



Postgraduate Research Handbook

Keele
UNIVERSITY



Keele Doctoral
Academy

THIS IS KEELE

Contents

Welcome!.....	6
Introduction.....	7
The Keele Doctoral Academy (KDA)	7
The Team	7
New Starters First Steps	8
Email Account.....	8
How we contact you	9
Induction	10
PGR Essentials Course	10
Our Faculties	11
PGR Checklist	11
Admin.....	13
Keele Card	13
PGR Profile.....	13
Microsoft Teams.....	13
Two-factor Authentication	14
Virtual Private Network (VPN).....	14
International PGRs	15
Visas and Immigration	15
Attendance Monitoring	15
English Language Support.....	15
Systems and Platforms	17
Skillsforge	17
Training SharePoint	17
eVision.....	17
Keele Learning Environment (KLE)	18
Timetabling	18
Keele App.....	18
SafeZone App.....	18
Facilities.....	20
PGR Offices.....	20
IT Services.....	20
Students Services.....	21

Library and Computer Centre Access	22
British Library Training	23
Accessing e-journals off campus	23
SCONUL Scheme	23
Supervisory Team	24
PGR-Supervisor Agreement	24
Attendance Monitoring	25
Responsibilities.....	27
Changes to Supervisory Team	29
Key contacts outside your supervisory team	30
Training and Development.....	31
Training Requirements.....	31
Learning Pool	32
Keele People	33
Teaching Opportunities	33
Funding to support training	34
Research	36
Our Research Institutes	37
Our Research Faculties	39
Studentships and Fellowships	43
Doctoral Training Centres	44
Engagement and Impact.....	45
Open Research	47
Research Culture	47
Regulatory Information.....	48
Research Committees	49
Staff Roles	49
Branding Guidelines	53
Timeline	54
Milestones and Progress.....	54
Progress Reviews	54
Submitting your Thesis	55
Viva Voce	56
Graduation.....	56
Requests	58
Annual Leave.....	58

Re-registration	58
Leave of Absence (including sickness)	58
Exceptional Circumstances (on research modules)	59
Change in Mode of Attendance	60
Transfer from MPhil/MRes to PhD (or vice versa)	61
Extensions	61
Withdrawals	61
Academic Integrity	62
Proofreading Guidance	62
Plagiarism	62
Commissioning	62
Governance, Integrity, and Ethics	63
Data Management	65
Research Excellence Framework (REF)	66
Events and Opportunities	68
Community Engagement	68
International Study Opportunities	69
Employment during your research degree (including international PGRs)	69
Careers	70
3-Minute Thesis Competition	71
Community and Representation	72
Keele Students' Union (Keele SU)	72
Student Societies	73
Reporting Issues/Feedback	74
PGR Feedback	74
Postgraduate Research Experience Survey	76
Complaints and Appeals	77
Report and Support	77
Help & Support	78
Student Experience and Support Officer (SESO)	78
Disability Support and Inclusion (DSI)	78
Keele Mentors Scheme	79
Keele Connect	79
Out of Hours Support	80
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	80
Welfare Support Team	80

Physical Health	81
Advice and Support at Keele (ASK)	82
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)	82
Inclusive Education Framework	83
Dignity and Respect Framework.....	84
#NeverOK	84
Athena Swan	84
Spectrum.Life	85
Research Development Concordat	85
Research and Innovation Support (RaISE).....	86
Final Words	87

If you need the handbook in an alternative format, please contact the KDA via

kda@keele.ac.uk

Welcome!

We are very pleased to have you join our postgraduate researcher (PGR) community, and we hope that your time here is intellectually stimulating, challenging, rich and rewarding.

Founded in 2020, the Keele Doctoral Academy (KDA) provides an overarching support system for all PGR matters. This includes academic governance, rules and regulations, and coordination of the various support systems that can help. We are here to advocate on behalf of PGRs across the University and externally, and to support and promote the work of our PGR community through research training and research events.

There is a tremendous amount of support available at Keele, from your peers, your supervisors, your Postgraduate Lead, your Faculty Postgraduate Research Director, Student Records, the Keele Student's Union (Keele SU) and not least, the Keele Doctoral Academy.

We have gathered a lot of information together in this handbook, some of which may not be relevant to you right now but do take the time to read through and get an overview of the path ahead. The handbook will be an important source of reference.

You are a valued member of the Keele community, and we aim to support you as best we can. We also welcome your comments and feedback at any time.

[Professor Sam Hider](#)

Director, Keele Doctoral Academy



Introduction

The Keele Doctoral Academy (KDA)

Keele's overall mission is to 'make a difference in society by providing innovative, high-quality education for students from all backgrounds and by undertaking world-leading research that transforms understanding and brings benefit to society, communities, and individuals.'

Research is an integral part of that mission. Keele wants to push the limits of current knowledge and understanding and the KDA support Keele's diverse group of world-class researchers by providing a research-focused home that brings central and Faculty support functions together.

You are now part of the Keele mission and a member of the Doctoral Academy. We will strive to continually provide you with opportunities to connect with other postgraduates and staff from across the University, through research focused events, training and development programmes, and social activities.

We have a dedicated [website](#) with resources and essential information for each stage of your degree and this handbook should serve as a guide to all things research at Keele.

The Team

The KDA team comprises specialised academic and support staff, helping you through your research degree from induction to graduation.

We are predominantly home based however; we do not desk from the Innovation Centre 1 (IC1) building on the main campus site. Our contact information can be found [here](#).

New Starters First Steps



If you are a prospective PGR, please watch this shared experience video:

[Why come to Keele - Edwin's Experience](#)

Email Account

You will be allocated a Keele PGR email account following enrolment.

The email address will typically be displayed as an initial, followed by your surname i.e., [A.Non@Keele.ac.uk](#).

Alumni

For previous UG/PGT students who studied at Keele, please ensure you use your PGR email account moving forward. Please contact it.service@keele.ac.uk if the PGR IT account isn't automatically provided as part of enrolment.

Keele Postdoctoral Fellowship

PGR graduates retain their Keele IT account for 12 months following their Senate Award date. This provides an on-going affiliation with Keele when applying for grants, jobs, and on-going publication submissions.

Multiple Accounts

For those of you who take employment at Keele whilst studying, you will also be issued with a staff account. You are issued two for security (GDPR) purposes and you should therefore use each account as required. If you do not, you may risk losing

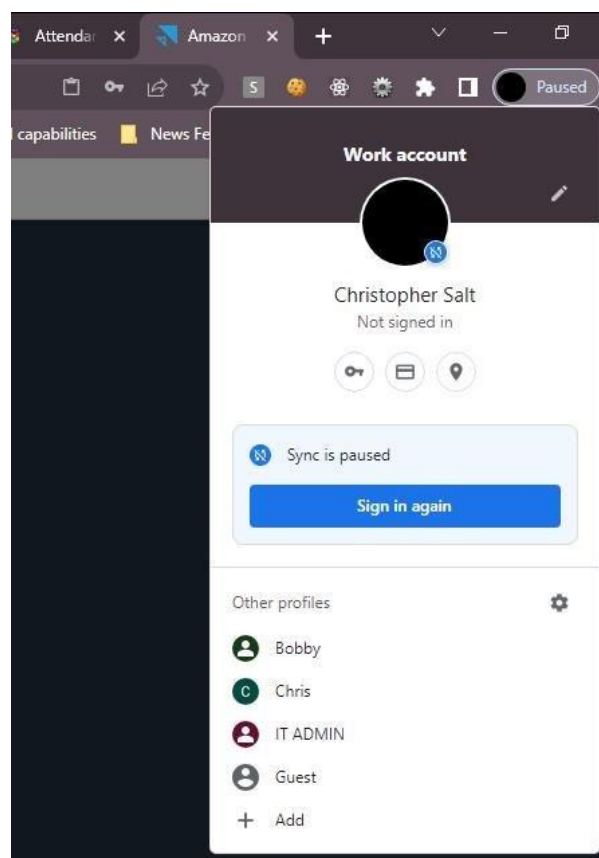
work/correspondence relating to your degree, when your staff IT account is closed (in line with contract end dates).

We are not permitted to use staff email accounts or personal email accounts for PGR communications.

Recommendation

- [Multiple profiles in Chrome](#)

Create a PGR and staff profile and Chrome will remember the correct login for each.



How we contact you

University services will contact you throughout your studies with important information, primarily via your Keele Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) email address.

For enrolment, you will be contacted by Student Records with guidance on how to enrol.

We expect you to check your Keele email regularly, ideally daily, and you are responsible for reading University emails and taking action if appropriate.

Secondary channels of communication include Microsoft Teams, Keele app, social media, website, phone and post.

You can contact us using this [link](#), and find us on social media to follow along with the latest updates.

Induction

Once you have enrolled, you will be invited to Induction.

PGRs will receive a welcome email with links to useful resources including an online 'Essentials' module to complete. The email will also include details of face to face and online research specific welcome sessions, to meet fellow PGRs but also ask questions.

For those of you using University facilities, you will also be provided with a building induction to familiarise you with the fire drill/safety regulations where you are based. For those of you who are laboratory-based, this may also include a laboratory induction and a referral to [occupational health](#) for immunisations.

PGR Essentials Course

During your first few weeks, you should complete the following three online courses:

- **(PhD and MPhils) PGR Year 1 Essentials - it is important you complete this course ASAP**
- (Professional Doctorates) PGR Year 1 Essentials - it is important you complete this once you have passed your Progression Review 1, this is usually after 24 months on programme.
- Information Security

- Equality in the workplace

These courses can be accessed via [Learning Pool](#).

Our Faculties

At Keele research is performed across a range of topics that are split across three faculties:

- [Faculty of Business, Law, Humanities and Social Sciences \(BLHUSS\)](#)
- [Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences \(FMHS\)](#)
- [Faculty of Natural Sciences \(FNS\)](#)

Faculty specific handbooks are available on the links above. Choose the one relevant to you for more information into your area of study.

PGR Checklist



If you are at the beginning of your PGR journey, this shared experience video may be useful: [Amy and Katie's Advice to new PGRs](#)

Knowing how to get started can be overwhelming. To help with this, we have provided a suggested checklist for new starters below. More information into the individual checkpoints can be found in subsequent sections of this handbook.

PGR Checklist:

- ☐ Collect your Keele card (campus-based PGRs only)
- ☐ Attend KDA Induction
- ☐ Attend Faculty Induction
- ☐ Complete the PGR Year 1 Essentials Training
- ☐ Meet your supervisor
- ☐ Read the PGR Handbook
- ☐ Read the PGR Code of Practice
- ☐ Read your Faculty Handbook
- ☐ Create a PGR profile
- ☐ Download the Keele App
- ☐ Download the SafeZone App
- ☐ Visit the [Research and Innovation Support Hub](#)
- ☐ Sign up to workshops you want to attend in the coming months
- ☐ Familiarise yourself with Microsoft Teams
- ☐ Familiarise yourself with Skillsforge
- ☐ Visit the Vitae website and familiarise yourself with the RDF
- ☐ Assess your RDF needs
- ☐ Visit the library (campus-based PGRs only)
- ☐ Visit Keele SU Clubhouse (campus-based PGRs only)
- ☐ Explore Keele campus (campus-based PGRs only)
- ☐ Visit the SU Sports Fair (campus-based PGRs only)
- ☐ Visit the Societies Fair (campus-based PGRs only)

Admin

Keele Card

It's your proof of ID around campus (for all students and staff).

- You can access key buildings with it, such as the Library, the Sports Centre, the 24-hour launderettes, social spaces in halls and teaching buildings.
- It's your library card for borrowing, printing and photocopying.
- You can use it to purchase food and drink from the university catering outlets at a discounted price

Collecting your Keele card:

You can find out when and where to collect your Keele card [here](#). You will need to bring a form of photographic ID with you when you collect.

If you lose your Keele card, you can request a replacement via the [IT self-service portal](#).

PGR Profile

All PGRs are strongly encouraged to create an online profile for your School and KDA webpages. Creating your profile is simple – just complete the form [here](#).

Microsoft Teams

The University uses Microsoft Teams (365).

