



School of Law  
Transitional Justice Institute  
Ulster University Law Clinic  
Legal Innovation Centre

PhD Researcher Subject  
*Handbook (Last updated July 2022)*

[ulster.ac.uk](https://www.ulster.ac.uk)

# **PhD Researcher Handbook**

## **Law**

School of Law

Transitional Justice Institute

Ulster University Law Clinic

Legal Innovation Centre

Late Updated 22 June 2022

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## Next Generation of Scholars

The University Research Strategy emphasises the measures that have been put in place to support doctoral students and states the university's intention to grow its research student base.

Doctoral researchers are central to our research culture:

- We integrate PhD researchers in our activities to the fullest extent possible.
- PhD researchers are encouraged to participate in the work of the staff including research projects, conferences, hosting visitors.
- Staff support PhD researchers when they decide to organise events, seek funding, arrange fieldwork.
- PhD researchers have been successful in securing external funding and scholarships for events (eg from FWSA), for fieldwork (SLSA), and for attending workshops and conferences (British Academy event in Colombia).

This handbook covers local information relevant to members of the law research unit of assessment. Much more material is also available on University websites and especially the [Doctoral College](#), [PhD Manager](#) and [Student Wellbeing](#).

## Key Contacts

Research Director (Law)	Rory O’Connell	21D60 <a href="mailto:r.oconnell@ulster.ac.uk">r.oconnell@ulster.ac.uk</a> 903 66693
PhD Coordinators (Postgrad Tutors)	Cath Collins and Thomas Hansen	<a href="mailto:c.collins@ulster.ac.uk">c.collins@ulster.ac.uk</a> and <a href="mailto:t.hansen@ulster.ac.uk">t.hansen@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Head of School (Law)	Esther McGuinness	<a href="mailto:ep.mcguinness@ulster.ac.uk">ep.mcguinness@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Associate Head of School (Law)	Jason Elliott	<a href="mailto:Jd.elliott@ulster.ac.uk">Jd.elliott@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Head of School (Applied Social and Policy Sciences)	Jennifer Hamilton	<a href="mailto:Ja.hamilton@ulster.ac.uk">Ja.hamilton@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Associate Head of School (Applied Social and Policy Sciences)	Susannah McCall	<a href="mailto:s.mccall@ulster.ac.uk">s.mccall@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Research Director (Applied Social and Policy Sciences)	Karl O’Connor	<a href="mailto:K.oconnor@ulster.ac.uk">K.oconnor@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Associate Dean for Research and Impact (Arts Humanities and Social Sciences)	Justin Magee	<a href="mailto:jdm.magee@ulster.ac.uk">jdm.magee@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Law Ethics Filter Committee Chair	Charles O’Sullivan (chair).	<a href="mailto:c.osullivan@ulster.ac.uk">c.osullivan@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Law Ethics Filter Committee	Charles O’Sullivan, Siobhán Wills, Anne Smith, Mark Simpson, Thomas Hansen, Kris Brown	

### Administrative Support:

Faculty Postgraduate Secretary	Carol Boyd	<a href="mailto:cm.boyd@ulster.ac.uk">cm.boyd@ulster.ac.uk</a>
Academic Excellence Executive Assistant	Sadie Magee	<a href="mailto:s.magee@ulster.ac.uk">s.magee@ulster.ac.uk</a>
School of Law School Officer	Rhonda Black	<a href="mailto:Ra.black@ulster.ac.uk">Ra.black@ulster.ac.uk</a>

Support to ADRI	Deborah McKinney	d.mckinney@ulster.ac.uk
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### **Whom to contact?**

Supervisors for specific project related advice, researcher development programme advice, general career advice, to discuss leaves of absence, etc

PhD coordinators to discuss general academic support including possible ad hoc training events.

Research Director for the overall management of the research environment and for more complex queries, finance related queries and sign-off on forms.

Head of School or Associate Head of School if interested in teaching opportunities (Law, or Applied Social and Policy Sciences).

