day per week permitted (See section 3 above).
 - Recording of a Fail outcome by the Research Degrees Board.
 - Exclusion during the academic session for unsatisfactory progress under Academic Regulation A6.3
 - Exclusion following disciplinary proceedings under the Regulations for the Conduct of Students or where the student is in breach of the University's

Academic Regulations or policies relating to professional conduct and the conduct of research.

- 7.2 Where a student fails to transfer from MPhil to PhD and is either moved to an MPhil only award or chooses to exit with a Master's qualification, variation or termination of the Studentship will be at the University's discretion.
- 7.3 Continuation of the Studentship is subject to satisfactory progression throughout the programme including Research Programme Approval within regulatory timescales.
- 7.4 Continuation of the Studentship for students on a PhD (via MPhil) route is subject to successful completion of the Transfer to PhD process within published timescales.
- 7.5 Students whose progress or conduct does not satisfy the University are liable to have their studentship discontinued.
- 7.6 For DTC students, satisfactory progress and continuation of funding will also be subject to review by the DTC Management Board or equivalent.
- 7.7 Doctoral Training Centre for Industry Collaboration: students are required to attend at least 75% of the bespoke DTC training and development activities each year.
- 7.8 Continuation of the Studentship is dependent on the student's project being within the University's research remit. Students wishing to make any major change to their research project must apply to their School for approval.
- 7.9 Funding will end from the date of expiry of the Studentship or upon conferral of the final award.
- 7.10 Students who consider changing their mode of study must discuss this in advance with the Research Degrees Tutor to determine whether funding may continue or not. Continuation of the Studentship in these circumstances will be at the University's discretion.
- 7.11 Students must inform the University immediately if either:
 - a) they fail to start their programme of study; or
 - b) they cease their programme of study before the studentship is due to end.
- 7.12 If students intend to take up employment before the normal expiry date of the Studentship, they must inform the Director of Studies as soon as possible of their intended date of departure and the date on which the appointment is to be taken up.

Students who start full-time employment at the University after they have submitted their thesis for examination will not continue to be eligible for a stipend. Students will be required to refund any overpayments to the University.

- 7.13 Where a Studentship is terminated by the University or by the student (for example where a student withdraws from a programme), the University will not seek repayment of any of the stipend received to that point, except in cases where there has been overpayment.

8. Placements

- 8.1 Students who undertake an agreed placement during their studentship may be entitled to additional stipend payments. This will be agreed by the relevant budget holder.

C. PAYMENTS IN RESPECT OF STUDENTSHIP AWARDS

1. **A full Studentship award** consists of approved tuition fees, a maintenance grant (known as a stipend), and may include a research training support grant (RTSG) as appropriate for the project. Studentships may also be tuition fees only or maintenance grant only. The type of Studentship and the amount awarded will be detailed in the Offer Letter.
2. **A studentship award** may consist of the following:

2.1 Approved Tuition Fees

The University will remit tuition fees directly at the rate specified in the Offer Letter. Where International fee rates apply, the student is required to fund the difference between the Home and International fee rate unless prior written agreement has been obtained from the University to fund the full International fee. This will need to be paid in accordance with the University's standard requirements.

2.2 Maintenance Grant (Stipend)

Maintenance grants and other payments are made direct to the student's UK bank or building society account. The rate of maintenance grant and allowances will be specified in the Offer Letter and will be paid quarterly in advance. Payment for periods of less than 12 months will be reduced proportionately.

2.3 Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

The Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) can be accessed by students whose funding includes an RTSG.

The RTSG is intended to be used to pay for expenses which the funded student, their supervisor/s, or their school/research institute deem to be in direct support of the funded student's research.

The RTSG should not be considered as a personal allocation for each funded student, it is to be used based on their needs and priorities, subject to University approval.

Applications for RTSG funding should be made in advance of the activity and not retrospectively. Receipts are required for all claims.

Access to RTSG funds is only available up to the date of thesis submission. The value of an RTSG will not be increased to cover any programme extensions.

Examples of RTSG expenses are:

- Fieldwork expenses
- UK, EU, and overseas conferences and summer schools
- Language training courses usually undertaken in the UK prior to an overseas fieldwork trip
- Reimbursement of interpreters, guides, assistants
- Survey costs eg printing, stationery, telephone calls
- Purchase of small items of equipment eg cameras, recorders, films, memory cards
- Payment of participants/gifts for local informants
- Books or other reading material not available through libraries

The RTSG is not to be used for the following:

- Visa/immigration expenses to enter the UK to commence study or extend stay
- Subscription costs to academic societies or professional bodies
- Proofreading
- Journal subscriptions
- Job interview expenses
- Laptops or other computing equipment will be considered in exceptional circumstances. Such requests must be clearly and adequately justified based on the nature and requirements of the research being undertaken and must be essential for the successful completion of the research degree. In these instances, any equipment purchased in excess of £200 will remain the

property of the University/funder and should be returned following completion of the award.

3. Allowances for Students with Disabilities

- 3.1 Students with disabilities may be eligible for further financial support. Students who have not already done so are urged to contact the University's Inclusivity Team in Student Services as soon as possible as assessment of any special needs will be required in order for any reasonable adjustments to be put in place.

4. Tax

- 4.1 Postgraduate research students are not deemed to be employed by the University. Payments are in the form of a stipend which is exempted from income tax under Section 10(16) of the Income Tax Act.
- 4.2 It should, however, be noted that earnings from sources such as teaching and demonstrating received during the final year of the award will be aggregated with income from post-award employment when income tax liability is assessed for the fiscal year in which the award terminated.
- 4.3 Students who receive a sponsorship grant or remain in the employment of a sponsor in addition to the grant awarded by the University of Lancashire may be subject to tax on the income from sponsors.
- 4.4 Students are responsible for confirming their own tax arrangements and the University cannot provide advice. Part-time students should check with their tax office regarding income tax liability resulting from any employment.
- 4.5 Students who spend time overseas for the purposes of fieldwork/long-term attachment and are still in receipt of a stipend while overseas are responsible for establishing the tax implications overseas, including if they return to their home country for a period of leave.

5. National Insurance

- 5.1 The University of Lancashire will not make payment for students' National Insurance contributions. Students may become liable for contributions in connection with any paid teaching or demonstrating which they undertake.