



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of Engineering

Additional Information about a PhD in the School of Engineering

Please read this document carefully before accepting your Offer of Admission. If you require clarification about any of the information in the document, please contact the Engineering Graduate School Office before accepting your Offer of Admission.

This document provides information about PhD degrees in the School of Engineering. It supplements the general University information given in the Offer of Admission. Please make sure you also read the University's terms and conditions, which are included in the Offer of Admission.

This document is written for PhD applicants, but the information within it is also relevant to students applying for other Postgraduate Research (PGR) degrees in the School of Engineering (such as a MSc by Research, MPhil, PhD with Integrated study, or EngD degree). The specific requirements for each of these PGR degrees will be different, but can be found in the information given under "sources of further information", below.

If you have been offered a place in one of our Centres for Doctoral Training, they will provide you with additional information relevant to their degree programmes.

Contacting the Graduate School in the School of Engineering

The Engineering Graduate School Office can be contacted by email (EngGradOffice@ed.ac.uk) about any of the information in this letter. Please also advise us if there are any requirements (e.g. cultural, health, or access requirements) that we need to know about that could affect your project or supervision.

Sources of Further Information

The School of Engineering's Postgraduate Research Student Handbook is the key source of information for our PGR students. It explains the requirements of a PGR degree in Engineering, our Graduate School community, training, and support services:

- School of Engineering PGR Handbook
<https://www.eng.ed.ac.uk/sites/eng.ed.ac.uk/files/attachments/freestyle-page/20231117/PGR%20Handbook%20August%202023.pdf>

Other sources of information that you might want to look at this stage include:

- The University's Code of Practice for Postgraduate Students and their Supervisors.
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/research-students>
- The University's Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations.
<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk>
- The University's Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.
https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf
- Degree Programme Table for an Engineering PhD.
<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk>

Offer of Admission

The University will send you an Offer Letter through its online application system. This is an academic offer letter for admission on to a degree programme.

If your offer of admission is conditional, it will state the requirements that need to be met before you can join the University (for example, uploading a degree certificate, or satisfying English language requirements). Please note that we cannot change this to "unconditional" until the requirements have been met.

The Offer of Admission will state the attendance date when your PGR degree will start. If you need to change this start date, please contact EngGradOffice@ed.ac.uk and your supervisor, so that we can make sure everything is ready for your arrival.

PhD Degree Requirements

To be awarded a PhD you will submit a thesis and defend this thesis in an oral examination. It will be assessed according to the University regulations.

Your thesis is due to be submitted at the end of your "Prescribed Period of Study". For a full-time PhD at the University of Edinburgh, this is 3 years after your start date. All of your research must have been completed during the prescribed period of study. For a PhD, there is an additional twelve-month submission period following the prescribed period of study, for writing-up only.

Your progress during your project will also be assessed through a combination of formal annual progression reviews, a project plan, and presentation at the School Research Conference in your second year of study. These requirements are listed in the Degree Programme Table, and described in the School PGR Student Handbook.

PhD students are required to take part in training, which includes a compulsory PhD induction day, attendance at the annual School Research Conference, and engagement in a programme of courses that support both your research and your broader personal development. This is checked and discussed as part of the annual progression review process. Note that this is a part of the conditions of our scholarships (including those from EPSRC or the University), and a condition of the School providing a small contribution to your basic research costs.

Publishing your work is an integral and expected part of your research, and the UK funding bodies require work to be published in open-access journals, your PhD thesis to be open access, and research data to be made available (open data). Exceptions can be made, for example, if you are working with an industrial partner upon commercially-sensitive work. However, if it is necessary to withhold your work from being published, your Supervisor and the School of Engineering's Business Development Executive will ensure that an intellectual property agreement is in place at the start of your PhD project.

Your Research Project and Resources

One of your first tasks as a PhD student will be to fully define the topic and scope of your research project. If you submitted a research proposal as part your application, you may need to adapt this to suit the resources available to you, and so that it can be achieved within the timescale of a PhD. Please note that we cannot guarantee to deliver a particular research project, especially if the project is too ambitious for a PhD, or if funding is not in place to cover the research costs for the project. We encourage you to discuss your research project with your supervisor before accepting the Offer of Admission.

Academic Life and Expectations

The normal place of work for all PGR students is at The King's Buildings in the University of Edinburgh (unless this has been formally arranged with the Graduate School in advance of your project). PGR students are entitled to 40 days of annual leave each calendar year.

PhD students take an active part in the academic life of School of Engineering, and we encourage and expect this from our PhD students. You will belong to one of our seven Research Institutes, which run active research seminars and other events. EngGradSoc is our student-led society that organises a range of social and academic activities across the Graduate School. Our PhD students also contribute to the School's teaching as Tutors and Demonstrators. This is organised by the Engineering Teaching Organisation, which provides compulsory training to support you in the role.

You will be provided with a desk in one of our PGR student offices and a standard specification computer, for the duration of your period of study. The School has a range of high quality laboratories, workshops, and equipment. Technical and IT support is also provided. However, the resources for your research project must be discussed when you plan your PhD.

Part-time Study and Distance Learning

A small number of our students study part-time. Part-time students are required to spend 50% of their time on their PhD and are expected to be in the University 50% of their time. It is consequently not possible to pursue a part-time PhD in addition to full-time employment. Part-time study must be discussed with your potential supervisor, because its viability will depend upon the nature of the research project.