Law Ethics Filter Committee Chair for queries on the ethical approval process

Doctoral College website <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/doctoralcollege/home>

PhD Manager <https://phdmanager.ulster.ac.uk/do/ulster-authentication/login>

## Health and Safety

Occupational health - procedures available concerning health, well-being and stress at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/healthandsafety/health-and-safety-policy-and-procedures>

The Occupational Health people are at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/healthandsafety/occupational-health>

Equality and diversity and dignity at work policies and other helpful information are at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/about/governance/equality-diversity>

Student wellbeing offer a wide range of support options including financial advice, counselling, advice on reasonable adjustments, etc. Student support also operate a hardship fund which PhD researchers can access in exceptional circumstances <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/wellbeing/home>

Law School fund. The Law School has a small fund to help students including PhD researchers. Dr Esther McGuinness manages this. Details are at: <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/alumniandsupporters/support/student-fund/law-school-student-fund>

Inspire: Confidential support with relationship, addiction, financial, legal, medical and other matters. Advice and counselling available 24-hour free phone number 0800 028 5510 or by emailing [ulsterstudents@inspirewellbeing.org](mailto:ulsterstudents@inspirewellbeing.org)

Chaplaincy <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/studentssupport/services/chaplaincy>

PhD researchers should be aware that they can raise issues with their supervisors, PhD coordinators, Research Director, Head of School or the Doctoral College. Staff members will signpost researchers to appropriate help if not in a position to provide any themselves.

Staff are reminded that there are training modules on several of these issues (health and safety, equality and diversity, disability awareness, mental health first aid, etc as well as research integrity and doctoral supervision).

### **SAFEZONE**

Ulster University has teamed up with technology firm CriticalArc to provide SafeZone, a free new app for students and staff that connects you to the University security team if you ever need urgent help, first aid or if you have an emergency while on campus.

<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/safezone>



## Job Description: PhD Coordinators (Postgrad tutors)

As explored below, we have an active PhD community. The PhD Coordinators for doctoral studies are Cath Collins and Thomas Hansen. The duties of this role include:

1. To respond to general queries regarding PhD opportunities and supervision
2. To keep an up-to-date list of the current PhD researchers
3. To liaise with the Schools
4. To liaise with the Doctoral College as the need arises
5. To organize a meeting of all PhD researchers once every semester
6. To operate, with the Research Director, the admissions procedure for any PhD places and funding
7. To track the progress of PhD researchers and to liaise with individual students and supervisors as appropriate
8. To keep in regular communication with the PhD researchers, as regards their needs and progress, and University policies
9. To be involved in PhD admissions process as appropriate
10. To be involved with other University processes which affect PhD researchers as the need arises (e.g. ethics committees)
11. To undertake additional staff relating to PhD provision as the need arises
12. To undertake such further PhD coordination tasks as arise

## Job Description: Research Director

**Main Purpose:** To provide strategic leadership to ensure a research performance of the highest quality in REF.

### **Main Responsibilities:**

The Research Director will:

1. Work with the Dean of Postgraduate Research and Director of the Ulster Doctoral College in the regular monitoring and management of the progress of research students within the relevant UOA and ensuring satisfactory completion rates;
2. Work with the Heads of the Doctoral Colleges to develop a vibrant cross-disciplinary research student culture through the delivery of a wide range of events and activities for the benefit of research students and designed to foster interdisciplinary and social linkages;
3. Work with the Heads of the Doctoral Colleges to contribute to the development of a first-class researcher development programme including both generic and subject-specific training;
4. Work with the Heads of the Doctoral Colleges to ensure that all research students have full and timely opportunities to develop professionally and that supervisors are equipped to work for the benefit of the student;
5. Work with the Heads of the Doctoral Colleges to help develop procedures to improve the student experience for PhD researchers. As part of this the post-holder will help to create and manage a process for encouraging and monitoring progress of each student.

## Supervision Arrangements

Each researcher is supervised by a panel of two (or sometimes more) staff members. One of these is designated as 'Chair' and has overall responsibility for effective and adequate supervision.

The general practice in the unit is 'co-supervision', ie all supervisors play a significant role in the supervision, albeit the exact nature of this may vary.

If a supervisor is on research leave, the normal expectation is that the supervisor remains on the supervision panel as an active supervisor, though there may be a degree of flexibility about attending all meetings.

If a supervisor is on leave for some other reason, eg health or caring responsibilities, for an extended period of time, then the University will need to consider appointing a replacement supervisor. The supervisor will not carry out normal supervision duties during such a period of leave. Before the leave begins the supervisors should discuss the supervision needs with the PhD researcher and then discuss with the Research Director what needs to be put in place during the leave period.

