

Approved by all Colleges with the exception of Trinity College

Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Colleges on Postgraduate Student Numbers

1. A vital part of the University's developing academic strategy is the expansion of the postgraduate student population, particularly doctoral students, to enable the University to remain globally competitive and to fulfil its academic mission of facilitating excellence in education and research.
2. Despite an ambition to increase postgraduate numbers by 2% a year since 2011, this has not been achieved. Over the last two years a postgraduate recruitment and funding strategy has been developed and postgraduate numbers have consequently started to increase.
3. This Memorandum of Understanding¹ sets out the targets agreed between the University and Colleges collectively for growth in full time postgraduate student numbers over the period 2016-17 to 2021-22. Further work is underway on part-time student numbers with the intention of producing an addendum to this Memorandum.

Definitions and assumptions

4. For the purposes of this Memorandum, postgraduate students are defined as all matriculated students registered at the University on credit-bearing courses that lead to the award of the following qualifications, all of which have a first degree as a minimum entry requirement:

PhD	BusD*	EdD*
EngD	MD*	VetMD
CPGS	MLitt	MSc
MPhil	MRes	MASt
MSt*	LLM	MCL
MBA	Executive MBA*	
MFin	MEd*	MMus
PGCE	PG diplomas open to matriculated students*	

5. Postgraduate students who are writing up and students on courses leading to qualifications marked * above which are part-time are excluded from the targets set out in this Memorandum. Students studying for all other postgraduate qualifications on a part-time basis are also excluded from the full-time numbers and targets. Students registered for a 1+3 research programme are counted as doctorate-level students for all four years of their course.

¹ This Memorandum was developed by the 2017 Working Group on Postgraduate Student Numbers. Membership and terms of reference of the Working Group are included as an appendix.

6. Undergraduate students are defined as matriculated students registered at the University on courses leading to the award of the following qualifications:

BA	BTh	MEng
MSci	MMath	MB/BChir
VetMB		

as well as students on courses that normally lead to the award of the above qualifications but who are not aiming for a qualification as a result of already holding a Cambridge degree (Cambridge graduates reading Triposes).

7. This Memorandum assumes that undergraduate numbers will remain static over the planning period 2016-17 to 2021-22.

Targets for full time postgraduate student numbers

8. The University and Colleges collectively agree to a target of 13.1% growth from a baseline of 6,548 full-time postgraduate students on 1 December 2016 over five years, that is a target of c. 7,400 full-time postgraduate students on 1 December 2021. If growth is steady, this target will be equal to 2.5% annual growth in the total full-time postgraduate population. It is, however, acknowledged by both the University and Colleges that there is likely to be slower growth in the early period of this Memorandum, and greater levels of growth in the later years.
9. The current proportion of one year to doctoral students is 40:60. Both the University and Colleges collectively have expressed a wish to increase the proportion of doctoral students such that the ratio becomes 38:62. It is agreed, however, that aspirations need to be tempered by a sense of what can realistically be achieved over the five year planning timeframe.
10. In this spirit, whilst recognising the need to meet the overall target for growth from the perspective of both the University and the Colleges, the University agrees to shift the balance of one year to doctoral students to 38%:62% over the five year period to 2021-22.
11. The University and Colleges collectively agree that the overall target for growth in postgraduate numbers, and the aim to increase the proportion of doctoral students, are aspirational and that they will need to work collaboratively and proactively to achieve them, both as regards the implementation of the postgraduate recruitment strategy and the ambitious fundraising campaign. As between the two aspirations the growth in the total number of postgraduate students is considered by the University and the Colleges to be the priority.

Additional considerations

12. In planning for growth, the University and Colleges individually and collectively are mindful not only of the additional demands on academics to deliver teaching and academic support to an increased number of students, but also the additional demands that will be placed on administrative and support services.
13. It is recognised that further work is required by both the Colleges collectively and the University and Schools to model growth and to review the distribution of postgraduate students between Colleges and between Schools. The agreed growth will be modelled and translated into agreed targets for one year and doctoral student entrants.
14. Under this Memorandum it is agreed that actual postgraduate student numbers both by School and by College will be actively monitored against targets, and that College, School and overall targets will be reviewed on an annual basis. It is acknowledged that annual growth is likely to fluctuate over the planning period, and the University and Colleges agree to work together with the longer, five year horizon in mind.
15. The Colleges and University recognise that this level of growth and a shift in the proportion of doctoral students will be difficult to achieve, and that success will depend on a number of key factors including University planning policies and procedures, expansion of College housing stock, balancing student types within individual College populations, and the successful implementation of the University's recruitment strategy and, in particular, fundraising.

Appendix

Joint University and Colleges Working Group on Postgraduate Student Numbers, 2017

1. Membership

Nominees of the Colleges:

- Professor Michael Proctor (Provost of King's College)
- Professor Mary Fowler (Master of Darwin College)
- Dr Marina Frasca-Spada (Senior Tutor of Corpus Christi and Associate Secretary, Senior Tutors' Committee)
- Dr Iain Black (Senior Tutor of Clare Hall and Chair, Graduate Tutors' Committee)
- Mr Christopher Lawrence (Bursar of Wolfson College)
- Mr Paul Warren (Chair of the Bursars' Committee and Bursar of Clare College)

Nominees of the University:

- Professor Graham Virgo (PVC Education) - Chairman
- Professor Duncan Maskell (PVC Resources)
- Professor Richard Prager (Head of the School of Technology)
- Professor Helen Thompson (Deputy Head of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences)
- Dr Noel Rutter (Deputy Head of the School of Physical Sciences)
- Professor Martin Millett (Head of the School of Arts and Humanities)

Secretary: Mrs Alice Benton (Head of Educational & Student Policy)

In attendance: Dr Ekaterina Samoylova (Senior Information Analyst and Modeller, Planning & Resources Allocation Office)

2. Terms of Reference

The Group was established by the UCJC

(a) to consider and make recommendations for agreement by the University and Colleges on postgraduate student numbers: the overall size of the postgraduate student population; the proportions of master's and research students; and the proportion of part-time and full-time students. The Working Group will take account of the ambitions of both the University and Colleges for postgraduate student numbers over the next five years, and aspirations for the future size and shape of the Collegiate University.

(b) to consider and make recommendations on appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and management of postgraduate numbers between the University and the Colleges.

(c) to identify, consider and make recommendations as appropriate on any factors which might be relevant to realisation of ambitions for postgraduate student number growth.