You can find several online training materials via the [IDS Sharepoint](#).

To use MS Teams, login using your Keele credentials [here](#).

Two-factor Authentication

To access Keele systems, you will require two-factor authentication. The easiest way to do this is to download an app for your smartphone. More information on this process can be found [here](#).

Virtual Private Network (VPN)

To be able to transfer data to Keele's IT network for secure storage and to access your electronic network drives, folders and files you will need to request VPN (Virtual Private Network) to be set up on your device. University owned IT equipment will have this installed as standard.

When [working from home](#) and remotely accessing your files and certain University systems, you may need to use the University's VPN. The following [link](#) provides instructions on how to download this to your device.



GlobalProtect VPN

Palo Alto

Business, Computer Management

International PGRs

Visas and Immigration

If you are an international PGR, the [Immigration Compliance team](#) are available to support you should you require sponsorship to study in the UK. Once you arrive, you should consult with the team regarding leave of absence requests, changes in mode of attendance or extension requests as they will ensure any changes meet the requirements of your visa.

Attendance Monitoring

All Student Route Visa PGRs are required to attend monthly meetings with their supervisor, as per the PGR Code of Practice. This includes during any period of corrections or revisions following examination. Formal records must be maintained of supervision meetings; logged within the PGR records system (Skillsforge). These formally recorded supervision records will be used to evidence you are satisfying UKVI attendance requirements.

English Language Support

The Language Centre provides individual and group language guidance and assistance to international PGRs at all levels - from Foundation Year to PhD researchers, from beginners to near-native speakers. Credit-bearing Academic English modules help international undergraduate, and postgraduates develop the skills essential to succeed with their studies, and year-round 'One-to-One' tutorials ensure as-needed, personalised English language support.

If you are an incoming non-native English-speaking international PGR, you will take a diagnostic English language assessment during your first weeks at Keele, after which we

will make personalised recommendations for modules or other forms of English Language support.

To contact us, email enl@keele.ac.uk, or for more information [click here](#).

To book a 30-minute 'One-to-One' follow this [link](#).



Systems and Platforms

Skillsforge

Skillsforge is a software solution to manage the PGR journey including development needs assessments and training records.

Implementation of the system started in 2025/26 and as new sections become live, this [user guide](#) will be updated.

Training SharePoint

The [KDA Training Centre SharePoint](#) is a platform for accessing specialised Postgraduate Research resources and KDA training. Please bookmark this page and check the Training Centre on a regular basis, as new training and resources are uploaded weekly.

eVision

You will need to be familiar with eVision during your first few weeks. eVision provides an opportunity to:

- View your current and previous module marks (if applicable).
- View and update your personal information and contact details.
- Re-register for your course each year
- View your current financial record including fee and stipend payments (where applicable)

You can access eVision through the [student login](#) on the Keele homepage ('STUDENT KLE' via the drop-down list). Once logged in, go to KLE 'The Office' tab (top right), and select 'eVision' from the secondary tab list which appears.

Keele Learning Environment (KLE)

The KLE, or Blackboard, provides all students and staff with a personal teaching and learning workspace that can be accessed through the Internet.

The KLE gives you access to information, activities and resources associated with the modules you are studying. These might include resources such as lecture notes and slides, pictures and other materials, and interactive features too, such as discussion groups. The KLE is also a useful place to find information about support and activities happening on campus. You can get KLE help and support from the IT Department. Further information can be found [here](#).

Timetabling

Information on how to access your timetable (taught modules only) and where to go to resolve any timetabling issues can be found at keele.ac.uk/timetabling/.

Please note, most PGRs do not need to use the KLE or timetabling as this is only required if you are registered to attend taught modules i.e. Professional Doctorates.

Keele App

The Keele App can be used to view your timetable if applicable, view campus maps to help you navigate, find out information about the facilities and services offered, check PC availability across campus, view your library account, and update you on the coming social events. Please download the app using the following [link](#).

SafeZone App

SafeZone is a free to download app that allows users to get immediate help 24 hours a day and 7 days a week in the event of an emergency. It can share your location with the

Campus Security Team and offers a Check-in Timer feature if you are feeling vulnerable or working alone. When using campus facilities out of hours, the SafeZone app should be used. Details are available from this [link](#).

A white smartphone displaying the SafeZone app interface. The screen shows a status bar at the top with 'App Store at', '13:47', and '85%'. Below the status bar is a header with 'Keele UNIVERSITY' and a profile icon. The main interface has three large buttons: a green 'First Aid' button with a white cross icon, a blue 'Help' button with a white telephone handset icon, and a red 'Emergency' button with a white warning triangle icon. At the top of the app interface, there are icons for 'Torch', 'Check In Timer', and 'Check In'.

 **SafeZone**

A **FREE** safety app

- First aid call
- Non-emergency help
- Emergency support

Download **SafeZone App** on  

Facilities

PGR Offices

The University is committed to providing flexible study space for PGRs who intend to study on campus (excludes Distance Learners). Access to study space, including desk space, may vary between Schools and is subject to local arrangements or availability. PGRs should liaise with their supervisors and School in the first instance to discuss study space and any associated facilities, which may include access to storage, printing, and kitchen facilities where available.

IT Services

IT Services are responsible for your IT systems and networks throughout the University. Their services include the wireless network, printing service, IT Suite and Labs. They provide help and advice using Keele systems such as the KLE, eVision, Microsoft Office 365 software, Google Mail and Apps and advice when connecting to the wireless network (eduroam).

Remember when using Keele University IT systems that you are bound by the IT Conditions of Use, a link to which can be found [here](#). It is important that you familiarise yourself with these to ensure that you use the systems within the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy.

IT support is available virtually or in person and it is the first point of call for anything IT-related. You can contact them by telephone on 01782 733838, please check the above link for the latest opening times. The online Self Service portal is also available 24/7 and connects you with services across the University. There is also an online chat facility which can be accessed via the above link.

Note: PGRs using their own personal laptop must request Keele IT services install appropriate University antivirus security software within the first month on programme.

Students Services

University can be an exciting and happy time, but it can also bring with it stress and challenge. There may be a range of issues that affect your life and studies whilst at Keele or back at home. Most people seek help because they want to change the way they are thinking, feeling or behaving.

Keele Student Services provides crucial support services to all students including PGRs across the University. Its team consists of a network of specialised support staff with the expertise to support all students in a range of areas or direct them to external services to ensure all students receive the necessary support.

Student Services consist of the following areas:

- Residential Support
- Disability and Dyslexia Support
- Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Sexual Violence
- Bullying and Harassment
- Faith
- Visa and English language Support
- Study Support
- Money advice
- Careers and Employability advice
- Specific Student Group Support
- Student Experience and Support Team

For more information on the Services available including out of hours support please follow this [link](#).

Library and Computer Centre Access

We have two libraries at Keele. The Campus Library is usually open 24/7 during the semester and the Health Library, at the Royal Stoke University Hospital site, is open late, 7 days a week.

We have over 1,100 study spaces for you to work in quiet collaboration, individually or silently quietly in groups, on your own, or in silence. Group and individual study rooms are available to book – please see the Library website for details.

You can also borrow a laptop for a day from our self-service facility in the Campus Library.

You can use our "click and collect" service that allows you to pick up library books you request through our Library discovery service.

You have 24/7 access to a huge selection of online resources. We have subscriptions with many academic publishers giving you access to over 40,000 ejournals, and over 300,000 ebooks. There's also a collection of around 500,000 print books in the Library buildings. Use [Library Search](#), our discovery service, to search and access these items and to request books that are out on loan – it's as easy as using Google, but lets you find quality, academic information.

You can access the key readings for your modules through our online reading list system, linked directly from your KLE module spaces.

Please remember that our libraries are here for you to work in, so be considerate to others working throughout the day and night. If you're studying in silent areas and noise levels get too much, you can use our "Text a Talker" service at the Campus Library (07768 511143) - a member of our team will discreetly respond.

If you need any help using the Library and its resources, speak to Library staff at the information desk or contact us online by using the Library's Live Chat service.

If you're looking for specialist, subject support, you can book an appointment with a Librarian at either the Campus Library or Health Library, who can help you to find resources for your assignments/dissertations; manage your references using RefWorks;

or just use some of our more specialist resources. Our Campus Librarians also provide a range of 30 minute “...In a Nutshell” workshops helping you develop your information research skills through practical workshops, whereas the Health Library offers a range of health focused workshops. Or you can develop your skills online with our “Library... in a Nutshell” interactive digital resources.

For further information and to access all our resources go to the [Library website](#).

British Library Training

Many PGRs will find it helpful during their degrees to access the British Library's extensive collections. The Library has various resources to help researchers in locating information that will be helpful to them. You can access these resources on the Help for Researchers online pages: [British Library Catalogue](#)

Accessing e-journals off campus

Access to Keele's e-resources is provided through your Keele username and password. When you reach the journal home page look out for a link called “institutional log-in” or “Shibboleth log-in”, select the UK Federation and then Keele University and log in using your IT Account username and password (the log-in you use to access the Campus network) when you reach the usual yellow Keele log-in screen. Visit this [link](#) for more information, including our Off-campus Access Step by Step guide and a series of short you-tube videos to assist with off-campus logins to each individual publisher.

SCONUL Scheme

Over 170 higher education institutions in the UK and Ireland are members of this scheme which provides PGRs access to the resources of other libraries. To use the scheme, an application should be made [here](#).

Supervisory Team

All PGRs are appointed a lead supervisor and at least one other supporting supervisor (except PhD by Publication PGRs), when they begin their research project. For Professional Doctorates, this is following your first progress review. Supervisors undertake an important role in a research PGRs academic and professional development, with the appropriate subject knowledge and skills to support researchers throughout their research programme.

The lead supervisor has primary accountability for the PGR under their supervision, and the University has established a set of criteria by which lead supervisors are selected against. As well as providing the necessary academic support, and guiding PGRs through each stage of their postgraduate research programme, lead supervisors will also support PGRs with additional support wherever possible or point PGRs to the relevant University Service.

More information on supervision can be found through the [Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#).

PGR-Supervisor Agreement

Located within Skillsforge, on the meetings and reviews drop down, the purpose of this agreement is to provide a framework within which PGRs and supervisors can discuss their expectations of the supervisory relationship. PhD, MPhil and DM PGRs should meet their supervisor as a priority, to agree the main ground rules for supervision and for completion of a research degree.

Each section of the agreement contains discussion prompts, and we would strongly encourage all PGRs to complete an agreement. It can be revisited at any stage, should supervisory teams or projects change, and any PGR (regardless of start date) can complete an agreement.

Further guidance can be found in the [Skillsforge user guide](#).

PGRs funded by ESRC must complete an agreement and should download a copy of the completed agreement from Skillsforge and send to their funder by the specified deadline. Please liaise with our DTP coordinator (dtp.pgr@keele.ac.uk) for the yearly deadline and submission guidance.

Attendance Monitoring

Supervision meetings must be recorded in Skillsforge once every 4 weeks as a minimum and are used to monitor PGR attendance.

Professional Doctorates will meet their supervisory team in the second academic year as you prepare for doctoral progression and the research element of your degree. Attendance during your taught phase is therefore monitored through the Keele app.

Many of Keele's research programmes have non-standard starting dates. Full-time PGRs will typically undertake a full working week (typically 35 hours) on their research degree and part-time PGRs will normally spend the equivalent of at least 17 hours per week on their research degree. An agreement will be reached with part-time PGRs at the start of their registration as to the proportion of time they will spend on their research degree.

Areas for discussions should include the following:

- The nature of research and concept of originality
- The importance of independent thinking
- Timescales of different milestones in the research as well as overall timescales
- Expected commitment to the research programme by the PGR in terms of length of the working day or week
- The nature and extent of assistance the supervisor(s) will provide
- The roles of different supervisors, if applicable
- Scheduling of supervisory meetings

- Facilities and resources available
- Planning and time management
- Record keeping
- Identify specific research training needs and suitable training modules/courses, including ensuring your safety on campus
- How progress will be monitored and managed

Once you have agreed the detailed research protocol with your research supervisor, you will need to finalise your project plan. This will include:

- Specifying tasks and timescales and what you need to do to fulfil these
- Finalising and agreeing your training needs and agreeing an overall strategy for your Skillsforge training record and its regular review
- Identifying any resources, including equipment and software, you need to complete your research
- Defining and allocating detailed roles (whilst preserving the integrity of your own role as a PGR)
- Organising and overseeing project management meetings
- Liaising with your supervisor over research governance and project approval requirements
- Liaising with Faculty staff and supervisors to submit your ethics submission (joint responsibility of PGR and supervisor)

Please also review our Occupational Health pages [here](#).