We do not have a formal requirement as to the frequency of formal supervision meetings, though we would expect these to be more frequent in first year given the PhD researcher is new to the programme and has two important milestones in terms of review meetings.

Following each formal supervision meeting the PhD researcher should write up a note of the meeting and record it on PhD Manager.

## Office Space

There is a shared space in the Belfast BC block, BC-06-225.

The Research Director makes a decision on allocation of desk space every year in late Summer.

Desks in the PhD space will be shared, two researchers to a desk.

From time to time PhD researchers may request a desk in Magee and if so the Research Director will endeavour to facilitate that request.

## Library

PhD researchers may want to suggest specific books that the Library should purchase if these are helpful generally for research and teaching. Researchers should ask their supervisors to contact the Librarian [Library-AHSS@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:Library-AHSS@ulster.ac.uk) if they wish to do this.

Under the Sconul Access scheme, PhD researchers can also request access to QUB Library and other libraries in the UK and Ireland:

<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/library/services/borrowing-and-access-schemes/sconul-access-scheme>

## Assessments

There are **three internal assessments**, prior to the PhD viva, during the PhD process: Initial assessment, confirmation assessment and final assessment. These are progress seminars and are important opportunities for constructive feedback and engagement.

For Viva details please see Doctoral College website.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with information on the Doctoral College website: <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/doctoralcollege/handbooks-and-policies/research-studies-handbook>

The panel is empowered to make recommendations concerning the direction of the work and/or re-assessment after an agreed period.

The process is managed through the PhD Manager and supported by the Faculty Postgraduate Secretary.

The panel will consist of two staff members who are not on the supervision panel. The Chair of the panel is responsible for chairing the meeting and writing up a report on the PhD Manager.

### **Initial Assessment (Progress Seminar 1 or initial assessment)**

This is held approximately three/four months post-registration (normally January for full-time researchers) and must be organised in close co-operation with the researcher's supervisor(s). It is concerned with a precise description of the proposed programme of work, which has been submitted in written and electronic formats (**1 page abstract plus maximum of four A4 pages**) at least two weeks in advance of the seminar date for circulation to panel members. **The material must be submitted via the PhD Manager and include a Turnitin Report.**

Both the written report and the oral presentation (illustrated by Powerpoint or similar) must include information on the following:

- the overall aim of the investigation;
- the project background;
- the methods to be employed and associated ethical issues ;
- the objectives to be achieved within the first year of studies.
- research training activity completed during the assessment period
- work completed to date including amount of written work submitted
- draft chapter outline and
- draft timeline.

Selected staff are designated to form the seminar panel, which provides a report on

the research plans; this panel may recommend changes to the programme of work and re-consideration of the proposals after an agreed period of time. The total length of this seminar is 50-60 minutes: a presentation of 15 minutes followed by questions from the panel; after questions the panel will deliberate in the absence of the researcher and then (time permitting) invite the researcher back. A formal decision, with feedback, will be communicated to the researcher in writing through the PhD Manager.

## **Confirmation Assessment**

This is held approximately 10- 12 months post-registration (for full-time researchers) or 15 months post-registration (for part-time researchers) and normally forms the basis for Ph.D. confirmation. So if you register in September as a full-time researcher you can expect to have the confirmation assessment in June.

A written report on progress (**1 page abstract plus a maximum of six A4 pages, excluding diagrams and figures where appropriate**) is to be submitted to the **PhD Manager** at least two weeks in advance of the seminar date, together with an abstract (no more than one A4 page) and Turnitin report. Both the written report and the oral presentation (again, illustrated by Powerpoint or similar) must include information on the following:

- the overall aim of the investigation
- the project background
- the methods employed and associated ethical issues
- data obtained to date
- amount of written work submitted since last seminar
- proposed programme for future Ph.D. work (or, where appropriate proposed programme to complete practical and written work within the following 12-month period to submit for M.Phil.)
- research training activity completed during the assessment period
- draft chapter outline and
- draft timeline

This seminar is given to a designated panel of experienced, research active academic staff who are required to provide a written report on researchers' progress, and make recommendation concerning progress to date and suitability for Ph.D. confirmation (or, where appropriate, continuation to complete an M.Phil.).

