

Research Degrees



The Natural Resources Institute

The Natural Resources Institute (NRI) is a specialist institute of the University of Greenwich and is based at the Medway Campus in Kent, England, approximately thirty miles from central London. This multi-campus university serves higher education needs both locally and nationally within the UK and regionally in the European Union. It also provides research, consultancy and education services worldwide, in the main through the long-established international activities of NRI.

NRI's origins go back to 1894, and its international reputation is founded on a long history of experience in research and development in natural resources, particularly in tropical and sub-tropical countries. One of its great strengths is its ability to integrate diverse skills from a wide range of natural and social sciences. Much of NRI's past work has been concerned with developing countries and countries with economies in transition, but its expertise has proved to be of growing relevance to the development and management of natural resources in industrialised regions. In the last ten years, around a hundred of our students have successfully graduated with a postgraduate degree.

Medway Campus

Medway Campus is located in Chatham Maritime, a rapidly developing area with a mix of office, leisure and housing development. Some of the campus's neighbours offer excellent leisure and shopping opportunities and the town centres of Chatham and Gillingham, and the historic city of Rochester, are only a short distance away.

Thanks to millions of pounds of investment in recent years, the campus provides a first-rate environment for students, with excellent academic facilities, social facilities and halls of residence. The library provides access to books, periodicals, electronic information services and media workshops.

Research facilities include controlled-environment rooms, chemistry laboratories, a molecular biology suite and greenhouses. The institute benefits from access to the facilities of the School of Science, which is also based at Medway.

The campus is well served by public transport, including bus services to the local towns, and has easy access to the county's motorway network. The university also provides a bus service between campuses.

Accommodation

Medway Campus offers 350 rooms in five halls of residence. Accommodation consists of single study-bedrooms, each with en-suite toilet/shower facilities and shared kitchen/dining rooms. Every room is wired for free direct access to the university's network for Internet and e-mail services.

The university advertises houses, flats and lodgings that are available for rent to students. Most are owned and managed by local landlords and landladies, and students deal with them directly. Rent depends on the type of property and its location.

For further information on accommodation, call 020 8331 9063 or log on to www.gre.ac.uk/accommodation.





Student's unions

NRI students are represented by both the **Students' Union University of Greenwich (SUUG)** and the **Universities at Medway Students' Association (UMSA)**.

SUUG represents students' views at the university and provides social activities and support services for its members. It also runs events and helps to organise cultural and sporting clubs and societies. For more information, visit www.suug.co.uk.

UMSA represents the educational institutions based at Chatham Maritime, including the University of Greenwich. The association runs a wide range of clubs and societies, organises events on campus and runs student facilities such as the campus shop and pub. To find out more, visit www.umsa.org.uk.

Membership of both unions is free and enables you to obtain a NUS card from the National Union of Students. This provides a wide range of benefits, including discounts on travel, clothes and entertainment.

Sport and recreation

Students at the University of Greenwich can join a wide range of clubs and societies. Sports fans may be interested in our American football club, the Greenwich Mariners, or our cricket and basketball clubs, all of which have enjoyed successes. The most popular team sports, such as football, rugby and netball, have multiple teams and compete in the British Universities Sports Association.

UMSA has its own clubs, covering sports such as men's football, women's football, netball, rugby and mixed hockey. Sports facilities across the campuses include pitches for football and rugby, gyms, and courts for badminton and tennis.

Other societies, representing a range of interests, faiths and nationalities, include the Law Society, Christian Union, Islamic Society, Nigerian Society and the Chinese Students & Scholars Association. Full lists can be found at www.suug.co.uk/societies/list and www.umsa.org.uk/clubs.





Research opportunities at NRI

NRI currently has around 50 full-time and part-time research students, many from overseas, who undertake MSc (by Research), MPhil and PhD degrees. A research degree involves training in research methods and the individual execution of a piece of supervised research. It is common for our students to undertake part of this research in a developing country. Each student undertakes a systematic, high-level study of a problem or topic and presents the results in the form of a written thesis (this may be supported by work in some other form). The student is examined orally on the work submitted.

Postgraduate studies at NRI are carried out within established research groups that are clustered together to maximise their collaborative potential. We are organised into three operational departments:

- Agriculture, Health & Environment Department
- Livelihoods & Institutions Department
- Food & Markets Department.

