

PGR STUDENT RECRUITMENT GUIDELINES

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

Please note that this document describes a local working practice at the Department of Chemistry, and that University-wide policies will override anything stated in these local guidelines.

To be successful as a research-intensive department, Chemistry needs to recruit the best possible PGR students. This requires a professional and transparent process for the unbiased selection of candidates. The purpose of this document is to provide a framework that also meets the requirements of the University Equal Opportunities Policy and the Equality Act 2010. It is essential that members of staff who are involved in any aspect of PGR recruitment follow the guidelines provided below.

Fundamental Principles

- The Department has a principle of open competition to recruit the best candidate based on merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the position.
- The Department encourages recruitment of PGR students who share a protected characteristic as defined under the Equality Act and will take appropriate steps to encourage applications of students who belong to underrepresented groups.
- The Department encourages recruitment of PGR students with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment and selection process as required.
- The Department will monitor recruitment and selection statistics and adapt its policies to allow improvements to be incorporated.
- A member of staff who has a close personal or familial relationship with a PGR applicant must declare this.

Advertising

To allow recruitment of the most qualified candidates and to ensure equality of opportunity, the Department will normally advertise all funded PGR positions externally such that the search for candidates is open, transparent, and as wide as possible in reach. As a minimum requirement, all funded PGR projects must be advertised on the departmental PGR webpage. All PGR advertisements that are disseminated must include statements aimed at encouraging application of PGR students from underrepresented protected groups, remind of our commitment to Athena SWAN and introduce the research student mentor scheme:

“The Chemistry Department particularly welcomes applications from women. We are committed to flexible working on an individual basis, we welcome and embrace diversity, and are committed to the Athena SWAN principles.”

“The Department is the holder of the Athena SWAN Bronze Award.”

“The Chemistry Department operates a research student mentor programme. One of our current student mentors will be available to answer any of your questions about life and studying in our Department throughout the application stage and during your research degree at Lancaster.”

Academic staff should submit their project descriptions to the administrative office (Jill Greenwood), who will insert this statement and publish the advertisement on the departmental webpage and externally.

Selection Process and Interview Panel

- The selection and interview process should be conducted in line with the University’s Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure that all applicants are given due consideration and that they are treated fairly throughout the entire process. Please read the Unconscious Bias briefing document before the recruitment process commences.
- For all unnamed PGR positions and studentships, all eligible / shortlisted candidates should be interviewed prior to an offer being made.
- It is the recruiting academic’s responsibility to give due consideration to all applications received and to select suitable candidates for interview.
- All potential applicants that contact the academic should be directed to submit an online application and should only be interviewed after the central admissions team has received the application.
- The interview panel should consist of the recruiting member of staff and at least one other academic member of staff. At least one member of the interview panel must be female and at least one male.
- For the purposes of fairness, the interviewers may wish to use an interview question-scoring template, however, this is not compulsory. The interviewers will share the questioning and decision-making between them. After the interview, the interviewers are expected to write a brief report summarising the salient points and outcome, and forward this report to the Teaching Office. The Teaching Office will hold interview documents for a period of 6 months, after which they will be destroyed.
- It is the responsibility of the recruiting academic to inform all interviewed candidates by telephone or written notification of the outcome of the interview. However, the department (ergo the academic) cannot formally accept a studentship application, and the central admissions team will make the formal offer after notification by the academic.

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