The total length of this seminar is 60 minutes: a 20-minute presentation, followed by questions from the panel; after questions the panel will deliberate in the absence of the researcher and then (time permitting) invite the researcher back. A formal decision, with feedback, will be communicated to the researcher in writing through the PhD Manager.

## Final Assessment

(NB This is not the PhD VIVA – for details on the Viva see the [Doctoral College website](#)).

This is given approximately 24 months post-registration (for full-time Ph.D. researchers) or 60 months (part-time Ph.D researchers) or 18 months (full-time MPhil researchers) or 36 months (part-time MPhil researchers) post-registration. For a full-time researcher this usually means an assessment in September or October at the start of their third year.

A written report on progress (**1 page abstract plus a maximum of six A4 pages, excluding diagrams and figures where appropriate**) is to be submitted to the **Faculty postgraduate secretary at least two weeks in advance of the seminar date**. Both the written report and the oral presentation (again, illustrated by Powerpoint or similar) must include information on the following:

- the overall aim of the investigation
- the project background
- the methods employed and associated ethical issues
- data obtained to date
- amount of written work submitted since last seminar
- proposed programme for future Ph.D. work; (or, where appropriate proposed programme to complete practical and written work within the following 12-month period to submit for M.Phil)
- research training activity completed during the assessment period
- draft chapter outline and
- draft timeline

This should include consideration of research training activity and written work submitted since the last seminar. The PhD Manager does not have the facility to upload this documentation for the Final Assessment so please email the Faculty Postgraduate Secretary and include a Turnitin report.

If the chair of the panel and your supervisors agree, **you may submit a draft chapter or journal article based on your PhD research as your written submission**. Designated experienced academic staff are present to review progress, offer advice and highlight any problems which may hinder completion with the relevant period.

The total length of this seminar is 60 minutes. This seminar comprises a 20-minute presentation followed by questions from the panel; after questions the panel will deliberate in the absence of the researcher and then (time permitting) invite the researcher back. A formal decision, with feedback, will be communicated to the researcher in writing through the PhD Manager.

## **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

Staff are advised to pay particular attention to the following in relation to these assessments and written reports.

### **Initial Assessment**

Is the project clearly defined?

Are the objectives to be achieved within the first 12-month period realistic and achievable within available resources (e.g. consumable or financial support, access, etc)?

Have ethical issues been appropriately addressed ?

Will the project provide adequate research training for the researcher to at least M.Phil. standard?

Is the programme of work likely to provide a sufficient foundation for (potential) Ph.D. study?

Does the researcher show evidence of at least a basic understanding of the problem, the limitations of the techniques to be employed and the significance of the work within the broader context?

Are the proposed supervisor/advisor arrangements satisfactory?

Has the researcher submitted an appropriate quantity of written work for comment and was the quality of this work adequate?

Has the researcher completed the appropriate research training activities?

### **Confirmation Assessment**

Have the objectives of the first 12-month period of work been achieved?

Is the proposed programme of work a logical extension of the completed studies?

Are the defined objectives likely to be achieved with the available resources?

Have ethical issues been appropriately addressed , or do they require review in the light of changes to the research plan since the first progress seminar?

Is the work likely to provide adequate research training to doctorate (or masters, where appropriate) level for the researcher?

Is the work sufficiently well-defined potentially to provide publishable data within a 12-18 month period?

Can the practical studies be completed within an 18-month period (or 6 months for M.Phil.)?

Does the researcher show evidence of ability critically to evaluate the work and place it within the context of related studies?

Is (are) the supervisor(s) satisfied with the researcher's progress to date, including

an assessment of the amount and quality of written work submitted since the last progress seminar?

Is the researcher satisfied with the current supervisory arrangements?

Has the researcher completed the appropriate research training activities?

### **Final Assessment**

Has the work made, or is it likely in the near future to make, a measurable and worthwhile contribution to the field of study?

Is the practical component of the work completed, or almost completed?

Do ethical issues require review in the light of changes to the research plan since the second progress seminar?

Has an outline of the thesis been finalised?

Has the work been (or will it be in the near future) subject to external review through conference presentation or full papers?

Are the researcher and supervisor(s) satisfied that the written thesis will be submitted on time in the light of the amount and quality of written work submitted to date? If not, are the assessors convinced that the thesis will be submitted within 4 years of enrolment and would they support an extension on this basis?

