



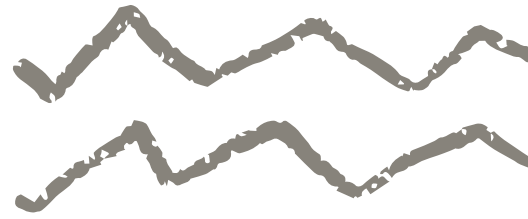
Applying for a Postgraduate Research Degree

Guide for prospective candidates



Nottingham Trent
University

Doctoral School



Your NTU application

If you're applying to undertake doctoral study with us at NTU, your application will be processed via SM Apply. You can find the link to our application portal on our Research Degrees page:

<https://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/research-degrees-at-ntu/how-to-apply>

Applying to a specific studentship?

The webpage for your chosen Studentship will include the link to the specific application portal.



To begin your application, you will need to sign up for SM Apply. Make sure to register with an email address that you use regularly, so that you receive any updates and communications over the course of your application.

SM Apply makes the process simple, splitting the form into easy to navigate sections and allowing you to save your application whilst it's in progress.

Entering your details

To begin your application, you will need to enter your personal details and education history to ensure that you are eligible to apply for a doctoral place at NTU and for your application to be properly processed. It's important that you enter your details correctly so that we can contact you once you've completed your application, and begin your enrolment at NTU if you're successful.

As part of the application, you'll be asked to provide your education history: this includes any relevant qualifications including undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. You'll be asked to upload your degree certificates or transcripts (the actual (or provisional) grade, Grade Point Average (GPA), or mark percentage must be included on these documents) so that we can confirm your educational background is relevant for the degree you're applying for. We also need to check that you're eligible to study at NTU under the University's [English Language Requirements](#). You must meet the standard qualifications entry criteria for PhD study at Nottingham Trent University which can be found in paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 of the Quality Handbook [Section 11- Research Degrees](#). If English is your first language, select 'Yes' on the form. If not, simply fill in the form with details of your English Language qualification(s) and upload the relevant documentation.

If you're applying to one of the four standard intake periods, you will need to state what type of doctoral degree you're applying for and your chosen mode of study. If you're applying for a funded Studentship place, you will may also be asked to fill out an additional eligibility check. This is to make sure that you meet the requirements for the funding, so that you can submit your application without issue.



Once you have entered your personal details (remember to save each section!), it's time to move onto the most important part of the application: your research project proposal.

The proposal should be 1500 words (not including references and appendices), which means that you need to be direct and concise. Make sure that your proposal clearly outlines a research question - a thesis statement, ultimately - and the approach you intend to take. Identify how your project will be original and how it will make a meaningful contribution to your academic field. Your proposal should mention any other major works on the subject, and how your project would contribute, challenge, or explore new avenues. The panel reviewing your application need to see why your project is unique, and how it would further both the research community at NTU and the academic field at large. It's advisable to have contacted your potential supervisors prior to submitting your application, and they can also offer guidance on your proposal.

If you're applying for a Studentship or other form of funded doctoral degree, then you may be applying to an already outlined research project. If so, make sure you clearly state which project you're applying for! Rather than a project proposal, you should write a statement of suitability outlining why you would be the ideal candidate for your chosen project. Think about the outline and research aims for the project and how you would approach them, as well as showing your understanding of the field and how the project will contribute to or challenge existing research.

Personal Statement

In addition to your proposal, you'll also need to provide a 500 word personal statement. This should demonstrate your strengths as a potential doctoral candidate: detail your experience, why you are interested in the field, and your motivation to undertake doctoral research. Your personal statement should also outline your academic strengths and any relevant professional skills, and how these will help you to produce a high quality research project within the timeframe of the degree.



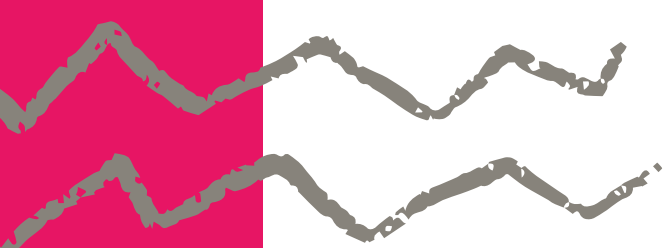
To support your application, you need to provide two referees who can offer statements to testify to your capabilities and suitability for a research degree. You can request these references directly through SM Apply: fill in the name and contact details for each referee when you reach the section of the application, and include a short message to let them know the details of your application. References are an important part of your application, so they should be professionals who know you well: these could be tutors who have taught you during your undergraduate or Master's degree (but not your proposed supervisor). If you haven't been in education for a period of time, you may choose to select a referee who is, for example, an employer or a partner in the creative industries. They will then be able to submit their reference for you directly to your application on SM Apply.

Make sure that you have contacted your referees prior to your application, to explain to them the project you are proposing or applying for and to check that they are able to provide you with a reference.

Additional details

Once you have completed this main section of the application, you will need to fill in the Equal Opportunities form (this information is required but will not be used as criteria to assess your application), upload any additional documents needed to support your application, and sign the applicant declaration.

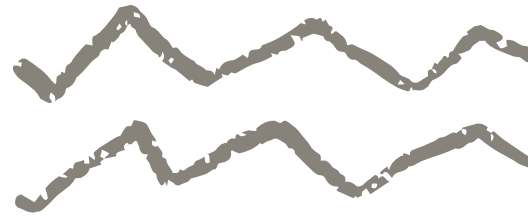
If you have questions about any of the sections contained within the application or are unsure about the information that you need to provide, you can contact the NTU Doctoral School for assistance: doctoralschool@ntu.ac.uk.





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Your application is complete!

Once you've completed all the necessary sections and requested your references, it's time to submit your application. Make sure that you've double checked all the details, and have proof read your proposal and personal statement. Once you're happy that everything is correct, it's time to hit submit!

Once submitted, your application will be reviewed by the Doctoral School and the academic panel. You'll be able to keep track of your application and what stage it's at via your SM Apply account. For any questions or queries about your application, contact the Doctoral School:

doctoralschool@ntu.ac.uk