Examples of postgraduate research in these departments are given on the following pages.



Agriculture, Health & Environment Department (AHE)

With up to three quarters of people in sub-Saharan Africa actively engaged or dependent on agricultural activity as the basis of their livelihoods, and with current concerns over food security, it is little wonder that the international donor community is putting the spotlight back on agricultural research.

The expectation is that such activity can improve yields and protect crops and animals from pests and diseases, enabling farmer communities to feed themselves without degrading the environment or adding to the problems of climate change. Yet the yield gap between crop potential and what is actually produced by farmers remains high.

Where traditional breeding has not delivered in the past, biotechnology can certainly act to address these problems. Ideally this should be achieved by indigenous scientists; however, in an age of increasing interdependence and globalisation of trade, commerce and information, it makes sense to achieve development by engaging the best minds in research, and this can only be achieved through partnership. Through its research activities, AHE engages with the wider scientific, development and commercial communities to create conditions for improving the livelihoods of the rural poor.

AHE actively pursues research in the following areas:

- Biodiversity and molecular biology
- Pest behaviour
- Agricultural biosecurity
- Chemical ecology and plant biochemistry.

Recent/current postgraduate topics include:

- Improving diagnostics for viruses infecting yam and cassava
- Chemical ecology of anopheles mosquitoes
- Investigations into the oviposition behaviour of *Anopheles gambiae*
- Sustainable control of the red-billed quelea and use of the birds as a food source.

Livelihoods & Institutions Department (LI)

LI is a multidisciplinary group and a leading centre of expertise in social and sustainable development. Using its skills in social, institutional, gender and policy analysis, it aims to understand the circumstances in which poor people create livelihoods for themselves, including the institutions and policies that constrain or empower them. This is key to addressing problems of poverty and ensuring sustainable economic development.

LI actively pursues research in a wide range of areas but is particularly keen to receive applications on the following:

- Agricultural innovation and institutional capacity strengthening
- Assessing impact on poverty, gender and livelihoods
- Risk, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Recent/current postgraduate topics include:

- Determinants of effective functioning of partnerships for innovation among agricultural service providers in Uganda
- The impact of staple crop value chain development on the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and rural communities in Nigeria and Malawi
- Climate change impacts, vulnerability and resilience in a pastoral livelihood system: The case of the Borana pastoral area, Ethiopia
- Rural territorial dynamics in north-east Brazil.



Food & Markets Department (FM)

It is important to ensure that increased farm production delivers food to match the needs of the expanding population. Strategies to promote food security through sustained growth in agricultural productivity must therefore recognise the need to invest in all aspects of the post-harvest supply chain. In addition to supporting food security, post-harvest activities generate considerable on- and off-farm employment opportunities, stimulate entrepreneurship and increase public-sector revenues.

FM has formed a multidisciplinary team of market and commodity economists, value chain specialists and natural scientists. Together, they provide a holistic and systematic approach to developing viable socio-economic, technical and environmentally responsible policies and practices to resolve constraints in the post-harvest chain, addressing areas such as reduction of post-harvest losses, promotion of value addition and facilitating wider market access.

FM actively pursues research in the following areas:

- Commodity management and market access
- Food processing and market access
- Innovation systems analysis
- Commodity storage and loss prevention
- Food safety.

Recent/current postgraduate topics include:

- Evaluating the impact of climate change on the post-harvest quality of perishables
- Dormancy control in root and tuber crops
- Understanding losses of provitamin A after drying and storage of orange-fleshed sweet potato (*Ipomea batatas*)
- Marketing a low-value, nutrient-rich staple crop: The case of vitamin-A-rich sweet potato in Uganda.



Studying with NRI

MPhil/PhD degrees

Full-time students normally devote 35 to 40 hours a week to research; part-time students devote at least 12 hours a week. Students typically register for the MPhil with the possibility of later transferring to the PhD. NRI will consider direct PhD registration in some exceptional circumstances, but such requests are subject to pre-approval by the university's research degrees committee.