Has the researcher completed the appropriate research training activities?

Written reports will be required from panels at each of these seminars, and problems in relation to any of the above should be detailed and recommendations for action included: this may include a recommendation for re-assessment within a specified time period. Reports must be submitted by the Chair of the panel to the Faculty postgraduate secretary within one week of the seminar date.

N.B. Panels should ensure that any extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness etc.) which may have hindered a researcher's progress, have been recorded and brought to the attention of the Research Director and the University's Doctoral College. Recommendations regarding action in respect of this should be included in written reports.



## **Role of Chair**

### **Chairing a progress seminar panel**

In advance of the progress seminar each panel member will be sent a package containing a schedule (with details of venue, timetable, panel composition, researchers presenting, and supervisors as well as whether they are presenting seminar 1, 2 or 3) and also the written submissions made by each researcher.

All panel members including the Chair should read the written submissions in advance of the seminar.

On the day the Chair should arrive a few minutes early, make any necessary introductions and check that the room is in order (the Faculty postgraduate secretary makes all room bookings, arranges teleconferencing/IT facilities etc).

Researchers should be greeted on arrival and introductions made. Supervisors are always invited to progress seminars but do not have to attend. The Chair should explain the format of the seminar, and should note in particular the time allowed for the presentation, alerting the researcher when this is almost up and asking them to finish if they overrun by more than a few minutes. Researchers presenting their first seminar have 15 minutes to present and 15 minutes for questions from the panel. Those presenting 2nd and 3rd seminars have about 20 minutes, with 15 minutes for questions from the panel.

When the researcher has presented the Chair should lead the questioning, then invite colleagues to ask questions. Although it is not usual for supervisors to question their own researchers extensively, it is allowable for them to ask some questions. Again the Chair should monitor the timing. When the questions have been completed the researcher should be asked to leave so that the panel can discuss the presentation and begin to complete the necessary paperwork. The panel may call the researcher back for informal feedback if time allows but it should be stressed that they will receive written comments from in due course.

In general the Chair is there to ensure that the seminar is conducted in line with the timetable and in an appropriate manner.



## Financial and Other Practical Details

Researchers with a DfE or VCRS award can access research travel and support monies (RTSG). The cost centre for this is 75468U.

From time to time, the Research Director may also support PhD researcher needs. This depends on the state of the budget, though individual researchers can always make a case for support. The cost centre for this is 75403Q.

### *Prior Approval*

To arrange travel or other expense, PhD researchers will usually need to use a Prior Approval Form.

Prior Approval Forms are at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/finance/staff/forms>

The forms should go to Academic Excellence Executive Assistant (Sadie Magee) or Faculty Postgraduate Secretary (Carol Boyd) (depending on relevant cost centre) and will need to be signed by the budget-holder, usually the Research Director.

Once the Prior Approval is approved, this will generate a prior approval (PA) number and a nominal code.

The cost centre, PA number and nominal code can be used to book travel through Key Travel, the University's travel agent. Key Travel can be contacted most easily via email on [ulster@keytravel.com](mailto:ulster@keytravel.com).

WHEN TRAVELLING ON UNIVERSITY BUSINESS IT IS IMPORTANT TO SECURE A PRIOR APPROVAL AS THIS TRIGGERS THE UNIVERISTY'S INSURANCE POLICY.

### **PhD external grants**

PhD researchers sometimes secure external grants eg SLSA fieldwork grants or conference grants.

To access these funds it will be necessary for the researcher's supervisor to set up a cost centre.

The supervisor and researcher should fill out an external grant proposal form on Worktribe, get this signed by the relevant Research Director and Head of School. It then goes to Research and Impact who will set up a cost centre.

### **Law School Student Fund**

The Law School has a student fund which may be able to assist with specific requests from PhD researchers. Please contact the Head of School (Law) for details

## Ethics Committee

We have an Ethics Filter Committee and consider ethical applications from staff, PhD researchers and those taught postgraduate or undergraduate students.

The University's policies in this area are at:

<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/internal/research/governance-and-ethics>

The forms required are at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/internal/research/governance-and-ethics/ethics> (click on the relevant category)

Research involving human participants are divided into different categories, A through to F. The details of these are found at

<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/internal/research/governance-and-ethics/ethics>

Research in Category A can be approved by the Ethics Filter Committee. Research in Category B needs to go to the Filter Committee and the University Ethics Committee. Most research in our unit either does not involve human subjects or fits into Category A or B.