If you're hoping to complete fieldwork, please consult with your supervisor as risk assessments may be required. Medical cover may also be necessary for overseas visits and PGRs can refer to the University insurance guidance for [further information](#).

You are strongly advised to liaise with your supervisor regarding research governance issues that your project may present, specifically any special approvals that may be

required, or procedures that need to be followed. You should read appendix 5 and 6 on Research Governance and the University's website on research governance very carefully. These will give you valuable information on how to conduct health services and clinical research. For more information, please visit the RaISE research integrity pages [here](#).

Responsibilities

The key responsibilities of research supervisors are:

- Being familiar with the provisions of this Code of Practice, the Faculty PGR Handbook, the University Regulations and policies that affect them and their PGRs;
- Introducing the PGR to the Faculty/School, its facilities and procedures, and to other researchers and relevant staff;
- Providing satisfactory and accurate guidance and advice;
- Monitoring the progress of the PGRs research programme;
- Establishing and maintaining regular contact with the PGR;
- Being accessible to the PGR to give advice;
- Contributing to the assessment of the PGRs development needs;
- Providing timely, constructive and effective feedback on the PGRs work and overall progress within the programme;
- Ensuring that the PGR is aware of the need to exercise integrity and conduct their research according to ethical principles, including intellectual property rights, and of the implications of research misconduct;
- Ensuring that the PGR is aware of sources of advice, including careers guidance and helping PGRs understand health and safety responsibilities;

- Providing effective pastoral support and/or referring the PGR to other sources of such support;
- Helping the PGR to interact with others working in the field of research;
- Where appropriate, giving encouragement and guidance to the PGR on the submission of conference papers and articles to refereed journals; and
- Maintaining the necessary supervisory expertise, including the appropriate skills, to perform the role satisfactorily, supported by relevant continuing professional development opportunities.
- Ensuring all paperwork relating to Progress Reviews and the examination process is completed and submitted in a timely manner. Checking and prompting whether Reasonable Adjustments should be in place for PGRs with Disabilities, Specific Learning Difficulties and long-term health conditions, under the Equality Act 2010.

The key responsibilities of PGRs are:

- Being familiar with the provisions of this Code of Practice, the Faculty PGR Handbook, the University Regulations and policies that affect them;
- Taking ownership of their personal and professional development, including, maintaining their Skillsforge training record and recognising when they need help and seeking it in a timely manner;
- Maintaining regular contact with supervisors (a joint responsibility with supervisors) and preparing adequately for meetings with members of their supervisory team);
- Actively participating in Progress Reviews processes within the timescales prescribed;
- Setting and keeping to timetables and deadlines, including planning and submitting work as and when required and generally maintaining satisfactory progress with the programme of research;

- Maintaining research records in such a way that they can be accessed and understood by anyone with a legitimate need to see them;
- Attending any development opportunities (research-related or other) that have been identified when agreeing their development needs with their supervisors;
- Raising awareness of any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect their academic work or registration; and
- Ensure communications sent from the University are read and, where relevant, responded to, in a timely manner, including correspondence via the PGR's Keele personal email account;
- For PGRs who require a Student Visa (formally known as Tier 4) to study in the UK – ensure compliance with your Immigration Responsibilities.
- Maintaining their own health and wellbeing and taking necessary action if they are experiencing difficulties. This might include: seeking assistance from the University Support services (which includes Counselling and mental health support; Student Experience and Support; Residence Support; Wellbeing; Study Support; Sexual Violence; Disability and Dyslexia Support; and Bullying and Harassment) (see www.keele.ac.uk/studentservices); and/or seeking alterations to study arrangements.

Further information can be found in the [PGR Code of Practice](#) and the Faculty handbooks.

Changes to Supervisory Team

Should difficulties emerge between a supervisor and a PGR, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Faculty PGR Director either via a change of supervisor request or via the concerns process. More information can be found [here](#).

In instances where a supervisor cannot continue due to long term leave or a change in job role, the Faculty PGR Committee will work with the supervisory team to source alternative supervision and will submit a change of supervision request.

Key contacts outside your supervisory team

Faculty PGR Directors and School PGR Leads can provide academic and process support and advice, alongside your supervisory team.

PGR Representatives collate your ideas and concerns and feedback to School and University committees where policies are developed.

Student Experience and Support Officers (SESOs) work closely with student services and can offer support and advice about your studies or life outside of them.

The KDA can also provide process support and advice but are separate to your Faculty.

Follow this [link](#) for support options.



Training and Development

Training Requirements

All PGRs at Keele are required to work on their own personal and professional development including research skills, in a tailored manner to complement existing skills and experience.

PGRs must meet the minimum subject-specific training requirements set by their School and the institutional requirement to engage with personal development and employability skills training at a level at least consistent with Research Council expectations.

- 60-70 hours for MPhil PGRs
- 200 hours for PhD/Professional Doctorates

Professional Doctorates are encouraged to access training beyond the first 2 years of taught modules, which must be successfully completed as required by their programme.

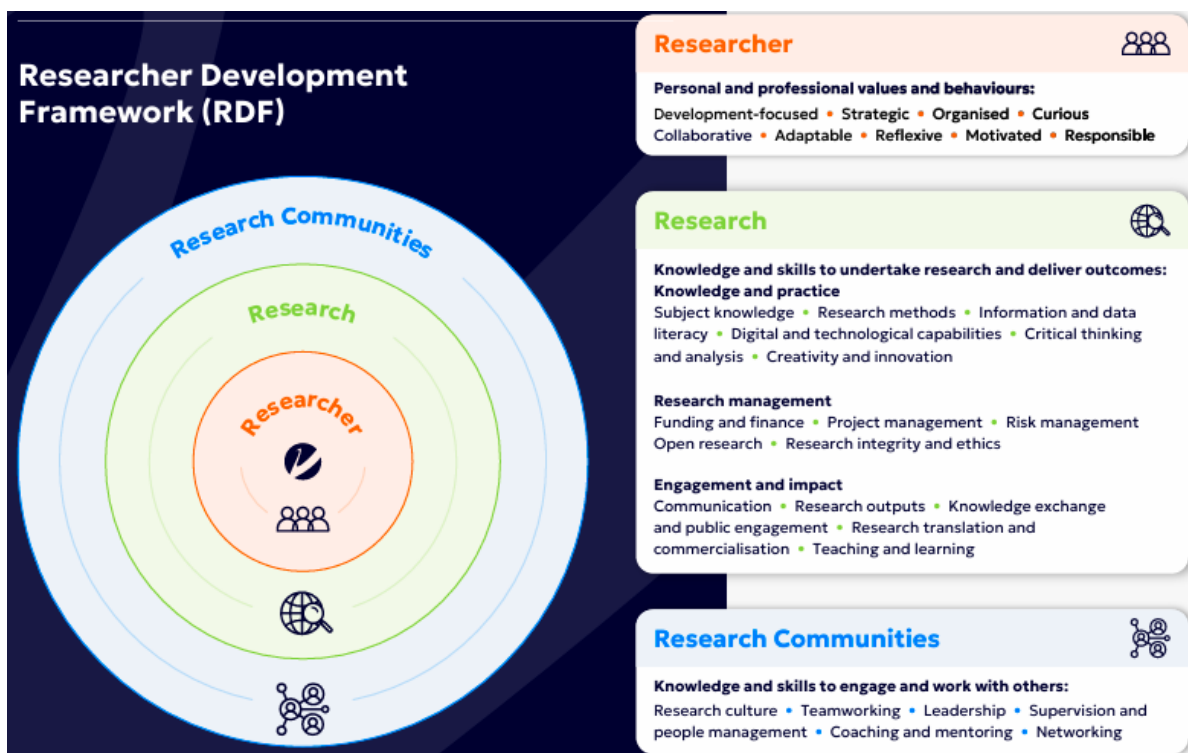
You should refer to the PGR Code of Practice for full details.

PGRs can apply for recognition of prior learning. More information can be found [here](#).

The KDA provides a suite of workshops, events and internal resources delivered throughout the year, to enable you to develop the skills you require during your postdoctoral degree and beyond, whether in academia, industry or elsewhere.

The workshops, events and resources are mapped to the internationally renowned Vitae [Researcher Development Framework \(RDF\)](#). An in-depth guide of the RDF can be found [here](#). Vitae is the global leader in the professional development of researchers and Keele University is an organisational member.

For further information, please visit [Researcher Training Centre \(sharepoint.com\)](#)



Vitae provide a wealth of resources for researchers at every stage of their career. For PGRs, Vitae and the RDF are useful for informing the evolution of your Skillsforge training record, helping structure conversations with Supervisors, linking to researcher activity and enhancing skill development.

Learning Pool

[Learning Pool](#) is a platform for accessing asynchronous online training offered internally by the Organisational Development team. You are welcome to enrol on any you feel would be beneficial to your research degree, including:

- Assertive Communication
- Managing yourself and your time
- [Microsoft Office 2016 Basics Training](#)

Keele People

PGRs are unable to access Keele People, so if a training session requires booking on this platform, simply email organisationaldevelopment@keele.ac.uk to request to be booked on to the course.

Teaching Opportunities

The University provides a wealth of teaching and demonstrating opportunities to PGRs, for example:

- Demonstrators that support student learning in laboratory, practical and field-based settings
- PGRs that undertake other teaching duties (e.g. leading seminars and lectures);
- Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) who are not undertaking the EDU-40128 Teaching Reflectively in Higher Education module.

There is no expectation that PGRs undertake teaching as part of their research degree. However, those interested in developing teaching experience or applying for paid teaching and demonstrating opportunities are encouraged to engage with the University's teaching development provision and read the [PGR Teaching Policy and Best Practice Guidelines](#).

[From Researcher to Teacher: Preparing to Teach as a PGR](#) is the University's introductory programme for PGRs considering teaching or demonstrating in higher education. The programme is delivered by KIITE twice each year and is the minimum training requirement for PGRs undertaking paid teaching roles, such as demonstrating.

PGRs who are undertaking more substantial teaching and/or supporting learning responsibilities may also wish to enrol on the [Introduction to Teaching and Demonstrating \(ITAD\)](#).

ITAD is an Advance HE-accredited programme that provides a route to Associate Fellowship (AFHEA). As an accredited programme, it includes assessment and requires

participants to be actively engaged in teaching and/or supporting learning activities within higher education.

Funding to support training

During a PGRs degree, the PGR and/or supervisor may identify external training and events that would be of benefit and PGRs have the option to apply for financial support with travel and expenses associated with these activities.

Faculty training funds

To apply for this funding, PGRs should complete the relevant training fund request form (located [here](#)) using [Key Travel website](#) to determine the costs associated with the request, and the funding required. Once complete, the form should be submitted to the Faculty PGR Administrator, for the PGR Committee support.

PGRs externally funded by Leverhulme, STFC, AHRC and ESRC

The application process for externally funded PGRs varies and PGRs are asked to liaise with Donna Bailey DTP Coordinator via DTP.pgr@keele.ac.uk in the first instance.

Alternatively, there are external funding schemes you can apply for with small pots of money available.

EURAXESS:

This [search tool](#) incorporates funding schemes from several providers and can be filtered to suit individual requirements.

The University also provides the following:

- Hardship fund - available to students including PGRs experiencing severe or urgent financial hardship.

- Keele key fund – £110,000 of funding available for students including PGRs and staff across the University, funded by alumni
- Subject awards and prizes - Subject level awards and prizes tied to a subject or course.
- Keele SU postgraduate bursary - Apply for up to £500 to engage in activities outside of your course which will help personal and academic development.