We will provide you with at least two supervisors who meet the requirements for higher degree supervision. We will identify potential supervisors when we receive your application. Unfortunately, if appropriate supervisory support in your field is not available, we may not be able to make you an offer of a place as this is an integral requirement for your registration. NRI offers the possibility of a split research programme where part of your research is carried out overseas (this may be in your home country). In such circumstances, we may appoint an additional local supervisor.

Fees for MPhil/PhDs are composed of two parts. The level of supervision/registration fee is dependent upon whether you are undertaking full-time or part-time research and whether you are considered a home or international student.

Home students include United Kingdom, EU or EEA nationals who are resident in the EU/EEA, but other

students may qualify. If you are unsure whether you are a home or international student, please contact the university's Enquiry Unit or International Office (for contact details, visit www.greenwich.ac.uk).

The research expenses fee is payable in addition to the supervision/registration fee; the level is dependent upon the nature of the research being carried out. The agreed level of fees will be included in your formal offer letter.

Registration periods for a research degree

MPhil only	Minimum	Maximum
Full-time	18 months	36 months
Part-time	30 months	48 months

MPhil/PhD (including MPhil registration period)

PhD via transfer	Minimum	Maximum
Full-time	36 months	60 months
Part-time	48 months	72 months

PhD direct	Minimum	Maximum
Full-time	24 months	60 months
Part-time	36 months	72 months

MSc (by Research)

NRI offer an MSc (by Research) award in conjunction with two taught MSc programmes, Natural Resources, and Food Safety and Quality Management. These lead to the award of MSc Natural Resources (by Research) or MSc Food Safety and Quality Management (by Research) respectively.

MSc students take a series of compulsory and optional courses. Each course is worth a specific number of credits. MSc (by Research) students spend more time on project work than students on taught programmes, carrying out a 120-credit research project with 60 credits of taught courses. A taught programme comprises 120 credits of taught courses and a 60-credit research project.

One of the taught courses must be Research Methods; other courses are normally related to the proposed specialist area of research and are agreed with the programme leader and research supervisor at the start of the programme of study.

If you wish to be considered for an MSc (by Research), you must first register for one of our taught MSc programmes. Once at NRI, you must pass an interview with research staff and successfully complete the first term's taught courses. You will then be allowed to transfer.

EU students may take either a full-time or part-time MSc; the part-time option is not available to non-EU students. The minimum length of any MSc programme is 12 months and the maximum is 48 months. Research work may be undertaken overseas if a suitable local project supervisor is available.

For further information on our MSc programmes, please see our website (www.nri.org), where you will also find information on fees. An MSc application form is available at www.nri.org/study/msc-nr.htm.





Key facts

Fees

Current information on fees is available from the University of Greenwich website at www.gre.ac.uk/students/finance.

Funding

Research students at NRI are supported from a variety of sources. Some are self-funding while others are supported by research councils, charities or donor agencies. Further information on potential funding sources can be found at www.nri.org/study/fundingsources.htm. Please remember that you will need to be able to pay your fees and also support yourself (including funding your accommodation and other living expenses) for the entire period of your study.

Entry requirements

Applicants should have:

EITHER a good first degree, usually 2.1 or above (UK or UK equivalent) in a relevant subject

OR a Master's degree (UK or UK equivalent).

- Applicants are also required to show proficiency in the English language. They should have an IELTS score of 6.5 or a TOEFL score of 600, which should have been achieved in the last two years.

How to apply

If you are interested in applying, you should complete an application form, available from www.gre.ac.uk/research/apply (click on 'Application process'), and submit this with the following material:

- A statement describing the specific area of research in which you are interested (where possible this should include a 300–500-word summary of your research topic);
- A full curriculum vitae;
- Information concerning funding (whether you have funding or are applying for funding).

Without this information, it will not be possible to proceed with your application. Please e-mail the form and additional material to postgraduateresearch@gre.ac.uk so we can consider your application and identify potential supervisors. If you meet the requirements for a programme and we can provide the necessary supervision, we will invite you to an interview. This may be in person on the campus, or we may interview you remotely via telephone or video conferencing. If you are successful at interview, we will make you an offer.

For further information

For further information about research at NRI, visit www.nri.org; information about postgraduate research at the university can be found at www.gre.ac.uk/research.



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**FS 54723
ISO 9001**



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