

The PhD application process in the UK

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1. The the university as an organisation:

- University / College
- Faculty
- Department or School
- Discipline or Field
- Research areas of individual academics or teams
- Administrative Staff (e.g. Admissions Officer)
- Academic Staff (Professors and Lecturers)

2. The requirements and provision for graduate students:

- What is the minimum and maximum registration period for full-time students?
- What is the usual length of the thesis?
- What is the examination process (usually a viva voce)
- Is there a formal postgraduate training programme (e.g. downloadable documents)?
- Are there any research proposal guidelines?

3. Typical provision for doctoral students:

- Is there a Graduate School within the university? What does it do?
- Is there a Graduate School within the faculty, school or department? What does it do?
- Is there a named person (academic or administrator) in this department responsible for PhD applications?

Example: Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS),
Kingston University

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research degree at Kingston.

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- Find an expert: Kingston University has a wealth of media commentators who are able to speak on a large variety of subjects.
- Search by expert name: Enter name:or view the **full alphabetical list of expert names**
- Search by subject keyword: Enter a subject keyword:or view the **full alphabetical list of subjects**

5. The academic as supervisor:

- What is the academic's areas of expertise?
- What do they do (research, teaching, course design, public organisations, memberships)?
- What are their scholarly outputs (papers, conferences and networks, publications)?
- Doctoral students? Doctoral completions?

6. The introductory email:

Put your 1st + FAMILY NAME + PhD ENQUIRY in the Subject Bar

Dear Professor [Family name] OR

Dear Dr. [Family name] OR

Dear Mrs./Mr. [Family name]

My name is [1st name, Family name] and I am a recent Masters graduate from...

University in... (town), Algeria. I wish to conduct a PhD study in the area of... with a particular interest in...

I am in receipt of a full scholarship from the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, having successfully completed a national scholarly examination.

Please consider my proposal [and application form (?)], attached above, as I would very much like to study at your university.

Yours sincerely, [1st name then Family name].

7. The conversation - response to emails:

What is the supervisor [or administrator] asking you?

What else do they need to know?

Which part of the proposal, application or enrolment process is it for?

Aim to give clear answers and to provide more detail, as you develop the relationship with the university.

8. The Curriculum Vitae:

CVs are not always required as part of the application process BUT developing a CV will help you to keep track of your life history and academic achievements, so that these can be easily identified when someone asks you about them.

Find a CV format you like, begin to build it up. Revise it regularly. Have it ready when you need it, for example to introduce yourself and initiate a conversation about your interests.

9. The interview:

Remember that this is likely to be quite informal in character, so try not to be too nervous (or too relaxed!).

Aim to speak confidently and clearly about yourself and your research interests.

Try to respond directly to questions. Ask for clarification if you do not understand.

Consider the process as a dialogue not a test. Consider feedback (in the interview, on the proposal, on your application form) as helpful advice that is in your best interest.

10. Be your own administrator:

Keep copies of your

- email correspondence
- application forms
- proposal(s), including all drafts,

in several locations, e.g memory stick / computer file / drop box / email folder.

Develop a profile of who you are, what you have done and your 'next steps' or goals.

Update it regularly.

Good Luck!

Useful web information:

- www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/
- <http://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/why-choose-a-research-degree/>
- <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Doctorate-guide.aspx>