Research

What is research?

Research is original and methodical work undertaken to contribute and increase knowledge in a specific area, refining understanding and developing new ideas.

A research degree, also known as a doctorate, is the highest degree awarded by UK Universities. Individuals who undertake a doctorate are given the opportunity to delve deep and explore a topic of choice and do so to progress academically, further their professional career, or diversify and change career paths.

There are several varieties of research degrees available at Keele including PhD, MPhil, DM and Professional Doctorates.

Keele was originally established as part of a wider vision to transform and enhance opportunities within the local area and to this day it continues to be committed to sharing knowledge and engaging with impactful research. The extensive Science and Innovation Park, one of the largest of its kind in the UK, is a key component of the University's overall impact in the local economy.

Keele's research is tackling some of society's most urgent problems, including ageing, global health and renewable energy and our interdisciplinary institutes serve as hubs that stimulate collaboration and debate across three Faculties and the schools within them, each of which has its own research focus and a postgraduate research cohort.

Our Research Institutes



Institute for Social Inclusion

The Institute aims to tackle the issues of inequality on a local, national and global scale. Promoting and supporting a wide range of interdisciplinary research, co-created with external partners, that seeks to identify, explain and overcome social, economic, political and cultural obstacles to egalitarian respect and social inclusion.

Institute for Sustainable Futures

The Institute contributes to research, education and training that has positive impact on the long-term sustainability of our societies, environments and ecosystems across local to global scales.

Bringing together the natural and social sciences, arts and humanities, working closely with a range of local to global stakeholders, from business to community groups, non-governmental organisations, and government, to identify the real problems that our societies, environments and ecosystems face.





Institute for Global Health

The Institute aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable populations in resource poor settings.

Working around non-communicable diseases and neglected tropical diseases in a wide range of low- and middle-income

countries, with interdisciplinary research teams in the Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Brazil and Ethiopia. Current global health projects are funded by GCRF, AHRC, MRC and NIHR.

Digital Society Institute

The Institute aims to drive business growth and innovation, helping organisations understand and adopt advanced data and new digital technologies. Launching this year, it will provide an environment for Keele's world-leading research to interact with local communities – sharing our research expertise with relevant industries including health, business, energy and computing.



Our Research Facilities

Faculty of Natural Sciences (FNS)

The [Faculty of Natural Sciences](#) is composed of five Schools: Computer Science and Mathematics; Life Sciences; Engineering and Physical Sciences; Psychology. We also host the Harper and Keele School of Veterinary Medicine. Research in FNS is



strongly aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and forms a fundamental component of the University's interdisciplinary Research Institutes for Sustainable Futures and Global Health and Wellbeing.

The Faculty provides an exceptionally dynamic and stimulating environment for research in natural sciences. Researchers in the Faculty have active collaborations with Universities throughout the UK, and over 35 countries in Europe, the USA and low and middle-income countries. Fundamental, strategic and applied research takes place in the highest quality environment. The Faculty attracts major research funding from the ESRC, EPSRC, NERC, NIHR, BBSRC, MRC and European Union alongside major funding charities such as the Wellcome Trust, Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation, and the Leverhulme Trust.

FNS is home to three Research Centres: The Centre for Applied Entomology and Parasitology (CAEP), Centre for Glycoscience Research and Training (CGRT) and the Keele Policing and Academic Collaboration (KPAC). Members of academic staff also interact with other Keele University Research Centres including the Centre for Regenerative Medicine Research which conducts a range of fundamental and translational research.

FNS is further home to the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ILAS), which offers interdisciplinary degrees, facilitates collaboration across all sciences and supports the

Keele SU. Academic staff also contribute to a range of interdisciplinary Research Institutes including; Institute for Global Health and Wellbeing, Institute for Sustainable Futures, Institute for Social Inclusion and the Digital Society Institute.

Presently, there are around 200 postgraduate research students registered within FNS, distributed throughout the five Schools. In addition to our core Postgraduate mission of providing the facilities and support for successful research and comprehensive training, we also aim to ensure that this wealth of talent and diversity of interest is brought together whenever possible to share ideas and experiences and to form a pool of knowledge and expertise for the benefit of not only all our research students but also the Research Institutes and the University as a whole.

Each year the Faculty organises a Postgraduate Symposium: this provides an opportunity for all PGR students to present their work and experience an authentic conference environment. The Faculty further hosts the Student Journal of Natural Sciences (SJNS) which is an online, peer-reviewed, student journal from Keele University. SJNS welcomes submissions from undergraduate and postgraduate students and publishes articles, literature reviews, case studies, editorials, letters to the editors and book reviews from any branch of the Natural Sciences.

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS)



The [Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences](#) is composed of three schools: Allied Health Professions and Pharmacy, Medicine, and Nursing and Midwifery. With state-of-the-art facilities, and internationally recognised research centres, the Faculty prepares skilled, compassionate professionals who make a real difference in healthcare.

Research in FMHS is focused on addressing some of the most pressing health and social care challenges facing society today. The Faculty has established strengths in primary care research, musculoskeletal health, mental health and wellbeing, cardiovascular disease, long-term conditions, and health research methodology. Its work is designed not only to advance scientific knowledge but also to deliver tangible improvements in patient care, public health, and healthcare services. By working closely with the NHS, social care organisations, local government, patients, and research funders, Keele researchers ensure that their findings can be rapidly translated into real-world benefits.

A key feature of the Faculty's research portfolio is its broad interdisciplinary approach. Research is organised around several major themes, including cardiovascular and renal health, musculoskeletal health, mental health and wellbeing, health professionals' education, and health, care and wellness. These themes encourage collaboration between researchers from different disciplines, enabling innovative solutions to complex health problems and ensuring that research has a meaningful impact on communities.

The Faculty is home to specialist research units that support high-quality, impactful studies. These include the Clinical Trials Unit, which helps design and deliver robust

clinical research, and the Impact Accelerator Unit, which focuses on translating research findings into practical healthcare improvements. Through these platforms, Keele supports research that influences national guidelines, healthcare policy, and clinical practice. Recent examples include work on inflammatory arthritis pain management, early psychosis care, cardiovascular health, and innovative treatments for cartilage repair.

Keele's research also extends beyond the UK, with a strong commitment to global health and applied health research in low- and middle-income countries. Researchers work to address international health challenges while ensuring that diverse communities are represented and included in research. The Faculty actively promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of its work, recognising that better research outcomes are achieved when a wide range of perspectives and experiences are involved.

Faculty of Business, Law, Humanities and Social Sciences (BLHUMSS)



The [Faculty of Business, Law, Humanities and Social Sciences](#) is composed of three Schools, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Keele Business School and the School of Law. It is also home to the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The Faculty has a vibrant research community of over 200 academic staff and over 150 PGRs, reflecting our diverse and supportive research culture.

We are part of the ESRC Northwest Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership for pathways in Criminology, Social Policy & Social Work, Economic & Social History, Health & Wellbeing, Social Studies of Science, Technology & Medicine, and Socio-Legal Studies; and the AHRC North West Consortium Doctoral Training

Partnership for pathways in History, Law, Philosophy, English, Creative Writing, Media and Cultural Studies, and Music.

Within the Faculty there are a wide range of research themes, dividing further into topics within Schools. These include areas such as socio-legal research, medical ethics, social justice and human rights, gender and sexuality, international Law, ageing and social care, music composition and technology, local history, American history, European and Twentieth Century Political history, English literature and Creative Writing, Political Theory and Political Philosophy, Global Studies, Environment, Comparative Politics and policy,, Economics, Accounting and Finance, Marketing, Management and Organisations, Crime, Social Justice and Policing, Children, families and society, Communities, identities and mobilities.

We are also host to the Keele Institute for Social Inclusion and the David Bruce Centre for American Studies. We offer high-quality supervision, with every PGR having at least two supervisors, overseen by Postgraduate Research Leads within each School and a Faculty Postgraduate Research Committee chaired by the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Studies. All our PGRs are offered a wide range of research and other personal development training opportunities. This includes not only the generic University training offered by KIITE, but also numerous additional and dedicated training modules, events, and workshops offered within the Faculty itself.

There is a vibrant and active researcher community, hosting work in progress research seminars, our own postgraduate conference, and a peer-reviewed journal, 'Under Construction', focused on publishing PGR research.

Studentships and Fellowships

Studentships are funded research projects and can be internally or externally funded from research councils or from the industry. View our studentship opportunities [here](#)

Fellowships provide an opportunity to undertake independent research and can lead to the formation of your own research group. These awards are usually fixed term posts designed to develop an academic career. Benefits include:

- Independent research
- Career progression
- Protected research time
- Prestige for both the individual and the hosting Institution
- An attractive academic CV

At Keele, we assist researchers to obtain these prestigious awards.

RaISE (Research and Innovation Support Enhancement) is the professional services team responsible for supporting the development of research projects involving Keele University and its external partners.

Further information can be found [here](#).

Studentship Agreements

These are required when a partner is funding or co-funding a PhD level project which will be undertaken by a PGR under Keele's supervision. This should be arranged by the supervisor who will contact a member of the Project Assurance Contracts team through a Contract Request Form on Topdesk or by email raise.contracts@keele.ac.uk.

Doctoral Training Centres

A large proportion of UK Research Council funding for postgraduate research studentships is now awarded to institutions via Centres for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Training Partnerships. These are flagship doctoral training programmes which combine cutting-edge doctoral study with a dynamic, innovative and interdisciplinary research culture that aims to develop future research leaders.

Keele is involved in the following Centres for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Training Partnerships:

- [**AHRC North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership**](#)

- [ESRC North West Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership](#)
- [STFC Doctoral Training Grant](#)
- [Leverhulme](#)

Engagement and Impact

Your research has the potential to make a positive difference and have an impact upon others. By using your PhD research to support communities, businesses, educators, policy makers and others, you can bring about real change and benefits by providing solutions to the challenges they face. In the UK, funding bodies and other organisations that support PGR research, such as the British Heart Foundation, Wellcome Trust and Cancer Research, are focusing upon the impact that research has beyond academia. Planning, generating and evaluating impact are critical to the work that we do in research and higher education, to make a positive difference and demonstrate the benefits of investing in research.

According to UK Research & Innovation (UKRI), “Impact is the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy. This occurs in many ways – through creating and sharing new knowledge and innovation; inventing ground-breaking new products, companies and jobs; developing new and improving existing public services and policy; enhancing quality of life and health; and many more.” Your PhD research might provide opportunities to undertake activities that could lead to impact, such as working in partnership with relevant stakeholders, lobbying policy makers, media engagement, public engagement through participating in public-facing events, delivering outreach activities to schools and many more.

Such activities and engaging with diverse audiences can help generate impact from your research and enhance your skills and employability. If you are planning a career in research and higher education, Impact will be a key part of what you do. If your PhD leads you to a career outside of academia, the skills, opportunities and networks that you will gain through impact and public engagement activities will be equally useful.

To maximise the impact potential of your research and make the most of the opportunities that arise it is important to plan as early as you can. Ideally, start thinking about impact as you plan your research. At Keele, there are specialists working in Public Engagement and Impact that can support you with this activity, contact them at research.raise@keele.ac.uk, as well as [Public Engagement with Research Champions](#) within each of our Faculties.

You should begin by identifying suitable stakeholders that can shape and influence your project so that it is beneficial to specific communities and organisations. Ask yourself:

1. Who might benefit from this research?
2. How might they benefit from this research?

Thinking about these questions will help you to identify suitable stakeholders that you can approach to find out whether your research meets their interests, needs and priorities. Stakeholders can evaluate the feasibility of your ideas and how they may need to be adapted to work in particular contexts. You should also use these questions to create an impact goal; what impact do you intend to have? Having a specific and realistic idea about what benefits you think this might bring can help you engage the right people, plan the right activities, and develop plans to evaluate whether these have been effective and demonstrate your impact.

Additional information can be found at the [RaISE webpages](#).

Opportunities:

[UKRI Policy Internship Scheme](#) provides the opportunity for doctoral PGRs funded by the research councils of UK Research and Innovation to work for three months in a highly influential policy organisation. Internships are available with several parliamentary departments, government departments and non-governmental bodies, learned societies and other organisations. During this time interns can be involved in drafting briefing papers, participate in a policy inquiry and organise a policy event.

