**GCU COVID Research Recovery & Reconnect Grant for Postgraduate Research Students:**

**Guidelines and Application process**

**Links to connected material:**

Online application form Application for the PGR-CR3 grant

**The guidelines include:**

* Description of the grant
* Background
* Eligibility
* Application process
* Decision-making process
* Award and deliverables
* Timeframes
* Appendix 1: Template of the online application questions
* Appendix 2: Flow chart of the application process
1. **Description of the grant**

The PGR COVID research recovery & reconnect (PGR-CR3) grant is a new time-limited grant offered by GCU in the autumn 2021 to be funded from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) COVID mitigation funds. It is for PGR students not previously supported through funding extensions: namely currently registered self-funded students or those International students with reduced awarded stipends.

The PGR-CR3 grant is for self-funded, continuing students, who are experiencing financial barriers to progression with their studies. It would provide a support grant of ***up to*** £1,000. The final amount awarded will depend upon the SFC budget available, the number of applications made, and their meeting the criteria of requesting funds due to a COVID impact.

**The deadline for applications is Tuesday 31 August 2021 midnight.**

1. **Background**
	1. Everyone within the GCU community has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with evidence that some groups have been more severely impacted by the pandemic response than others, such as those with protected characteristics, or due to caring responsibilities, home-schooling, or shielding. Our community of post-graduate research (PGR) students has been amongst those impacted in their studies.
	2. Not all our PGR students have faced the same challenges, and they are a diverse group, with respect to modes of study, funding routes and sponsorship arrangements. A number of measures are supporting students to maintain progress with their research in the pandemic:
2. Continued access to university well-being services
3. Access to Scottish Government hardship funding in Winter 2020/21
4. Research plan reworking - this important work is done with the supervision team
5. Registration periods extension for COVID-related delay -through the RDC3c process (>160 students have used this to date)
6. Extended funding for GCU PhD Scholarship holders
7. Graduate School Researcher Development Programme, including an expanded schedule of writing workshops, 1-2-1 appointments and writing retreats <https://www.gcu.ac.uk/graduateschool/researcherdevelopment/>
8. Research Students Representatives committee – keeping Research leads across the University connected with issues such as access to specialist space on Campus
9. For students awarded external funding, we have supported funding extension requests
10. GCU staff undertaking PGR studies have been able to access Research Reboot funding
11. Research Reboot funding has provided a number of opportunities for PGR students to be employed to support education or research under the supervision of GCU academic staff.

2.3 Despite this support, we are aware that some PGR students may be struggling to maintain progress with their studies, have experienced fragmented research time, or have financial concerns as employment opportunities have reduced in the pandemic. Students who are self-funding have been identified as a group of students who might be helped by additional support.

1. **Eligibility**
	1. The SFC funded PGR-CR3 grant is intended for PGR students for whom a period of dedicated data collection, analysis or thesis writing is both
	2. Necessary to recover from a COVID impact on data collection, analysis or writing, and
	3. Unavailable due to economic factors (due to loss of earnings, for example).
	4. Eligible applicants will not have other sources of stipend support. GCU staff are not eligible.
	5. PGR students eligible for a COVID PGR Support grant would be EITHER:
2. self-funded students (full-time or part-time), or
3. International PGR Students in receipt of a GCU or external funded Scholarship of reduced fees, or fees plus a reduced stipend.
	1. Funds would only be awarded to GCU PGR students whose date of enrolment was prior to July 2021 (i.e. it is not applicable to new entrants in academic year 21/22).
	2. Funding must be used to allow a renewed focus on research, and the application will comprise a plan agreed with the Director of Studies to describe the data collection, analysis and/or writing that will be achieved over the period of October to December 2021, and the expected outputs.
	3. Applicants are wholly responsible for considering whether the request for such funds and their receipt would impact upon their overall finances, including eligibility for any other sources of support such as other hardship funds, and social security benefits.
	4. Applications for the SFC funded COVID PGR Support grant must be supported by BOTH the Director of Studies and the Senior Post Graduate Research Tutor / Director of Yunus Centre / PGRT in GCU London. This is so that the supervision team can confirm this is the most appropriate time for applicants to engage in this aspect of focussing on their research studies, and there is linkage with the RDC3c process.
	5. We particularly encourage applications for the SFC funded COVID PGR Support grant from research students who may have experienced a disproportionate impact of COVID due to their having caring responsibilities, or protected characteristics.
	6. Applications are welcomed from GCU PGR students regardless of their location (Glasgow campus, London campus or researching at a distance).
4. **Application process**
	1. Applicants will be asked to complete an online application form which will ask for:
5. Student details: Full name, School/ Yunus Centre/ GCUL, name of Supervisors, and Director of Studies, student funding status (self-funded, international), year of study.
6. Nature of the COVID disruption. This will use the itemised list from the RDC3c application.
7. Brief description of the nature of the COVID disruption and, where appropriate, how much time was lost because of that disruption. This could be the same case made in the RDC3c requests.
8. 300 words on what you propose to do with a focussed period of research time, and how much focussed research time you need
9. 100-word statement of support from your DoS, clarifying how the focused research reconnect time fits within the student’s research recovery plan
10. Basic demographic characteristics (optional), including any protected characteristics: this is recorded *solely* to support reporting for equality purposes.
	1. The online application form questions and guidance for answering these questions are found in Appendix 1. These online application form questions can be used by the student and supervisory team to prepare jointly their response ready for submission in the online form. Only the online submission will be accepted.
	2. What is required from the student and supervisor?

