



PhD Funding Application Workshop

College of Humanities, Wednesday 12th December 2012

What is a PhD?

- A PhD involves an extensive investigation of a particular topic
- A PhD is only awarded when the results make an original contribution to knowledge in the field, which is normally assessed by a written thesis and oral examination
- A research degree usually involves the completion of a written thesis, however alternatives to this may be allowed e.g. to include the presentation of part or all of the thesis in an alternative format, eg as a multimedia document or by means such as a piece of art, or a record of professional practice in the form of a series of case-studies, which must be accompanied by a commentary



Supervisory team

Each student is allocated to a supervisory team, to see them through their studies. This team usually comprises three members of academic staff as follows:

- **First (Lead) Supervisor:** has expertise in your chosen research area and/or methodology
- **Second Supervisor:** brings a different perspective on the research process
- **Mentor:** helps with any non-academic issues that may arise and provides pastoral support to the student



How long does it take to complete a PhD

- Full-time students are expected to complete a PhD in three years.
- Home/EU students may be able to study part-time, however visa regulations normally prevent international students from following this option.
- We will require you to register initially for the MPhil, with the possibility of transferring to the PhD upon satisfactory progress. This will not increase your overall period of study.



First steps...

- You will need to pinpoint the area in which you wish to undertake your research and identify members of academic staff who specialise in this area and can offer you supervision
- Find out about individual staff members, their research interests, publications and current projects by visiting the staff profile sections in our subject web pages
- Identify which funding opportunities you wish to apply for





Any questions about studying for a PhD
at Exeter?





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Our awards

Available to UK/EU applicants:

- Subject-specific AHRC awards in Archaeology; Classics and Ancient History; Drama; English; Film Studies; History; German; and Theology and Religion
- Thematic AHRC awards in Digital Humanities; Environmental Humanities; Global Uncertainties; Identities and Beliefs; Medical Humanities
- University of Exeter - London Film School (LFS) Film by Practice awards
- Exeter/NIAS Intangible Histories awards for Archaeology and Drama
- ESRC South West Doctoral Training Centre studentships in Economic and Social History



Available to International applicants:

- College of Humanities International Doctoral Studentships
- University of Exeter - London Film School (LFS) Film by Practice awards
- Exeter/NIAS Intangible Histories awards for Archaeology and Drama



How much funding will I get?

- Varies, so please check each individual funding opportunity
- Normally:
 - Tuition fees
 - Maintenance grant (£13,590 2012/2013 AHRC rate)
- There may be opportunities to earn extra money from work as a Graduate Teaching Assistant





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Applying

The application process

- Identify the award(s) you would like, and are eligible, to apply to
- Obtain electronic copies of your degree transcripts/certificates
- Obtain electronic copies of your English language proficiency documents, if required
- Contact potential referee(s) to ask them to provide a reference to support your application
- Write your research proposal
- Prepare your covering letter
- Prepare your CV
- Submit an online application via the funding award link



How to prepare your application

- Think about what you want to do, the subject you are interested in, and make a list of ideas
- Speak to your prospective supervisor
- Allow yourself plenty of time to fill it in
- Ask your peers/family to proof-read your application
- Speak to successful applicants/current PhD students



Your research proposal

- See the handout on preparing your research proposal
- The aim of the proposal is to determine your area of research interest and to give you an opportunity to demonstrate to us that you have the aptitude to undertake doctoral level research
- It is the most important document submitted as part of your application, so we strongly encourage you to spend time preparing it and to take into account these guidelines



Your covering letter

- Your covering letter should be no more than c.500 words in length
- Your covering letter should discuss why you are applying to this award; why you feel your skills and abilities merit you being awarded the studentship; how you feel you and your research would contribute to the research environment at Exeter and the wider research community; and what you would like to use the degree for post-graduation
- Covering letters should normally be addressed 'To Whom It May Concern'



Your CV

- Your CV should include your academic qualifications, as well as the degree you are currently studying for if applicable, plus any relevant work experience you may have had
- If you have been actively involved in the research community for your chosen field of study, for example published papers in journals, etc, please include this information here as well





What do you think the short-listing panel are looking for in an application?



Successful candidates will be considered to have outstanding research potential and able to complete their thesis within 4 years.

Studentships are awarded on merit and strategic fit.





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The interview

If I am invited to interview what happens?

- Panel of academics (Normally Chair plus two subject specialists)
- You will be expected to give a 5 minute presentation to the panel
- Followed by the main interview



How to prepare for the interview

- Be prepared!
- Think about why you want to do a PhD
- Think about your research experience and how to describe it
- Read, re-read and read again your application and research proposal this is the information the panel has in front of them
- Practice your presentation- timing is key



Common mistakes when applying for funding:

- Missed deadlines
- Application instructions not followed and/or all questions on the application form were not answered
- Vagueness/Lack of clarity
- Sloppy presentation
- No suitable supervision available at Exeter



Useful resources

- What is postgraduate research study at Exeter:
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/postgraduate/whatispostgrad/research/>
- Choosing PhD study at Exeter:
<http://ismedia.exeter.ac.uk/flash/ee/skills/consideringaukphd/player.html>
- PhD study with the College of Humanities:
<http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd/>
- PhD study in the Arts and Humanities (FindAPhD.com):
<http://www.findaphd.com/student/study/study-3.asp>





Any questions?



Thank you for attending our PhD Funding Application Workshop.

We wish you all the best for your application!

Contact us:

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