Individual research councils and Doctoral Training Partnerships also run their own internship schemes, so if you are UKRI funded, check directly with them for available

opportunities. For example, the [AHRC North West Consortium DTP](#) offers funding for partner-led and researcher-led placement opportunities and the [ESRC North West DTP](#) also offers additional funding for internships.

Open Research

Open research is about making research more transparent, collaborative and efficient and this includes access, public engagement, data, platforms, tools and services.

Keele is committed to open research, and more information including resources and details of the support Keele offers is available on the [Research Integrity & Improvement SharePoint](#).

Research Culture

Research Culture is a broad term used to describe the culture within which research takes place – this can be at a local level e.g. Keele has a research culture or at a national or international level. It encompasses the interactions that happen daily, the way people act, the opportunities for researchers, technicians and research enablers (professional services colleagues who support research projects), and how we manage breaches of research integrity or poor behaviour. There is more information about research culture on the [R&I hub](#) – remember you are a part of our vibrant, inclusive and positive research culture, your actions and voice matter.

Regulatory Information

Postgraduate research programmes at Keele are subject to the University Act, Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations, which set out the requirements by which all degrees are delivered, assessed and awarded as well as the broader rules and parameters for the conduct of University business and the governance and standards by which the University operates.

As a Keele PGR you are bound to many of the same requirements set out in the University Regulations as other undergraduate and PGRs, but you should be mindful of specific regulations that apply directly to you and your research programmes.

The researchers' section of the KDA website provides all the key documentation you must submit whilst at Keele and the policies you must abide by, including:

- [Degree regulations](#)
- [Code of Practice](#)
- [Guidance and student forms](#)
- [Examination guide](#)
- [Professional Development Learning Plan](#)
- [Appeals and complaints procedure](#)
- [Attendance monitoring](#)

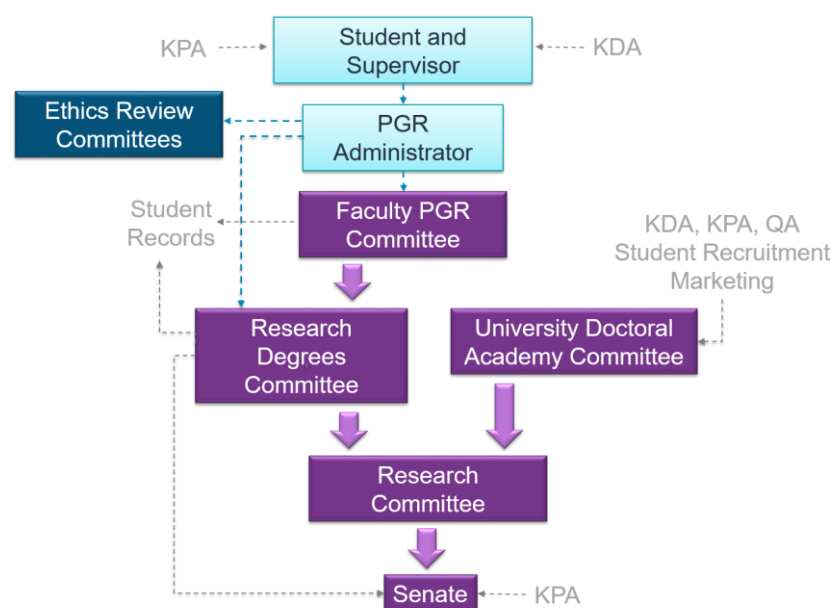
Location of other University resources:

- [Student terms and conditions](#)
- [University Regulations](#)
- [Programme specifications](#)

Keele maintains the academic standards of its research programmes through a network of committees at Faculty and University level, supported by key staff whose roles contribute to the PGR experience.

Research Committees

The research committee reporting structure is as follows in the diagram below:



Staff Roles

University Research Committee

Encompassing all matters concerning the strategic management of, and support for, University research:

- Policies and procedures for the management and evaluation of research activity.
- University structures appropriate for the conduct of research.
- University schemes to allocate funding for research.

Research Degrees Committee

Operating as a pan-University examination board approving postgraduate research degree final awards, on behalf of Senate. The Committee also has a role in ensuring the quality and consistency of research degrees and the examination process by monitoring matters with respect to individual PGRs and approving PhD, MPhil, DM and Professional Doctorate milestone submissions (including progress reports, thesis titles, examination panels, leave of absence and extension requests), on the recommendation of the Faculty Postgraduate Research Committee.

Doctoral Academy Committee

Oversees the operation of the Keele Doctoral Academy (KDA) to provide efficient and effective support for PGRs. Working to promote and maintain a high-quality postgraduate research culture within the University through oversight, monitoring performance and the promotion of best practice in relation to postgraduate research programmes, PGRs and their supervisors within each Faculty.

Faculty Research Committees

Encompassing all matters concerning the strategic management of research within the Faculty.

Policies and procedures for the management and evaluation of research activity.

- Faculty structures appropriate for the conduct of research.
- Faculty schemes to allocate funding for research.

Faculty Postgraduate Research Committees

Oversees all matters relating to the progress and experience of PGRs within the Faculty. Ensure compliance with the University's Regulations and Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees. This Committee is responsible for the consideration and approval of researchers' progress, requests for leave of absence and other changes of status or candidature.

Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise

The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise is the executive lead within the University for all research matters, including research degrees and PGRs.

Doctoral Academy Director

The KDA Director acts as the lead figurehead for doctoral research within Keele, ensuring that the University's approach to doctoral research receives ongoing senior level focus. The KDA Director leads strategic development, is the focal point for internal and external stakeholders, and serves as Chair of the Research Degrees Committee.

Doctoral Academy Manager

Supports the KDA Director operationally, ensuring a high-quality experience for all researchers. The KDA Manager is responsible for developing initiatives to enhance the postgraduate experience as well as highlighting funding opportunities and training initiatives, organising cross-Faculty research events and identifying and supporting the development of key partnerships.

Faculty Executive Deans

Executive Deans for each Faculty play a major leadership role within the University. They lead, manage and develop the Faculty to ensure it achieves the highest possible standards of excellence in all its activities. The Executive Dean is responsible for all aspects of the executive leadership and strategic direction of research and education within their Faculty, including external and international engagement.

Faculty Deans for Research

Responsible to the Executive Dean for the Faculty's research and enterprise strategy and maintain oversight of the Faculty's compliance with University and statutory regulations in the areas of research governance and ethics.

Heads of School

Responsible for all aspects of educational leadership and management of the School, including research, and ensuring compliance with University and statutory regulations.

Postgraduate Research Directors

Each Faculty has a Postgraduate Research Director, who is an experienced supervisor of researchers. The Postgraduate Research Director chairs the Faculty Postgraduate Research Committee and has overall responsibility for the progress and experience of postgraduates within the Faculty. The Director is responsible to the Faculty Dean for Research for any local arrangements for research degrees and for liaising with and reporting as necessary to the Head of School and/or Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise.

Postgraduate Leads

Responsibilities at School and disciplinary research centre level for PGRs, ensuring that the postgraduate research processes are adopted, working with the Postgraduate Research Directors. Postgraduate Leads provide academic support for PGRs who wish to progress queries or issues outside of their immediate supervisory team.

Doctoral Academy Postgraduate Officer

The Postgraduate Officer, in addition to their capacity as the Secretary to the Research Degrees Committee, has an advisory capacity to staff and PGRs on a broad remit of postgraduate research matters, providing advice on PGR policy and procedural matters, ensuring compliance with University regulations and the Code of Practice. The focus of the role is to ensure that researchers are provided with a high-quality experience, that postgraduate research awards generally are robust and of the highest academic standards, and to assist in achieving the University's strategic aims for postgraduate research.

Doctoral Academy Researcher Developer

The Researcher Developer works with professional service staff and academics from across the University, to ensure the continued development and enhancement of our research development training programme from design and promotion through to delivery and feedback. Also responsible for the co-ordination of the University's submission for the HR Excellence in Research Award, which supports the wellbeing and career progression of Researchers.

Postgraduate Research Administrator

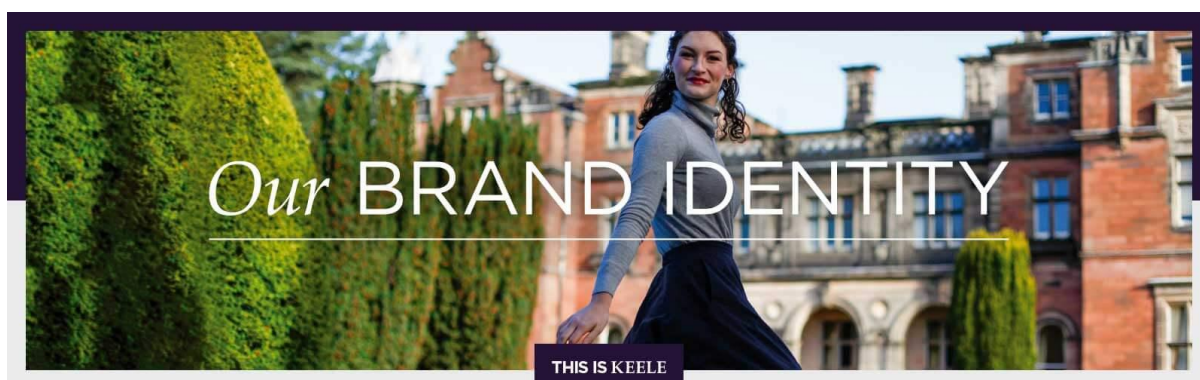
PGR Administrators support Faculty PGR Directors and PGR Leads from initial enquiry and application through to viva voce. Collating milestone paperwork for committee ratification.

Doctoral Training Partnerships Coordinator

Supports UKRI funded PGRs and the academic staff associated with these awards e.g pathway leads with the recruitment of PGRs and the funding associated with them. This can relate to sickness payments, training requests, stipend and fee payments. The DTP Coordinator will also provide PGR data and will assist academics with coordinating future DTP funding applications.

Branding Guidelines

For branding guide for logos, PowerPoint presentations and more: [Branding guidelines](#)



Timeline

Milestones and Progress

The following [link](#) will take you to our step-by-step overview of key milestones for each research degree; along with timescales based on mode of attendance and the action required at each point. Please check the research degree relevant to yourself.

Degree registered for	Mode of attendance (registration status)	Minimum period of supervision from initial registration	Expected time to submission from initial registration	Maximum time to submission from initial registration
Masters Degree (MPhil)	Full-time	12 months	18 months	24 months
	Part-time (0.5 FTE)	24 months	36 months	48 months
	Part-time (0.8 FTE)	15 months	23 months	30 months
Doctoral Degree (PhD, DM)	Full-time	24 months	36 months	48 months
	Part-time (0.5 FTE)	48 months	72 months	96 months
	Part-time (0.8 FTE)	30 months	45 months	60 months
Professional Doctorates	Part-time (0.5 FTE)	48 months	72 months	96 months

Progress Reviews

To ensure your continued progress and that you are receiving appropriate support through your research degree, Keele conducts a six-monthly Interim Review Progress (IPR) during April and October. These will be submitted via Skillsforge. In addition, Progress Reviews (PR1, 2 and 3) are required at key points in your research degree. The first of which involves a report and interview with internal examiners nominated by your supervisory team. More information can be found [here](#).



Follow this shared experience video for advice on Progress Review 1:

[Brenda's PR1 Hints and Tips](#)

Submitting your Thesis

See the Postgraduate Research Examination Handbook [here](#) for a detailed overview of the examination process including thesis layout and referencing information.

At least 2 weeks prior to your submission date, you should notify the Postgraduate Officer in the Exams office via submissions.pgr@keele.ac.uk.

