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Postgraduate Research at The School of GeoSciences



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20 November 2025

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Research Institutes

- Earth & Planetary Science
- Global Change
- Geography & the Lived Environment
 - 200 PhD students
 - 15 MScR students
 - Diverse: Human Geography, Physical Geography, Ecology, Geology, Meteorology, Geophysics and more



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Postgraduate Research

In chat:

- *Which are you interested in?*
- *Why?*

MScR	PhD
1 year	3 years prescribed + 1 write-up year
Research training	Research training ++
Dissertation < 30k words	Thesis < 100k words
... advance knowledge and understanding of the field original work... ...contribute to knowledge... ...critical judgement... ...material worthy of publication...
Acquire transferable skills	Acquire transferable skills



Supervisors: reach out to them

- Talk to your supervisor early (*choose carefully*)
- 2 or more academics*
(*MScR often 1 supervisor)
- Guide and support your research
- Introduces you to
 - the field
 - colleagues
 - literature
- Sometimes help with funding
- Comment on your work



Why do a PhD / MScR?

- To follow your curiosity
- To do exciting things that few others do
- To contribute to ‘knowledge’
- To work independently
- To continue living as a student?
- It’s the first step towards an academic career



Why do a PhD / MScR?

Checklist

- Can I find funding?
- Have I found a supervisory team that fits?
- Is this a topic that I want to dedicate 3 (or more) years of my life to?
- Do I, in fact, enjoy working independently?
- Am I prepared for hard work (and some stress)?



Applying for a PGR degree in the School of GeoSciences

Agapi Styliandou, PGR Manager



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School of GeoSciences PGR Programmes

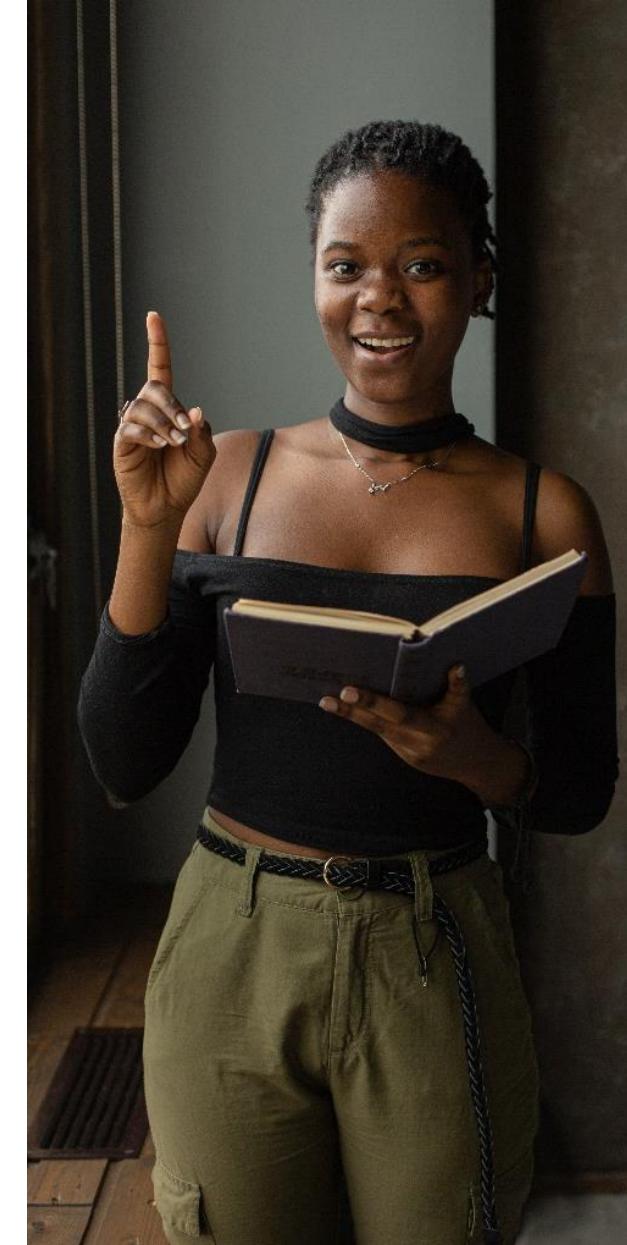
Phd Programmes	MScR Programmes
Geography (Human Geography and Environmental Studies)	Palaeontology and Geobiology
Atmospheric and Environmental Studies	GeoSciences (Individual Project)
Geology and Geophysics	GeoSciences (Individual Project – Taught Pathway)

You can find our PGR programmes, programme information (structure, eligibility criteria, application deadlines) and apply links on the University of Edinburgh's Postgraduate Degree finder webpage: <https://postgraduate.degrees.ed.ac.uk/>



Key Points BEFORE Applying

- Are you ready for independent research without courses to guide your progression?
- What is your research topic?
- Who is going to supervise you?
- How are you planning to fund your studies?

