

Arts and Humanities PhD Programmes

Postgraduate Application Guide 2020/21

Please visit the Humanities website which contains links to the seven discipline specific websites - <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/humanities> and <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/wsa> for Winchester.

PhD application requirements

A completed online application form and personal statement

All applications are submitted through an online application system, please visit the main University of Southampton website - <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/>

Please choose: - Postgraduate Study/How to Apply/Online application form

You then choose your programme and select the 'Apply online' link. Application forms do not have to be completed in one go, you can save your form and return to it at a later date, you are also able to log back in after submission and track the process.

Your two references in support of your application should be academic and **from your last or current period of study**, these references can be emailed directly to us at fah-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk. The system will send one request to your referees by email once your application is submitted, after that you will need to chase them yourself.

Copies of supporting degree transcripts (listing your subjects taken and grades achieved) and certificates awarded from all universities other than the University of Southampton

If your previous degree is issued from a university other than Southampton then please provide copies (if they are in a language other than English please obtain translations). These can be uploaded with your application or emailed to fah-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk, do not post originals at this stage.

Research Proposal

All applications require a research proposal, this can be uploaded with your application or you can email your proposal to fah-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk. You must send a copy as part of your application even if you also send one to an academic member of staff. We are unable to process your application until the research proposal has been received by the office. Below are guidelines of what we expect from a research proposal.

Sample of Work/Art Portfolio

Disciplines may require samples of work or an art portfolio as part of the application. Work samples should normally comprise an essay of approx. 2500-3000 words, or a longer piece of work with a section marked for particular consideration. The work should be appropriate to the subject area in which you intend to study.

Language requirement

Proof of language is not required for the initial application process. If you receive an offer from us we will advise you of any English language condition, however if you already have a language certificate that is less than 2 years old please upload a copy with your application form, or email to fah-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk

Once you have submitted your application you have 30 days in which to supply any missing documentation, you will receive reminders and a final warning email about this so please ensure you put a current email address on your application form. If you fail to supply the missing documentation then your application is withdrawn and placed in electronic storage. To reactivate please contact us at fah-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk. For the purposes of making a decision electronic copies of documents are sufficient, originals should not be posted at this stage. If you will be applying for any funding for your programme it is advisable to submit your application for a place on the programme ahead of time. Once we make an offer and you have accepted, your place is held for you until the start of the academic year.

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Guidelines for preparing a Research Proposal

Along with your application for a research degree, we expect you to prepare and submit an outline research proposal. This is an important part of your application, because it provides us with information about:

- Your area of interest, your knowledge of the field and possible topic within that area;
- Your understanding of at least some of the existing literature, methodological approaches, theory and/ or current debates relevant to your topic;
- Your understanding of possible research approaches to the problem/ issue you want to study.

The proposal will help our decision making about your ability and preparedness to undertake research. It also enables us to start matching you with a possible supervisor/ supervisory team with appropriate expertise.

There is no rigid format for your research proposal, and we do not expect this to be fully worked out – once accepted for research degree study, you must expect to develop and modify your proposal considerably, with the support and advice of your supervisory team. However we would expect a worthwhile proposal to run up to 1500 words (excluding your bibliography), and to include the following elements:

1. An indicative title
2. An introductory statement which outlines the general topic or area you are interested in, and explain the reasons why you want to undertake research in the field (about 200 words)
3. A short survey which indicates the range of reading you have already done, relevant to your topic, and your reactions to this, including identification of existing 'gaps' where you could expect to make a contribution (about 400 words)
4. A statement of one or more specific questions or issues which you plan to investigate, within the overall area of interest, and which will form the focus of your research (around 200 words)
5. An outline of the data sources, research methods and/or critical approaches which you are considering adopting for your project. Depending on the kind of research envisaged, your work may involve e.g. documentary analysis, empirical fieldwork, theoretical analysis, literary criticism.... Or an interdisciplinary combination (up to 500 words)
6. A concluding comment on how your completed project might be expected to contribute to the further development of the field (about 200 words)
7. A bibliography including full references for the literature referred to in the proposal (not included in word count)

If there is any special training you believe you will need in order to undertake the project it would be helpful also to mention this briefly. Your research training needs will in any case be assessed fully and systematically addressed as part of your programme of study. NB: Details about training needs are not included in the word count.