Note that before submitting to the Filter Committee, researchers need to secure a peer review of proposed research using form RG2; this peer review should be carried out by a staff member not part of the research team. The Filter Committee can expedite this and conduct the peer review itself if the Chair approves.

The Committee considers applications throughout the year, so please do contact the Chair to discuss a submission. Bear in mind also that the Filter Committee may need to refer some applications also to the University Ethics Committee (UREC).

UREC meets about 6 times a year to consider applications. Typically they interview researchers about their proposals; supervisors can attend these interviews with their supervisees. The deadlines are available at the website above.

### **ETHICS FORMS**

For ethical approval there are several different documents you will need to prepare. At a minimum they usually include:

- The RG1A form (see above)
- A research protocol. The research protocol needs to be about 3-5 pages and include a short background, the aims / objectives of the research, details on the methodology (including case selection, methods and data analysis) and a short bibliography.

- An interview schedule detailing questions; these may be indicative and it may be that you need different sets of questions if you are interviewing different types of participant.
- A participant information sheet. This explains the research in terms a non-specialist can understand, and outlines the participant's role in the research, and who is doing the research.
- A consent form.

The peer reviewer will need to complete an RG2 form before the ethics application can go to the Filter Committee.

## Local training

Every semester the Research Director, PhD Coordinators and PhD researchers meet to discuss unit level training needs and general PhD activities. This is in addition to more regular informal discussions, and participation in any other meetings.

This process is demand-led based on what PhD researchers articulate as their needs. Typical events include

- December: Mock presentations for the initial assessment review in January
- Spring: a seminar or workshop on research methods and / or research ethics
- As requested: feedback sessions on ethics documentation
- Mock viva in preparation for the final viva (ask your supervisors to arrange this)

We have also supported the organisation of PhD-led events such as PhD conferences or workshops. PhD researchers have organised a number of conferences, frequently working with colleagues in ASPS or in other universities eg TCD.

We have supported in-person writing retreat pre-pandemic and online writing retreats during the pandemic.

PhD researchers frequently audit relevant masters level classes. Discuss the desirability with the research supervisors and contact the relevant module coordinator in advance to see if this is possible

## What's the Craic?

Every year, two or three TJI PhD researchers organise the sessions entitled 'What's the Craic?'. Held on a particular day of the week, the informal discussions and talks bring the faculty, researchers, and masters students together to discuss work in progress, reflect on fieldwork, and hear draft conference papers.

Traditionally the format of the sessions is 'brown bag' (bring your own lunch). During 2020-2021 due to the pandemic the series ran online.

The sessions focus not only on particular research topics, but also on sharing useful tips and insights, such as publishing while writing a PhD or strategies on job searching. The sessions are held in-house, the invitation is restricted to the research community of Ulster University to allow for a comfort of sharing the work in progress and personal reflections in collegial and non-judgmental atmosphere.

Read more about the [2020-2021 session](#) and the [2019-2020 session](#).

## Prizes and Grants

### **INTERNAL PRIZES AND FUNDING**

There are funding opportunities in the University listed at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/study/scholarships>

Several of these can be used to secure support for eg field trips. Examples include the Santander Awards and (under the heading of Ulster University Student Fund) the Broadening Horizons Travel Bursary. Many of our researchers have secured these prizes in the past.

The University also has a number of Prizes detailed at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/academicoffice/prizes>

These include the John RE Scott Postgraduate Student of the Year Award.

Our researchers have been successful in securing these prizes in the past: Azadeh Sobout won the John RE Scott Award and David McKeever the inaugural Arts Humanities and Social Sciences AHSS prize, and more recently Michelle Rouse secured the AHSS prize.

### **EXTERNAL RESEARCH FUNDING**

Below is a list of funding programmes for PhD researchers. It contains funding for doctoral studentships, for fieldwork-related expenses and to study abroad.

Doctoral students who are nearing completion might also be interested in some of the funding for early career researchers listed above. Doctoral researchers are also eligible to apply for ESRC knowledge exchange grants as discussed above.