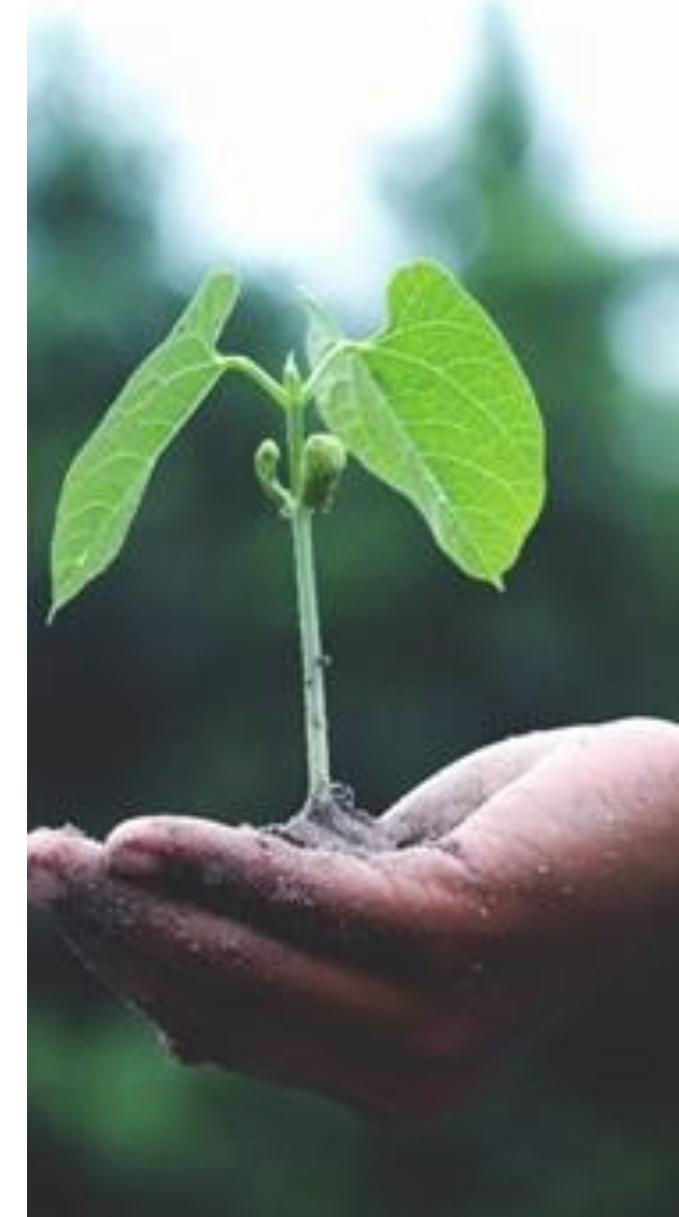


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Student-led Research Topic

- You write your own proposal
- You must identify and contact potential supervisors before applying
- You must read guidance on how to write a research proposal
- Applicable to all MScRs: Palaeontology & Geobiology, GeoSciences



Finding a Supervisor

You must contact supervisors directly

- Browse our staff list:
 - <https://geosciences.ed.ac.uk/people>
 - <https://geosciences.ed.ac.uk/people/teaching-research>
- Use the Edinburgh Research Explorer:
<https://www.research.ed.ac.uk/en/>
 - search by keywords to find academics involved in research that interests you
- Browse our website to read about the research that goes on in the School and see who conducts it:
 - <https://geosciences.ed.ac.uk/research/institutes-centres>



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Supervisor-led Research Topic

- You apply for an advertised project
 - e.g. E5 DTP <https://e5-dtp.ed.ac.uk/>
 - PGVOW session 20 November (starts at 3.30)
 - closing date for applications: 14 December 2025
- Supervisors will already be named, you can contact them to discuss your suitability for the project
- Ensure you read the application guidelines provided
 - Incomplete applications are not considered
- PhD only



Funding

- Many different sources with many different processes (i.e. SGSSS DTP, EDCS)
- Carefully **read** and follow guidance provided
- Funding application often separate from PhD degree application
- Most funding is for PhD students
- UK loans available for MScR for UK students
- Application window: November to January

<https://geosciences.ed.ac.uk/study/degrees/research-degrees/funding>

This page is updated with information regularly



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Next steps...

<https://edin.ac/student-chat-pg>



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Key Links

- School of GeoSciences website: <https://geosciences.ed.ac.uk/>
- Research facilities: <https://geosciences.ed.ac.uk/about/facilities>
- School of GeoSciences Postgraduate Research Team PGR programmes and application guidance:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/geosciences/study/degrees/research-degrees>



Contact details for follow-up questions

- We apologise if we did not get through all of your questions in the time allotted for this session. If you have further questions that have not been answered, please email: futurestudents@ed.ac.uk
- Alternatively, you can contact pgrsupport.geos@ed.ac.uk





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Thank you

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