It is occasionally appropriate to study for a PhD remotely, for example, to make use of research facilities that are uniquely available at a different location. Distance learning requires careful planning in advance, to ensure arrangements can be put in place for adequate supervision, training, and for engaging with our research community. For example, the frequency of supervision meetings, visits by the student to Edinburgh, and visits by

the supervisor to your place of study, would need to be agreed in advance. Please discuss a possible distance learning proposal with an academic supervisor and with our Graduate School Office before applying.

Arrival

PhD students are expected to commence their studies at the start of September/October or January, and the PGR inductions in the School are arranged to suit these dates. Please contact both the Graduate School Office and your Supervisor if you need to discuss the possibility of an alternative start date.

After you have accepted your Offer of Admission, the Engineering Graduate School Office will contact you with further information about your arrival. On your first day, you will need to visit the Graduate School Office and they will give you information regarding important dates, such as the next PGR induction, School safety induction, the School Research Conference and the residential trip for first year PhD students. The induction events are compulsory and take priority over other commitments. Please make sure you keep these dates clear. For example, if you are scheduled to tutor a class on the same day as the PGR induction, you must make arrangements for someone else to tutor the class.

Funding: Information for all students

There are three parts to the funding for a PhD:

- Tuition fees, see <http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/tuition-fees>
- Your living costs (which might be covered by a stipend).
- Additional programme costs (which cover the costs of your research project, such as travel costs, conference fees, experimental costs or specialist software licenses).

The Graduate School may provide your supervisor with a contribution towards the additional programme costs of your research project, which are conditional upon your satisfactory progression and upon satisfying the requirements listed in the Degree Programme Table.

Any costs above the Graduate School contribution will need to be covered from other sources of funding, such as a research grant held by your supervisor, or external sources of funding. You should discuss any additional programme costs with your supervisor, who is the budget holder for these funds, and is responsible for deciding how these are costs are used.

A matriculation fee is payable during the submission period (if you fail to submit during the prescribed period of study), and a continuation fee is payable if you fail to submit during the maximum period of study. Information on these is given under "Continuing study beyond annual tuition fees" on the University fees web pages.

Funding: Information for self-funded students

Self-funded offers are made to applicants who are either planning to personally fund themselves throughout their programme, or to applicants in receipt of an external scholarship (for example, from their home government).

The University will contact you directly to arrange payment of tuition fees, and you should satisfy yourself that any funding you receive is sufficient to cover these fees. Note that tuition fees are subject to annual revision, as described in the "Tuition fee policy" of the University fees web pages.

Please discuss any conditions upon your source of funding before accepting your offer of admission. For example, does your funding place restrictions on the duration of your PhD, or does your funding body require periodic progress reports to be submitted to them? We cannot guarantee to meet any funding conditions that have not been discussed before accepting your offer of admission.

Self-funded students are encouraged to undertake teaching work as a tutor or demonstrator. However, the total time spent on tutoring, demonstrating, and any other employment in the University must not exceed 9 hours a week (averaged across the academic year), and must not interfere with the progress of your PhD. You should discuss any tutoring and demonstrating work or other proposed employment with your principal supervisor.

Funding: Information for students offered a University Scholarship

If you have been accepted for a post-graduate scholarship from the University, you will receive notification of this separately to your Offer of Admission. This includes PGR scholarships, studentships, or bursaries that are funded by the University of Edinburgh, the College of Science of Engineering, the School of Engineering or external organisations such as the joint China Scholarships Council / University of Edinburgh scholarships, EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council) studentships or industry sponsorship. A scholarship might be from a combination of funding sources. Students who hold a scholarship from another funding source are not eligible for a full University scholarship.

You should carefully note the funding period of the scholarship, and that scholarships are for a fixed period of funding. The duration of the period of study of your PhD is not affected by the duration of the scholarship. Scholarships end when you submit your PhD thesis, or if you withdraw from study. If you require an interruption to your study, this will usually result an interruption to your funding.

The start date of a University Scholarship should usually be the start of October. There are restrictions on the funds for our scholarships that mean that it might not be possible to change the start date. It is not possible to defer a scholarship for a year.

Scholarships cover the tuition fees payable during your prescribed period of study, and if your scholarship is 42 months or longer, it will cover the 4th year matriculation fee. Scholarships are unable to pay continuation fees after the maximum period of study. They are conditional upon satisfactory progression and upon satisfying the requirements listed in the Degree Programme Table.

Funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), including EPSRC awards (such as DTP, CASE and NPIF awards) is subject to the UKRI Terms and Conditions of Training Grants, available from their web site: <https://www.ukri.org/publications/terms-and-conditions-for-training-funding/>.

Engineering students receiving a University Scholarship are encouraged to undertake teaching work as a tutor or demonstrator. However, the total time spent (including preparation and marking) must not interfere with the progress of your PhD, and a condition of your funding is that it must not be more than six hours in any week. You should discuss any tutoring and demonstrating work with your principal supervisor.

The School of Engineering's Finance Office (co-located with the Graduate School) arrange scholarship payments, but can only do so when you have matriculated and arrived to commence your studies. The first payment will normally cover the first three months of stipend, and subsequent payments will be paid monthly on the 28th of the month in advance.

Scholarship income is generally exempt from UK income taxes, subject to standard income limits, individual circumstances, or additional income. Students are encouraged to consult HM Revenues and Customs for additional information.

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