A useful resource for researchers looking for funding inside or outside the UK, and for UK research institutions is the British Council's Euraxess programme, see

<https://www.euraxess.org.uk/>

#### SLSA PhD Fieldwork Grant

Funding is available to students who will have completed their first year of doctoral studies by the time the grant will be taken up. Applications must be made using the PhD Fieldwork Application Package available on the SLSA website

<http://www.slsa.ac.uk/content/view/65/215/>

### Leverhulme Study Abroad Studentships

Study Abroad Studentships support an extended period of advanced study or research at a centre of learning in any overseas country, with the exception of the USA. See

<https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/study-abroad-studentships>

### Marie Curie Initial Training Networks (ITN)

This is something the University would have to apply for, not individual students.

See <http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/>

### Marshall Scholarships

The awards are open to United States citizens under 26 years old who are graduates of US universities, to undertake study in any subject leading to a degree at a UK university. Awards are made on a competitive basis and are for two years in the first instance, renewable for a third year in certain circumstances. The awards cover transatlantic air fares, tuition fees, maintenance, book, thesis and travel allowances. Up to 40 new awards are made each year. They are administered by the Marshall Aid Commemorative Commission. See <http://www.marshallscholarship.org>

### Modern Law Review Scholarships

The Modern Law Review offers scholarships for research students engaged in doctoral research on any subject broadly within the publishing interests of the Review. It therefore invites nominations for scholarships to be submitted by the Head of Department of the University in which the nominated students are currently registered as research students. See

<https://www.modernlawreview.co.uk/about-mlr-scholarships/>

### Peace Research Grant

The International Peace Research Association offers Peace Research Grants.

Details at <https://iprafoundation.org/peace-research-grant-instructions/>

## PHD PRIZES

Completed PhD dissertations can be submitted for prizes in different fields of law. Dissertations may also be considered for prizes in other disciplines such as political science. Possible prizes include

- Basil Chubb Prize for the best PhD thesis (produced in an Irish university) in any field of politics



- European Award for Legal Theory
- European Public Law Organization Thesis Prize
- Francis Deak Prize (awarded to younger author for meritorious scholarship published in The American Journal of International Law)
- Francis Lieber Prize (awarded to an author 35 years or younger for outstanding scholarship in the field of the law of armed conflict)
- Max Van Der Stoel Human Rights Award
- René Cassin Thesis Prize (for dissertations in human rights)

Not specifically for PhDs but the Irish Association of Law Teachers awards the Kevin Boyle Book Prize every two years. The prize will be awarded to a Member of the IALT who has published a book that is deemed to have made a particularly outstanding contribution to legal scholarship. Full details are available on the IALT website here: <http://www.ialt.ie/prizescompetitions/>

Not specifically for PhDs but the SLS offers the Peter Birks Prize for Outstanding Legal Scholarship <https://www.legalscholars.ac.uk/peter-birks-prizes-outstanding-legal-scholarship/>

## Postdocs and Early Career support

AHRC Research Grants Early Career

<https://ahrc.ukri.org/funding/apply-for-funding/current-opportunities/researchgrantsearlycareers/>

The Research Grants Schemes are intended to support well-defined research projects enabling individual researchers to collaborate with, and bring benefits to, other individuals and organisations through the conduct of research. This scheme is not intended to support individual scholarship. The early career route provides grants for projects with a full economic cost (fEC) between £50,000 and £250,000 for a varying duration up to a limit of 60 months.

Association of Commonwealth Universities Early Career Academic Grants

Early Career Academic Grants to staff at ACU member universities to attend relevant conferences or academic meetings in another Commonwealth country. The scheme is aimed at early career academics who have not yet had the opportunity to work, study, or travel outside their own country.

British Academy – Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme

This scheme is designed to enable outstanding early career researchers to strengthen their experience of research and teaching in a university environment, which will develop their curriculum vitae and improve their prospects of obtaining permanent lecturing posts by the end of the Fellowship. Applicants are expected to be at an early stage of their academic career.

<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/british-academy-postdoctoral-fellowships>

ESRC – Future Leaders Scheme

This scheme replaces the Postdoctoral Fellowship and First Grants schemes to provide enhanced opportunities for successful applicants. Awards will be for a maximum of three years with an overall limit of £215,000 (at 100 per cent full Economic Cost). The scheme aims to:

- enable outstanding early career social scientists – in partnership with their host institution – to develop the skills to become future world leaders in their field
- fund excellent social science research projects with high potential impact.

