

Assessment Criteria

1. **Academic excellence** - as demonstrated by past academic results and by transcripts, awards and distinctions. Candidates must be able to demonstrate that they are among the highest achievers in their undergraduate cohort, and ***in receipt of, or due to receive a first-class UK degree or equivalent.*** Candidates with Master's qualifications should have ***achieved a distinction or, where this has yet to be achieved, be able to provide evidence of high performance that will lead to a distinction.***
2. **Research Potential** - as demonstrated by the candidate's research experience to date, his/her interest in discovery, the research plan and its potential contribution as described in their personal statement.
3. **Suitability of candidate** - as demonstrated by the strength of references, support from the proposed supervisor, and performance at interview
4. **Academic Distinctive Performance** – as demonstrated by the reputation of their host institution
5. **Research Distinctive Performance** – as demonstrated by their research output/activities related to their degree and years of study.

| Criteria | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
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| Evidence of academic excellence | Candidate meets eligibility requirements with no additional evidence of academic excellence | Candidate meets eligibility requirements and shows evidence of ranking above average across the majority of courses/modules | As (1), plus additional recognition of academic achievement e.g. award for project/prize for being highly ranked in an academic year | As (2), plus additional evidence of academic excellence e.g. high scores across all courses/modules, achieved high class rank in more than one year | Candidate is consistently highly ranked in their class, achieves exceptional grades for the subject, and has numerous examples of recognition of academic achievement |
| Research potential Demonstrated by either: – research experience (PG experience/industry/placements) – research impact (conferences/papers/significance of research/ winning funding/other impact) – research significance | No evidence of previous research experience or engagement with impactful activities, no evidence that candidate’s research is significant in the field | Short duration of total research experience through research project and/or placement in a relevant group (academic or industry) and/or below average academic impact for the subject area e.g. attendance at conferences, paper publications, winning further funding, patent and/or minor evidence of how the applicant’s research is significant in the field. | Average duration of research experience for the subject area through research projects and/or placements in a relevant group (academic or industry) and/or average academic impact for the subject area e.g. attendance at conferences, paper publications, winning further funding, patents and/or some evidence of how the applicant’s research is significant in the field. | Above average duration of research experience for the subject area through relevant research projects and/or placements in relevant groups (academic or industry) and/or above average academic impact for the subject area e.g. attendance at conferences, paper publications, winning further funding, patents and/or clear evidence of how the applicant’s research is significant in the field. | Extensive evidence of research experience for the subject area through relevant research projects AND placements (academic or industry) and/or above average academic impact for the subject area e.g. attendance at conferences, paper publications, winning further funding, patents AND clear evidence of how the applicant’s research is significant in the field. |

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| Strong references from referees and Department | Standard references, no specific statements of academic ability or research potential | Some statements reflecting the candidate's academic ability and research potential | Consistent and convincing statements as to the candidate's academic ability and research potential | N/A | N/A |
| Academic Distinctive Performance | Average ranked University/Department according to reputable university ranking websites | Degrees (BEng/MSc) from top national universities | All degrees from internationally top universities | N/A | N/A |
| Research Distinctive Performance | Normally expected research experience/output for their degree and years of study | N/A | Beyond the expected research activity and output for their degree and years of study | N/A | N/A |