

**School of Medicine
Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences**

Guidance for potential MD students

What is an MD?

A Doctor of Medicine (MD) is a highly regarded postgraduate research degree. It is awarded by the University of Manchester in recognition of the successful completion of a period of supervised research and training, the results of which show:

- convincing evidence of scholarship,
- the competence of the candidate to pursue research
- a significant contribution to new knowledge and understanding in the theory and/or practice of any area of medicine.

This is assessed through presentation of a thesis and a viva voce. The thesis must contain material of a standard appropriate for peer-reviewed publication. As such it is essential that the research project is carefully thought out prior to beginning an MD.

How long does an MD take to complete?

A full time MD takes normally takes two years to complete.

- Within this time you need to collect all the necessary data
- You must allow time to write your thesis before going back into your clinical training programme.
- It is essential that you plan your research project well before you start your MD programme.
- Your project must have ethical approval before you start
- Your project must be achievable within a two year time period. This is particularly relevant to projects which involve patient recruitment.
- You should ensure that you can begin your research project immediately after registering for an MD.
- You need to make sure you have two years out of your clinical training for MD study.
- You cannot complete your research and then register for an MD.
- You can register for a full time MD if you do a maximum of one clinical session i.e. a morning or afternoon, per week.
- You will need to demonstrate that you have enough time out of your clinical training programme to complete your MD
- If you do more than one clinical session per week you should register for a part time MD. A part time MD runs over four years. During this time you must be able to spend the equivalent of 2.5 days per week on your MD.

Who can supervise my MD?

If you are thinking about studying for an MD you need to identify a good supervisory team well in advance of registering for your degree. It is very important that you choose your supervisor(s) carefully as you will need good and continued supervision if you are to be awarded an MD.

- Supervisors will normally have a full-time contract with the University of Manchester.
- If you are planning an MD project with a supervisor who holds an honorary contract you should normally have a second supervisor who holds a substantive university contract.
- Staff without a substantive or honorary University contract cannot supervise MDs.
- Supervisors must have experience of supervising postgraduate degrees to completion. If they have not had prior experience they can act as co-supervisors provided a suitable experienced main supervisor is appointed.
- Supervisors must be familiar with the standards and progress requirements of the University of Manchester and must have time to supervise students.¹

What should I do if I am thinking about registering for an MD?

If you are considering registering for an MD you should contact potential supervisors and begin to discuss possible research projects.

Students can register for an MD in September, January, April or July.

Applications must be submitted at least 6-weeks in advance of the expected start date.

Please note there is no ability to back date MD registration.

¹ Supervisors should attend Faculty supervisory awareness sessions and should refer to the University Code of Practice that governs Postgraduate Research Programmes, particularly the policy on supervision and progress and review
<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/graduate/code/>