The student-supervisory team should work together to jointly submit this form. We recommend the team read carefully these Guidelines and the application questions in the appendices before drafting their application and submitting it online.

The student-supervisory team should work together on developing the statements from the student on what you propose to do with the research time and from the DoS in support, clarifying how the research time fits within the student’s research recovery plan.

The student enters the agreed text of the application into the online form.

In lieu of signatures, the student downloads a copy of the online submission and emails it to the supervisory team.

The Director of Studies DoS sends the student’s email with the attached copy of the online submission form to the Programme Coordinator (Research Degrees) PC, and adds in their email, the declaration: “I confirm that the attached PGR-CR3 grant application form has been discussed and agreed by the student and supervisory team”.

* 1. A flow chart of the application and decision-making process is given in Appendix 2: Process for the Application for the Research Recovery & Reconnect Grant.
1. **Decision making process**
	1. A panel chaired by the PVC Research, with a SPGRT and or ADR from each School, Directors of the Yunus Centre, Graduate School and Research and Innovation Office (RIO) will make decisions.
	2. The decision criteria will include:
2. Description in terms of concrete objectives, of the research activity deliverables that will be achieved during the researcher reconnect phase.
3. Support from the Director of Studies and ADR / Yunus Director / PGRT GCUL
4. Confirmation that the student does not receive any financial support for their studies (other than for international students, a GCU or external funded scholarship of reduced fees or fees plus reduced stipend)
5. We will prioritise applications where there is evidence of COVID-rated delays (for example as detailed in the RDC3c process). These can be due to personal or family illness or isolation, or caring responsibilities.
6. **Award and Deliverables**

Successful applicants will receive the grant as a one off payment in October or November 2021. They will complete the research activity deliverables over the period of October to December 2021 and will be expected to provide in January 2022 a short report on how they used the grant to recover and reconnect with their research project.

1. **Timeframes**
2. Deadline for application – 31st August 2021
3. Notification of results of application – by the end of September 2021
4. Target date for disbursement of funds – October & November 2021
5. Completion of the research activity deliverables – October to December 2021
6. Completion of a short report on the outcomes of the grant award – January 2022

**Appendix 1: Template of the Online PgR-CR3 Grant Application Questions**

These PgR-CR3 grant application form questions can be used by the student and supervisory team to prepare jointly their response ready for submission in the online form. Emails from the student and Director of Studies, with the attachment of the pdf output from the submitted online form, confirming their approval of the submission, will be required in lieu of their signatures.

**Your Research Recovery & Reconnect Application**

**COVID Research Recovery & Reconnect Grant for Postgraduate Research Students at GCU**

### (Emails from the student and Director of Studies, with the attachment of the PDF output from the submitted online form, confirming their approval of the submission, will be required in lieu of their signatures.)

This application is for a time-limited grant offered by GCU in the autumn 2021 to be funded from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) COVID mitigation funds. The PGR COVID research recovery & reconnect (PGR-CR3) grant is for PGR students not previously supported through funding extensions: namely currently registered self-funded students or those international students with reduced awarded stipends.

The PGR-CR3 grant is for self-funded, continuing students, who are experiencing financial barriers to progression with their studies. It would provide a support grant of **up to** £1,000. The final amount awarded will depend upon the SFC budget available, the number of applications made, and their meeting the criteria of requesting funds due to a COVID impact.

The deadline for application is **Tuesday 31 August, 2021 midnight**.

The student-supervisory team should work together to jointly submit this grant application. We recommend the team read carefully the following document before drafting their application and submitting it online.