When you are ready to submit, you should send the following documents as attachments in a single email to the same address on or before your submission/resubmission date:

- One electronic copy of your thesis, including an abstract of no more than 300 words (PDF)
- One electronic copy of the Academic Honesty Declaration Form (Word or PDF)
- One electronic copy of the Thesis Submission Form (Word or PDF) - please note, a supervisor's signature on this form does not indicate a pass. The examination process is entirely independent of the Supervisor's opinions of the work.
- Resubmissions only: a scan of your receipt to confirm payment of your resubmission fee

For further information including the forms you must include with your submission and submission arrangements during University closure points, please click [here](#).

Viva Voce

There are seven stages to the examination process for research programmes at Keele. Researchers are supported throughout by their supervisors and Faculty staff and guidance is made available on the submission and oral examination process.

The seven stages to examination of research programmes are as follows:

1. Appointment of Examiners
2. Submission
3. Pre-Viva Examiner's Report Forms
4. Oral examination
5. A Post-Viva Examiners' Joint Report Form
6. Approval of outcome by Research Degrees Committee
7. Award by Senate

Detailed information on each of the seven stages and specific guidance on the examination process and each stage are provided in the PGR Examination Handbook [here](#).

For further information on any of the above processes, please refer to the online guidance and PGR Code of Practice located [here](#).

Graduation

Following your viva, you will be notified of the result by the Postgraduate Officer on behalf of the Research Degrees Committee. This may include a requirement to complete corrections to your thesis and full details of such corrections will be provided.

Once your thesis has met the requirements of your examiners and the result has been ratified by the Research Degrees Committee and University Senate, you will be asked to lodge your thesis with the library. Your details will then be passed to the Graduation

team, and you will be invited to graduate (summer or winter graduations are available and the dates and information is published [here](#)).



Requests

Annual Leave

Full-time PGRs are entitled to 30 working days annual leave, plus bank holidays, and this is pro-rata for part-time PGRs. Annual leave is to be approved by your lead supervisor in writing (via email), some schools may also have an annual leave form which must be completed and returned. Please see your Faculty handbook for further details.

International PGRs should contact the [Immigration Compliance team](#) before requesting annual leave and travelling outside the UK.

Re-registration

You will be invited to re-register annually by our Student Records team and it is important that you complete this within one month of your re-registration date.

At this point, you should ensure you do not have any outstanding tuition fees. If you are struggling to pay your fees, please contact the [Income Office](#) to discuss a payment plan.

International PGRs should also ensure that have a valid visa (if applicable), otherwise you will not be able to re-register on your programme. Please contact the [Immigration Compliance](#) team to discuss this further, if needed.

Leave of Absence (including sickness)

If you become unwell you must notify your lead supervisor as soon as possible.

Absences of more than 7 days must be supported by a medical certificate, submitted to your Postgraduate Research Administrator.

Absences that last longer than 4 weeks (illness, personal circumstances or external pressures) may require a leave of absence (LOA). Occasionally this is unavoidable, but in many cases, there is some discretion about whether LOA is appropriate and, if so, the timing of the leave. Retrospective LOA requests of more than 3 months are not permitted. If necessary, Supervisors can submit an LOA request on behalf of the PGR.

PGRs taking a leave of absence for health reasons are required to provide 'fit to study' evidence. Student services may also be asked to review and follow up on PGRs returning from leave, if deemed necessary e.g. extra support may be required on their return.

Note that no fees are payable for any period of approved LOA and you are not allowed access to any Keele support or facilities.

Funded PGRs should also review their funding regulations as this may have financial implications i.e., some funders provide sick pay, maternity and paternity leave, others will not provide a stipend if a PGR is on leave from their studies. Queries should be directed to the DTP coordinator (dtp.pgr@keele.ac.uk) or [Student finance](#) (as appropriate).

International PGRs should contact Keele's [Immigration Compliance](#) team as changes to your mode of attendance may affect your visa status.

More information can be found [here](#).

Exceptional Circumstances (on research modules)

For those of you taking taught modules as part of your research degree, you can request exceptional circumstances if your personal circumstances are affecting your studies. You should speak with your Personal Tutor or School as soon as possible. If it is deemed necessary, then you may have to submit a claim for exceptional circumstances.

It is in your best interests to speak with someone as quickly as possible, and certainly before any assessment deadline.

Change in Mode of Attendance

You may wish to change your mode of attendance to accommodate personal or external pressures i.e.,

Full time to part time or vice versa:

This will affect the tuition fee payments you make moving forward and the amount of time you are permitted to complete your research degree within.

Sponsored PGRs should also review their funding regulations as this may have financial implications. Student finance can provide advice and support for PGRs with financial concerns.

International PGRs should contact Keele's Immigration Compliance team as changes to your mode of attendance may affect your visa status.

Continuation status:

This signifies you are at the point in your studies when you have less than 12 months to complete (full-time PGRs), 18 months (0.8FTE part-time PGRs) and 24 months (0.5FTE part-time PGRs) and the work required up to submission of the thesis can be satisfactorily completed using only the following level of resources:

- Minimal supervision, primarily related to reading and commenting on draft thesis chapters;
- Access to the library; and,
- Use of computing facilities

This is not an automatic process and must be applied for by the PGR. PGRs who apply for this status are subject to continuation fees to be paid by the PGR, regardless of funding status prior to continuation.

More information can be found [here](#).

Distance learning:

PGRs wishing to transfer to distance learning must consult with their supervisory team.

Internationally sponsored PGRs should also consult with [Immigration Compliance](#) as this may affect your visa status.

Transfer from MPhil/MRes to PhD (or vice versa)

PGRs who wish to be considered for transfer to PhD or MPhil/MRes status should consult their supervisor as soon as possible. The transfer procedure will use the same process and Progress 1 (see key milestones). The decision to recommend transfer will rest with the Faculty PGR Committee. Such recommendations for transfer of registration will be made to the University Research Degrees Committee.

Extensions

If you are unable to complete your research degree in the usual timeframes you can request an academic extension. These can be used to request additional time to submit your thesis or to submit corrections. The form on which you can apply for an extension is located [here](#).

Withdrawals

If you decide that you can no longer continue with your research degree and wish to withdraw, please discuss this with your supervisor and/or PGR Lead and SESO. Once a decision has been made to withdraw, please complete the necessary form on Skillsforge. More information can be found [here](#).

Academic Integrity

Proofreading Guidance

If you decide that you would like someone to proofread your work or wish to use a proofreading company, it is very important that you read the document the proofreading guidance document from the Student Conduct website [here](#).

Failure to follow the guidance in this document, if you have your work proofread, could result in you being found guilty of academic misconduct due to you having unpermitted assistance. If you have work proofread, you must keep a copy of the draft work that you give to the proofreader, the changes that the proofreader suggests, and all communication with the proofreader. You will be asked to provide this evidence if the marker is concerned that the work has not been written solely by you, and you are asked to attend an interview about your work.

Note: use of proofreaders in Modern Language and English Language assessments is not permitted and constitutes Academic Misconduct.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, which is the most common type of academic misconduct, occurs when the work you are submitting is not your own, but in fact somebody else's. Please visit the following sites for more information.

- [Academic Misconduct](#)
- [Turnitin](#)

Commissioning

Commissioning is a very serious form of academic misconduct. If a marker is concerned that the work has not been written by you, you will be asked to attend an

interview where you will be asked questions about the content of the work to demonstrate that you understand the work. You will also be asked to provide evidence of how you prepared and wrote the work.

Governance, Integrity, and Ethics

Research Integrity

Research integrity refers to high quality and robust practice across the entire research process i.e., the planning and conduct of research, the collection and recording of data, reporting and dissemination of findings and the application and exploitation of findings.

Keele supports the five commitments outlined in the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity and expects its researchers to be aware of their responsibilities outlined in the Concordat and to adhere to the highest standards of integrity when undertaking research. More information regarding research integrity can be accessed via the [UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#).

Additionally, the [research integrity SharePoint](#) provides additional support and key contacts within the University.

Research Ethics

Keele is committed to conducting high-quality research underpinned by appropriate ethical standards for the benefit of society and in the public's interest. It recognises the benefits of a positive culture of ethical reflection, debate and mutual learning particularly against the continuing emergence of new situations and research methodology which require creative approaches to ethics issues.

Keele's [Research Ethics Policy](#) explains the University's stance in relation to research ethics review and the creation, operation and monitoring of research ethics committees. Information about the appropriate ethical review process for each type of research activity can be found via Keele's dedicated research ethics SharePoint.

Research Governance

Researchers are responsible for being aware of, and complying with, all legislative, policy and guideline requirements relevant to their research activities, including current and on-going policy changes.

There are several research policies and procedures that researchers should be aware of and abide by. The [University's Code of Good Research Practice](#), [Data Protection and Information Governance](#), [Conflicts of Interest](#) and the [Keele Health and Social Care Research Policy](#) outline the University's expectations of all researchers.

If you are using genetic material from a low-middle income country the [Nagoya Protocol](#) may be relevant.

The [Keele Research Governance Toolkit](#) is a useful resource, and your supervisor will also have experience of relevant research governance activity.

Intellectual Property (IP) Rights

IP is intangible property that is the result of creativity and innovation and can be owned in a similar way to physical property. Examples include patentable technologies, design rights, copyrights, etc.

Researchers should discuss with their supervisor if they think an IP has been created as PGRs are responsible for being aware of and abiding by, the University's policies, procedures, and guidance on IP and should declare at the point of submission if their thesis contains IP and/or if embargo on access should be applied.

Where the IP has been generated with the benefit of the University environment (including resources, facilities, and intellectual capital) the University would normally own the IP. The exception to this occurs where the PGR is sponsored by a third party, where it has been contractually agreed, that the sponsor will own the IP arising from the sponsored research work.

Researchers are entitled to a share of any financial gain resulting from the IP generated during the degree, in accordance with the [University's Intellectual Property Management Code of Practice](#).

Data Management

Research Data Management

Research creates data. Good data is critical to good research. Data created from research are valuable resources that can be used and re-used for future scientific and educational purposes. Good practice in data management is one of the core areas of research integrity, for the responsible conduct of research.

Keele supports its researchers in appropriate curation and preservation of research data and, where applicable, in accordance with research funders' requirements. The Keele Research Data Management Policy sets out requirements for data management that all Keele researchers should consider throughout their research. In addition, many funding bodies will require data management and sharing plans to be part of research grant applications. Keele has collated guidance on data management, see [here](#).

Security Sensitive Information

Keele defines security sensitive research materials as:

- Materials that are covered by the Official Secrets Act (1989) and the Terrorism Act 2006
- Materials that could be considered 'extremist' or incompatible with British values.
- Materials used for research projects commissioned by the military or under an EU security call.
- Research projects that involve the acquisition of security clearances to undertake the research.
- 'Materials' include both online, electronic and hard copy sources.

It is recognised that other research material, not mentioned above, could also be regarded as security sensitive. If in any doubt, a researcher should contact the University's Research Governance Officer for further advice.

The University supports its researchers in undertaking research using security sensitive material but takes seriously the need to protect them from the misinterpretation of

intent by authorities, which can result in legal sanction. It is therefore important that the University is aware of the research before it begins and can ensure proper data governance and oversight.

Responsible Use of Research Metrics

In addition to the research data management guidance and Research Data Management Policy Keele signed the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DoRA). DoRA is a set of recommendations designed to ensure that “...the quality and impact of scientific outputs...is measured accurately and evaluated wisely.” To date, signatories include seven other Russell Group universities, including: Imperial College London, University of Manchester and UCL.

Keele is committed to the critical role that peer review and expert judgement plays in the assessment of research but also recognises the value that quantitative metrics can play in complementing and supporting decision-making. The move to find new ways to assess quality in research outputs is fully in line with the wishes of research funders, notably the European Commission, the Wellcome Trust and Office for Students (previously HEFCE).

Keele has developed a set of principles outlining its approach to research assessment and management, including the responsible use of quantitative indicators. These principles draw upon DORA and are designed to encapsulate current good practice and to act as a guide for future activities. These principles can be viewed online [here](#).

Research Excellence Framework (REF)

The [Research Excellence Framework](#) is a UK wide exercise which assesses the quality (and volume) of research. The results are used to allocate research funding to UK Universities by the UK funding bodies. The funding bodies’ shared policy aim for research assessment is to secure the continuation of a world-class, dynamic and

responsive research base across the full academic spectrum within UK higher education, achieved through the threefold purpose of the REF:

- To provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment.
- To provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks, for use within the HE sectors and for public information.
- To inform the selective allocation of funding for research.

