Introduction

This document outlines the requirements and offers guidance for writing and compiling a PhD application to the School of the Built Environment at the University of Reading, including PhDs in Construction Management & Engineering, Energy & Environmental Engineering, and Architecture. Please read and follow the guidance in this document as applications that do not meet these requirements may be delayed or rejected.

If you require further information, then please contact the admissions team via email at pgadmissions@reading.ac.uk.

Criteria for the award of research degrees

At the end of their PhD, candidates are expected to demonstrate each of the following:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review to extend the forefront of their discipline, and to merit publication in an appropriate form;
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- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of the discipline or area of professional practice;
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and the ability to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.

It is important to reflect on these criteria when considering applying for to join our PhD programme.

Research proposal
Your application should include a research proposal. Please first read the general guidance on research proposals that is provided at this link: writing a research proposal. In addition, the School of the Built Environment has specific requirements about the structure of your proposal that are detailed below. Please ensure that your proposal meetings with these specific requirements or it may be delayed or rejected.

Your research proposal should adhere to the following structure and word limits:

- **Research question** [no more than 50 words]
  (a short statement that states the question your research aims to answer)
- **Objectives** [no more than 200 words]
  (about 4-6 objectives that describe the key elements of the research)
- **Background** [no more than 200 words]
  (why is the proposed research of interest, and why does the research matter?)
- **Literature review and academic context** [no more than 500 words]
  (how does the proposed research fit into existing academic literature)
- **Methodology** [no more than 200 words]
  (your research design; how will you go about achieving your research objectives and why is this approach appropriate?)
- **Expected academic contribution and outcomes** [no more than 200 words]
  (what is your expected original contribution to knowledge?)
- **Timetable**
  (a plan that demonstrates the work is achievable within 3 years of full-time study)
- **References**

Personal statement
You should also include a **Personal Statement** that explains your motivation and suitability for our PhD programme [no more than 500 words].
Assessment of applications

Once we receive your application, it will first be reviewed by the Director of Postgraduate Admissions for the School of the Built Environment. If the application complies with the guidelines, is of the required standard, and fits within the research profile of our School, it will be sent to one or more potential supervisors for a more detailed review. If a potential supervisor wishes to move forward with your application, then you will be invited to an online interview (usually using Skype or Teams), to further discuss your proposed research and fit for our PhD programme. Successful applicants will then receive a formal offer of a place.

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