Early career researchers with less than four years postdoctoral experience will be eligible. The call will normally open in June with a first stage deadline of September.

<https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/developing-people-and-skills/future-leaders-fellowships/>

European Research Council Starting Independent Researcher Grants

ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grants (ERC Starting Grants) aim to support up-and-coming research leaders who are about to establish or consolidate a proper research team and to start conducting independent research in Europe. The scheme

targets promising researchers who have the proven potential of becoming independent research leaders, pioneering frontier research in any field of science, engineering and scholarship. It will support the creation of excellent new research teams and will strengthen others that have been recently created. Candidates can be of any nationality, and must have obtained their PhD (or equivalent degree more than two years but less than twelve years prior to the opening date of the relevant call for proposals.

#### Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowships

<http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/ecf/ecf.cfm>

Early Career Fellowships aim to provide career development opportunities for those who are at a relatively early stage of their academic careers but with a proven record of research. It is anticipated that a Fellowship will lead to a more permanent academic position. Applications are welcomed in any discipline, and approximately 80 Fellowships will be available in 2013. Fellowships can be held at universities or at other institutions of higher education in the UK.

#### Leverhulme Trust Research Leadership Awards

The aim of these awards is to support those who have succeeded in beginning a university career but who are then confronted with the task of building a research team adequately able to tackle an identified but distinctive research problem. The awards provide support for research assistants and research students led by the award holder. Applicants will have held a university post for at least two years. Each institution is limited to one bid only. See <https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/research-leadership-awards>

#### ESRC NINE Postdoctoral fellowship

The call is open to applicants who have completed their PhD at a research organisation that is part of a [DTP or CDT](#) and who have less than twelve (12) months postdoctoral research experience. At the submission deadline, the applicant must either have been awarded a PhD or have submitted their thesis and passed their viva voce with minor corrections, with the expectation that the PhD will be awarded by the fellowship start date.

<https://www.ninedtp.ac.uk/postdoctoral-fellowship-scheme/>

## Research Assistant and research assistance work

The University has a Researchers' Pool for researchers who have recently completed their PhD or submitted their PhD. Researchers in the pool can be considered for short-term Research Assistant employment. Once you have submitted your PhD you should register on this and let staff know. Full details are at <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/peopleandculture/policies>

In addition, the Research Director or individual staff may have short-term research assistance opportunities or opportunities to assist with other work (event organisation for instance). These opportunities arise on an ad hoc basis, but do mention to the Research Director or your supervisors if you would be interested in principle.

## Teaching work

The Doctoral College Researcher Development Programme includes modules designed to help you develop teaching skills in higher education and to help with accreditation. Please do check the training available on PhD manager.

The Law School and the School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences regularly have teaching opportunities that suit our PhD researchers. Please contact the Associate Head of School to express any interest in teaching.

It is important to balance any teaching commitments with the priority of progressing the PhD so do discuss the desirability of taking on teaching (including how much and when) with your supervisors.

## Proofreading the final thesis

Depending on finances available and actual need, the Research Director may be able to pay for the final version of the thesis to be proofread by a professional proofreader. Discuss with your supervisors or the Research Director.

## Publications and Profiles

We share the successes of our PhD cohort and recent PhD graduates.

Please do inform the Research Director and Administrative Excellence Executive Assistant of important achievements like publications, conference presentations, prizes, grants so that these can be shared on the website and across the different social media platforms as appropriate.

We are also keen to hear from alumni of our PhD programme so do get in touch when you have major news to share.

The University is transitioning between two models of including PhD profiles: standard webpages and PURE.

Under the PURE system PhD researchers can and should update their personal profile, publications and activities:

<https://pure.ulster.ac.uk/en/organisations/school-of-law/persons/>

For now the standard webpages also remain and PhD researchers should consult with the Research Director as to what is required for these.

## **ALCS**

Register your publications at <https://www.alcs.co.uk/> and receive payments for copyright use made of your publications

## **Referencing**

The standard legal citation method is the OSCOLA system and full details of this are at <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/publications/oscola>

There is a one page version at this website.

Depending on your exact topic and after discussions with supervisors you may want to use the author-year (Harvard) referencing system.