The REF is a process of expert review, carried out by expert panels for each of the 34 subject-based units of assessment, under the guidance of four main panels. Expert panels are made up of senior academics, international members, and research users.

For each submission, three distinct elements are assessed: the quality of outputs (e.g. publications, performances, and exhibitions), their impact beyond academia, and the environment that supports research. As a PGR you are counted in this last section in two ways: the number of PGRs who complete their doctorate in a given REF period is counted, our research culture, and the environment that exists to support PGR research (funding, training, facilities and so forth) is also considered within the wider University context.



Events and Opportunities

The Doctoral Academy runs events throughout the year that are available to all researchers, these are announced via the [KDA website](#) and newsletter, Keele's daily digest and research newsletter and through Faculty Microsoft Teams and PGR and staff mailing lists.

The main events include:

- The Annual Postgraduate Research Conference (in person and online) is a focal point of the calendar, featuring talks from external speakers, round-table discussions, workshops and competitions.
- The Researcher Development Series provides an opportunity for PGRs, research-active staff and staff linked to research, to further their professional and career development through two weeks of workshops at the beginning of the academic year.
- PGR and Supervisor Q&As are informal virtual events which run through Microsoft Teams and bring together researchers and staff from across the university to hear from peers, ask questions to key research leaders to suggest improvements or ideas to the KDA.
- RalSE host [research talks](#) throughout the year and Keele SU also host events that bring our PGR community together socially.

Community Engagement

At Keele, public engagement embraces all activities that enhance our sense of the university as a place that makes a direct contribution to society and the economy through 'cumulative engagement' with local and wider related communities for mutual benefit.

The foundation of good Public Engagement with Research (PER) is a two-way creative process of listening and interaction for the mutual benefit of all involved.

PER is vitally important to Keele's civic mission. The University is committed to developing, sharing and co-producing new knowledge, and to developing relationships between its researchers and the range of communities and stakeholders that they interact with.

Keele is a signatory to the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)'s Manifesto for Public Engagement and, in October 2017, it was one of seven institutions awarded UKRI funding under the Strategic Support to Expedite Embedding Public Engagement with Research (SEE-PER) project.

For more information on the opportunities available to researchers, click [here](#).

International Study Opportunities

The University has several partnership arrangements including split site and dual award programmes for PGRs.

Split-site partnerships lead to a Keele award with PGRs registered for a research degree at Keele whilst spending a significant period of their research away from the University, at another approved institution or organisation.

Dual award partnerships enable PGRs to receive separate PhD awards from two partner institutions involved in a joint research degree programme, following research undertaken by the PGR at each institution.

Further information can be found [here](#). In most instances, PGRs apply to the partnership prior to starting their research degree.

Employment during your research degree (including international PGRs)

You may wish to take employment whilst studying. Whether this is internally within the University (Demonstrating or Teaching) or externally, it should be discussed with your

Lead Supervisor beforehand in terms of the number of hours you intend to work and how this will be managed alongside your research degree.

International PGRs should also speak with the [Immigration Compliance team](#) to confirm the number of hours permitted, based on their visa requirements. PGRs with visa's must not work more than 18 hours per week and should confirm and adhere to any additional restrictions imposed by their funding body.

Careers

The Careers and Employability Team can help you to find placements, work experience, internships and graduate opportunities. They will support you to think through your career plans and develop your employability skills. If you want to get your CV looking great, want to meet employers, or are just uncertain of what to do after you graduate then get in touch with us and talk things through.

Look out for our events, Careers Fair, coffee with employers and 'how to' workshops using this [link](#) or pay us a visit in the Library, where we are based. You can also access Keele Careers Online which offers online careers information including psychometric tests and advice about CVs, application forms and interviews.

Develop your academic skills

Academic support is also provided via Postgraduate Research Directors and Postgraduate Co-ordinators/Leads. These staff can support PGRs through the key milestones of their research programme, providing guidance on processes and the requirements of a research degree at Keele. Researchers will receive information on the structure and key staff within their Faculty during their induction.

3-Minute Thesis Competition

Every year there is the opportunity for students to enter the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition, where they must explain their research using just one slide, and in just three minutes. This challenge is open to students that have passed their PR1 and provides valuable experience in explaining your research in an engaging way. This competition extends beyond the University with winners going forward to the Vitae National Competition, culminating in a live performance at the Vitae Researcher Development International Conference. For more information, see [here](#).



For more insight into the competition, watch this shared experience video:

[**Ruth's 3MT Hints and Tips**](#)

Community and Representation

Keele Students' Union (Keele SU)



Every postgraduate at Keele becomes a member of Keele Students' Union (Keele SU) automatically and for free on enrolment. There is nothing to join and nothing to pay.

Keele SU is the single Students' Union for all Keele students. The Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA) has merged into Keele SU, bringing postgraduate representation, support and community into one organisation. What matters most to postgraduates is protected: a dedicated postgraduate space, a guaranteed Postgraduate Officer role, and the Postgraduate Bursary.

As a postgraduate researcher, you can:

- **Get advice.** [Advice & Support at Keele SU](#) (ASK) offers free, confidential guidance on academic issues, housing, money, wellbeing and complaints, independently of the University.
- **Apply for the [Postgraduate Bursary](#).** The bursary funds conferences, training and other activities that sit beyond the compulsory requirements of your programme. You can apply for up to £500 in total across an academic year, with no minimum. Applications are made online, with a short confirmation from your supervisor, and receipts must be submitted within three months of the activity.
- **Shape decisions.** Your [Elected Officers](#), take student views into University committees. [Union Assembly](#) is where students debate and vote on the direction Keele SU takes, and any student can submit an idea to it. You can also join the [Postgraduate Network](#), or stand and vote in the [Keele SU elections](#).

- Use [the Clubhouse](#), the venue near Horwood Hall — bar, café, study space and social hub, with events running through the year.

Keele SU works in partnership with the Keele Doctoral Academy (KDA) to make sure postgraduate research students get an experience built around how you actually study.

Everything postgraduate now sits at [KeeleSU.com/KPA](https://www.keele.ac.uk/su/kpa/). Follow Keele SU on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#).

Student Societies

There are a range of student led clubs and societies available to postgraduates. More information on the available clubs and societies can be found [here](#).



Reporting Issues/Feedback

Foremost, please do not hesitate to contact your supervisory team (or programme lead regarding taught modules) if you have any problems throughout your research degree. Your School PGR Lead and PGR Director can also assist with queries or issues, should you prefer to discuss the matter with an individual outside of your supervisory team.

The PGR and/or supervisor can raise concerns that may develop about the PGR experience and propose a solution using the 'Reporting Concerns with PGR Experience' form [here](#). The Faculty PGR Director in consultation with the School's PGR Lead will investigate into the concern and determine an outcome of this investigation.

For a full list of PGRDs and Leads, please click [here](#)

If you would prefer to speak with someone who is not from your School/Department, please contact KDA@keele.ac.uk.

Alternatively, you can submit a formal concern to the student support team and more information can be found [here](#).

PGR Feedback

PGR feedback is important at Keele and there are several opportunities for you to get involved. You are also encouraged to speak with staff informally if you have any suggestions for improvements or to seek advice regarding issues with your programme.

PGR Representatives (within programmes)

PGR representation across Keele is conducted in partnership with Keele SU, and the Student and Staff Voice Committee. PGRs have a variety of opportunities for giving feedback on their academic programme by volunteering to become a School representative or through the Keele SU's annual elections. More information can be found [here](#).

All Faculties operate a range of mechanisms to collect, review and respond as appropriate to the feedback from those concerned with research degrees, including individual PGRs and groups of PGRs or their representatives. Quality assurance processes also incorporate opportunities for students to feedback on the academic quality of their programme.

PGRs can stand for election as a Student Voice Representative who represent the views of other students on their programme, gathering feedback, which will be relayed to the Student Staff Voice Committees to discuss items raised by their peers and developments to the programme. It is an important role, which is recognised by being HEAR-recordable. There are even awards each year to celebrate the achievements of those who have gone above and beyond the standard duties of a student rep. Look out for further information publicised by KeeleSU, including details of elections, which are held online at the start of the year. More information can be found [here](#).

Student Staff Voice Committees

These meetings provide a forum for discussion between Student Voice Representatives and staff on the programme about programme issues. They are held at least once a semester. The meetings are normally chaired by a student rep and act as the principal means for staff to be made aware of the collective opinion of students. Their success depends upon students getting involved, either as reps or by supporting the reps by providing them with your feedback.

PGR Representatives (Schools)

You can also volunteer to become a PGR School Representative. These individuals attend School and Faculty Committees with a specific research focus and are often involved in the organisation of School training events and conferences which is great experience for your CV.



If you are interested in becoming a PGR School Representative, some suggestions are provided within this shared experience video:

[Abi's PGR Rep Hints and Tips](#)

Module Evaluation

For those of you undertaking modules as part of your research degree, you will be invited to complete an evaluation form. These are done anonymously and give you an opportunity to have your say on the content and delivery of modules. A summary of the results is considered by the Student Staff Voice Committee and other School committees; they form part of the annual review of the curriculum.

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey

The University takes part in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) every two years from early March. PRES and PTES are national surveys of postgraduate research and taught

students inviting them to comment on their experience in a range of areas relevant primarily to their academic experience including; supervision, resources, research community, research skills and professional development.

The KDA will consider the results through each of its major postgraduate and University level committees, informing the improvement of the academic and wider research experience.



Follow this [link](#) for more information.

Complaints and Appeals

If you are unhappy with any aspect of your experience at Keele, you can submit a complaint to the University.

Every effort should be made to resolve your issue on an informal basis in the first instance, without recourse to a formal procedure and you should contact your supervisory team (or programme lead regarding taught modules) to discuss the matter.

If the problem persists, the complaint should be addressed to the local Early Resolution Officer for investigation. See [here](#).

Your School PGR Lead and PGR Director can also support you, should you prefer to discuss the matter with an individual outside of your supervisory team. Alternatively, please contact KDA@keele.ac.uk.

If you are unable to resolve your complaint informally through the above methods, you can submit a formal complaint to the University. More information is available [here](#).

Report and Support

The purpose of Report + Support at Keele University is to offer all who make a report a safe, accessible, and confidential way to report incidents and seek assistance. Our reporting tool will enable us to capture hate incidents which includes all forms of harassment, racism, homophobia, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct taking place in-person or online, on or off campus. Those who make a report will receive support. The platform is also an appropriate place for the reporting of other associated wellbeing concerns. Please find further information [here](#).

Help & Support

Student Experience and Support Officer (SESO)

All students including PGRs can access advice, guidance, and one to one support from their [Student Experience and Support](#) team, based within their academic School or Faculty.

If you need to talk to someone, whether it's about your studies or life outside of them, we have Student Experience and Support Officers (SESOs) based within every School and a PGR specialist SESO within each Faculty.

These individuals are part of the Student Services team and work closely with International Support, Counselling and Mental Health, DSI, and Chaplaincy to ensure all students can easily access the support they need.

You can [book a virtual appointment](#) to speak to the SESOs in your School or Faculty, or if you'd prefer to contact them via another method, just [get in touch with Student Services](#) as usual.

Disability Support and Inclusion (DSI)

The Student Learning team provide support for any academic-related difficulties you may be experiencing. They will help you explore a wealth of online materials that can improve everything from note-taking skills to presentation skills, and much more.

If you access this support but continue to have difficulties, you might suspect that you have a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) such as dyslexia and may wish to be screened. If you would like to arrange for a screening appointment the team can support this process. Contact them on support.dsi@keele.ac.uk

Each School/Department also has support workers who will act as the main link between DSI services and your programme of study. More information can be found [here](#).

Keele Mentors Scheme

The team in the Student Services Centre also co-ordinate the Keele Mentors Scheme, which is open to all new students including PGRs. You can sign up online using this [link](#).