COVID Research Recovery & Reconnect Grant for Postgraduate Research Students at GCU: Guidelines and Application process

**Section 1. Student-supervisor Information** (To be completed by the student)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Student full name** |  |
| **Student GCU email address** |  |
| **Student ID number** |  |
| **School/Research Centre** | **GSBS SHLS SCEBE GCU London Yunus Centre**Please select one |
| **Mode of study** |  **Full-time (FT) Part-time (PT)**Please select one |
| **Student status** | **Home RUK EU International**Please select one |
| **Research programme of study** | **PhD PhD by Previous Published Works ProfD/DBA MPhil**Please select one |
| **Year of study** | **Full Time: Year 1 2 3 4 Extension yr beyond max period****Part time: Year 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extension yr beyond max period**Please select one |
| **Registration start date** |  |
| **Funding source** | * **Self- funded**
* **International PGR studentship of reduced fees or fees plus a reduced stipend funded by GCU.**
* **International PGR studentship of reduced fees or fees plus a reduced stipend funded by external source.**

Please select one |
| **Director of Studies (DoS) full name** |  |
| **DoS email address** |  |

**Section 2. COVID PgR Grant Support Request** (To be completed jointly by the student and the supervisory team)

**This grant request should be discussed and agreed with the student and supervisory team in advance of the submission of the PGR-CR3 grant application form online by the student.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Details of Covid-19 related extensions of registration RDC3c approved. Total time extension granted.** (Where you have made multiple applications, provide the total extension time of all approved applications.) |
| **Months 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 > 12** Please select one |
| **Reasons for the disruption to your studies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**  | * **Unable to collect data and the impact cannot be mitigated**
* **Unable to undertake field work and the impact cannot be mitigated**
* **Unable to access GCU lab facilities and the impact cannot be mitigated**
* **Unable to access other resources required (please specify in your case) and the impact cannot be mitigated**
* **Unable to meet effectively between the student and supervisory team**
* **An impact on the supervisory team that has affected supervision or progress of either research or writing, such as illness**
* **Family/caring responsibilities**
* **Challenges with maintaining focus in current circumstances and stress**
* **Specific impact resulting from remote working as a result of a disability or being at higher risk of coronavirus**
* **Lack of access to mental health support, if needed**
* **Financial impacts, either personal or on the research activity**
* **Impacts related to any protected characteristics**
* **Other considerations that can be specifically attributed to Covid-19 and evidenced in the case.**

Please select one or a combination of these criteria |

**Circumstances**

**Please provide a brief note of your circumstances (including personal and research project related circumstances), describing how your studies have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and how much time was lost because of it. This statement can be an updated version of your statement of circumstances given in your RDC3c application(s). (200 words max)**

|  |
| --- |
| *Circumstances that resulted in loss of time might be, for example:* * *caring responsibilities that reduce the time that can be spent on the research studies;*
* *fieldwork or data collection challenges;*
* *reorienting to new ways of working that might include overcoming significant technological problems or difficulties in receiving supervisory guidance;*
* *having to significantly redesign or refocus the study.*
 |

**Research Recovery and Reconnect Plans**

**Student Statement: Please provide a short summary of progress with your research project so far. Give an outline of your research recovery plan with revised timeframes if you were to receive this grant support. Indicate how much time you plan to make available to focus on your research, enabled by this grant. Describe the data collection, analysis and/or writing that will be achieved over the period of October to December 2021, and the resulting expected outputs.**  **(300 words max.)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**DoS Statement: Please provide a statement of support, clarifying how the focused research recovery & reconnect time will fit within the student’s research recovery plan (100 words max.)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Section 3. Declaration**

**Separate email confirmations of the declaration are accepted in lieu of signatures.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Have the student and supervisory team discussed and agreed on 1) the revised research recovery & reconnect plan, 2) the focused period of research activity, 3) this grant submission?**  | **Yes No**Please select one |

**Actions required after submission of the online form:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **If yes, the student-supervisory team agree on the submission of the grant application**  | **The student should download a copy of the completed online PGR-CR3 grant application form after it is submitted and email it to the Director of Studies DoS. The Dos should forward the student’s email with the copy of the online submission form to the School Programme Coordinator (PgR) and add in their email, the declaration:** **I confirm that the attached PGR-CR3 grant application form has been discussed and agreed by the student and supervisory team.**  |
| **If no,**  | **The student should get the agreement of the supervisory team and the DoS statement of support to include in this grant application before final submission.**  |

**Appendix 2: Flow Chart of the Application Process for the PgR-CR3 Grant**

DoS and student complete grant application and student submits online form. Student downloads copy of grant online submission and sends to DoS.

DoS sends student’s email + grant application copy to PC with email declaration confirming agreement.

PC logs receipt of DoS declaration.

SPGRT/Director of Yunus Centre/PgRT GCU London considers online grant applications for their School/Research Centre. Expert views sought if necessary. Provides recommendation to panel.

Refer back to DoS if necessary

Panel makes final decision on grant request.

Student

Supervisor(s)/Director of Studies (DoS)

Panel clerk logs decision and notifies student and supervisory team and SPGRTs/Research Centre Director/GCUL PGRT/PCs.

Senior Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT)

Programme Coordinator (PC)

Panel clerk

PCs notify Finance

Panel