Keele Connect

This is a new online platform that brings together our global network of 100,000 alumni with each other and with current Keele students.

Keele Connect offers a chance for students including PGRs and fellow alumni to connect with their peers and to make a head start or advance your career by connecting with thousands of Keele graduates for advice, support and networking.

Through Keele Connect, you can search an online directory of global alumni professionals and make e-networking connections to:

- benefit from informal mentoring & career insights
- ask for practical advice on your job search worldwide including CV guidance
- gain an insight into various industry or career areas
- develop and improve your employability and networking skills

(Note: connections are all made digitally and not through face-to-face meetings.)

Find out more [here](#).

Out of Hours Support

If you are looking for mental health support in an emergency, the out of hours team are based in Student Services and work alongside security 6pm-6am term time. They can be contacted on 01782 733004.

Alternatively, the Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline is available for anyone who is feeling concerned, worried, stressed or low, or if you are worried about someone you know. This is open: 19:00-2:00 weekdays, 14:00-2:00 weekends and can be contacted via telephone on 0808 800 2234 or texted on 07860 022821.

Find out more [here](#).

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

We are committed to implementing a whole university approach to improving the health and wellbeing of our students and staff and have recently launched our Health and Wellbeing Strategy - [find out more](#).

Keele University has been a part of the Healthy Universities Network since 2016. We have a Healthy University Group (HUG). The members are key stakeholders from across diverse departments across the University. The HUG is responsible for the development and implementation of a strategic plan, and to assess the impact of any initiatives and interventions put into place.

Welfare Support Team

You can get in touch with the support team in the same way as you contact all other Student Services.

Throughout the year, the team can also provide you with information and advice about a broad range of topics, such as:

- Accessing support specific to your circumstances. We are proud of our diverse student community and have lots of support options in place for student groups
- Exploring the academic options available to you
- Taking time away from your studies, either temporarily (known as a 'leave of absence') or permanently

For more information please follow this [link](#).

Physical Health

[Get Active](#)

Helping you to keep active while being at home. Whether you're after a workout to do in your living room, or wanting to take on a challenge, there's something for everyone.

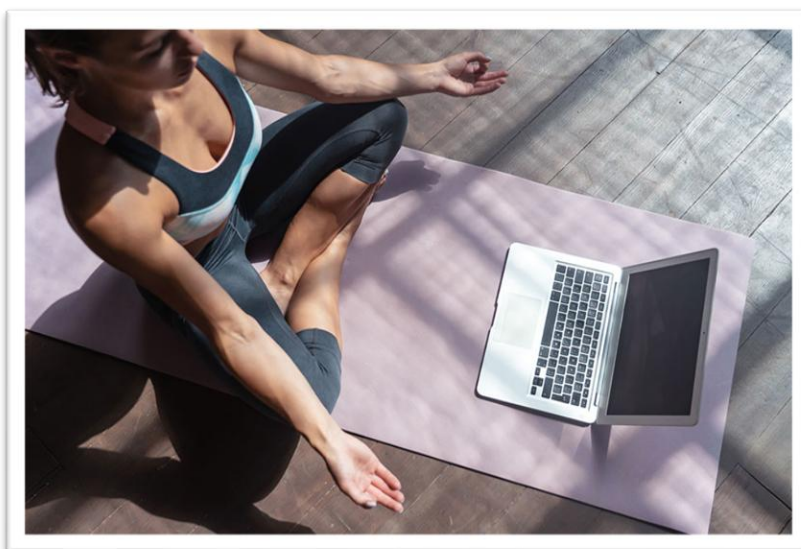
[Wellbeing Map](#)

Helping you to keep active, take time out, eat well, connect and be supported during your time at Keele.

[Nutrition and exercise](#)

Includes top tips, sports at Keele, cooking inspiration and much more!

More resources for taking care of your physical health are available [here](#).



Advice and Support at Keele (ASK)



ASK delivers independent advice on a whole range of issues, including academic, health, family, wellbeing, accommodation, finance, legal and employment.

ASK is part of the Students' Union and is free, confidential, non-judgemental and impartial. Our trained Education and Welfare Advisors are here to help, just ASK. We are open Mon-Fri 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm and are on the ground floor of KeeleSU.

Find out more [here](#).

Email: su.ask@keele.ac.uk or call: 01782 734800

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

As a leading example of an open and integrated community Keele University strives to be a place where learning, living and working is a positive experience for all. Equality and Diversity is a core value underpinning the University's mission:

- Valuing the rights, responsibilities and dignity of individuals through our commitment to equality and diversity;
- Valuing probity and ethical behaviour;
- Equality of educational opportunity.

These values will underpin everything that we do, helping to ensure that equality and diversity is mainstreamed across the University and is evident in our day-to-day practice. Further details of our work on Equality & Diversity can be found [here](#).

The equality objectives support all three aims of the general duty (to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations) and are specific and measurable. The four equality objectives are listed below, and they are further detailed in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy. Work to ensure relevant action is

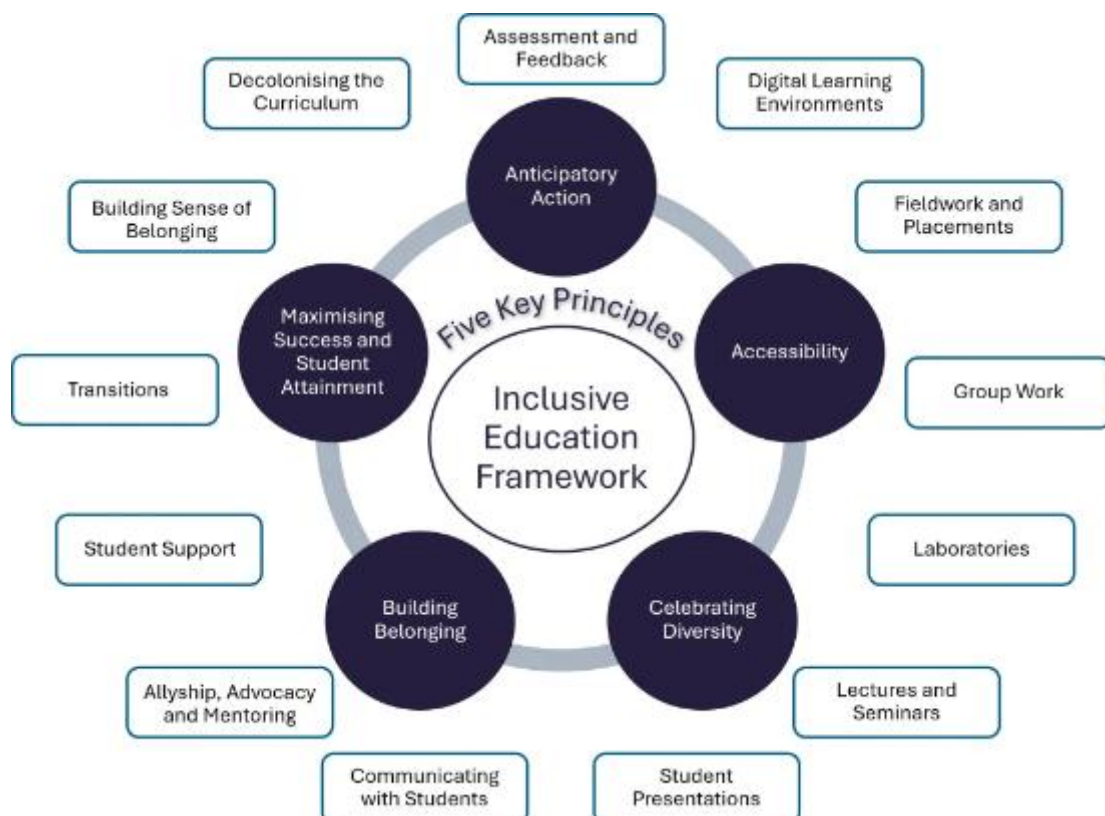
taken and monitored is carried out by our Directorates EDI Action Group together with EDI groups in academic departments. Strategy is driven by the EDI Steering Group with oversight from a committee including members of Council and UEC (the EDI Oversight Group).

Equality Objectives:

- Inclusive leadership and decision making at all levels of the organisation.
- Inclusive student experience/student lifecycle.
- Accessible and inclusive campus.
- Progressive, informed, diverse and supported workforce

Inclusive Education Framework

Keele's [Inclusive Education Framework](#) aims to maximise success by removing barriers to learning and creating a positive environment for all students. You can find out more about our commitment to helping students thrive using this [link](#).



Dignity and Respect Framework

Dignity and respect are at the heart of the core values of the University. Keele is a diverse, inclusive and professional community that respects individuals and enables them to strive for success to contribute positively and sustainably in the local region, wider society and national economy.

The purpose of the [Dignity & Respect Framework](#) is to translate these strategic commitments into everyday working practice at Keele. There is a need to define, in flexible terms, what dignity and respect feels like and looks like. The Framework aims to promote positive relationships by helping to focus and interpret these mutual expectations within a complex and diverse organisation.

#NeverOK

At Keele we are committed to promoting a safe and supportive campus environment for all members of our community. We recognise that incidents of sexual violence, domestic abuse, harassment and discrimination take place and can be experienced by anyone, regardless of their identity or circumstances.

Everyone has the right to live and study in a safe and supportive environment. We're making a commitment to take a stand against violence and discriminatory behaviour. Because it's [#NeverOK](#).

Athena Swan



‘Advance HE’s Athena SWAN Charter was established to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research.’

Since September 2005 the University has been a Member of the [Athena SWAN Charter](#).

Keele University is committed to the principles of the Athena SWAN Charter and values equality and diversity across its workforce.

Keele University sees membership of the Charter, with its bronze, silver and gold SWAN recognition awards, as working towards sustaining equitable working environments enabling universities to identify themselves as employers of choice, not only to their staff, but to students, stakeholders, research councils and industry.

Keele University currently holds an institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award, one departmental Silver award and 12 departmental Bronze awards.

Spectrum.Life

Spectrum.Life is a free 24-hour confidential helpline and app available for all students at Keele offering a comprehensive Student Assistance Programme for any of life's issues or problems. An experienced therapist or advisor will be able to inform and support both you and your immediate family across an array of concerns. Please follow this [link](#) for more information.

Research Development Concordat



Keele University is committed to supporting researchers with their careers.

We first received [the HR Excellence in Research Award](#) in 2013 after submitting

a Researcher Concordat Implementation Action Plan. This award has since been retained after reviews in 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2022.

The UK [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) is an agreement between funders and employers of research staff to improve the employment and support for researchers and research careers in UK higher education.

It sets out clear standards that research staff can expect from the institution that employs them, as well as their responsibilities as researchers.

[Keele's action plans](#), detail the progress which has been made and provide an update on the activities. The plan demonstrates how collectively the activities and work of the various parts of the University provide support for research staff. It also details areas where we are actively making changes to further improve our practices and the experiences of researchers at Keele.

Research and Innovation Support (RaISE)

[RaISE](#) is the professional services team responsible for supporting the development of academic projects involving Keele University and its external partners. The RaISE Team will:

- Help plan the project in the development phase
- Organise project costings and price the project
- Check that the project is deliverable and that there are the right facilities and support available in the University
- Put any contracts in place that are needed for the project
- Provide guidance on regulatory requirements

Final Words

We hope you found this resource useful and we wish you every success in your studies.

We would be very grateful to receive your comments and feedback, be they positive or negative, so that we can correct any errors and ensure that next year's PGRs benefit from your input and experience.

If you have any questions for the KDA, you are welcome to contact us by email or use the following form: [KDA Questions, Feedback and Ideas – Fill out form](#)

Disclaimer

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this Handbook at the time of distribution (September 2026 version 8) and in all other documentation provided by the University is correct at the time of publication. If you find any broken links, please head to the website and use the search function to find the information you need.

The Handbook does not replace the entries in the [Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) or [University Regulations](#), which are authoritative statements. In the case of a contradiction or other discrepancy between the information in this Handbook, the [Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) and the Regulations, the [University Regulations](#) shall be authoritative, unless approval has been given for a variation. We would, however, be grateful to you for drawing any sources of contradictory information to our attention.