



**DE MONTFORT
UNIVERSITY**
LEICESTER

TEF Gold

CENTRE FOR URBAN RESEARCH ON AUSTERITY

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Welcome from Professor David Mba

At De Montfort University Leicester (DMU), we want our research to make a difference to people's lives.

In addition to my role as Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise, I am a Professor of Engineering and actively engaged in research.

I see research as central to the university's identity. DMU has an abiding commitment to work in the public good – locally, nationally and globally – and I'm determined our research community should play an ever-stronger role in just that kind of engagement.

At DMU our PhD students form an integral part of that research community, and are supported and encouraged to build something new on the strong foundations and reputation we have established.

The pressing problems of our future need critical-thinkers and convention-challengers in every field ready to turn their attention, imagination and effort to better answers for everyone. If that's you, I hope you'll consider joining us.

Professor David Mba

Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise



Introduction from Professor Jonathan Davies

The Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA) explores the global impacts of austerity, retrenchment, neoliberalisation and anti-neoliberal resistance on urban living. We seek to contribute to a new and radical policy landscape to empower grassroots democratic participation and give a voice to the marginalised and dispossessed. We aim to foster discussions on intersecting inequalities in urban contexts to create egalitarian cities.

Launched in 2015, CURA is the only centre of its kind in the world according to the *Times Higher Education Supplement*. The centre occupies a clearly defined interdisciplinary niche, looking at how governing and resisting austerity leads to urban transformations. Our research team translates shared interests across disciplines and subject areas into outstanding collaborative research with a global reach.

We currently supervise PhD students from across the UK and abroad, including Germany, Italy and Turkey, and host regular visiting fellowships for doctoral students around the world.

Professor Jonathan Davies

Director of the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity



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Research at DMU

Research is rightly at the heart of teaching and learning at DMU and the life and global outlook of our university. Its quality was reflected in the last Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise – with nearly 60 per cent judged to be of international quality, and 18 per cent internationally leading.

The DMU Research Strategy sets out our mission to challenge conventional thinking, to search for new knowledge, and to apply that knowledge to our world for the better. The strategy was developed by staff and students across the university and is designed as a clear and confident statement of our ambitions for research and the actions we will take to achieve them.

We are now working to embed the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into all aspects of DMU research, teaching and learning. We are committed to these objectives, which aim to address pressing global challenges including poverty, hunger, health, education, climate change and social justice.

The Centre for Urban Research on Austerity is building on strong foundations in research already recognised as impacting society, and as making a real difference to people's lives. We are well placed to help meet challenges through our internationally recognised areas of expertise. Several of the UN's SDGs anchor our work, including SDGs 10 (reducing inequalities) and 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

For example, work by the CURA's Dr Ben Whitham was cited as evidence in the 2018 report *Islamophobia Defined*, used to advise MPs on the official definition of Islamophobia. In the 'age of austerity', we believe these goals have global relevance.

Central to DMU's approach to research is its investment in the future and its commitment to the development of a continuing pipeline of talent and skills – in both its staff and student bodies. All of this is underpinned by DMU's abiding values of creativity, professionalism, pride, respect and aspiration.

Why study for a PhD at DMU?

DMU is a scholarly community with a culture of research excellence, where postgraduate research students are nurtured and recognised by scholars and research leaders.

If you're looking for an opportunity to pursue a future as an academic, to further your understanding or your professional career, or simply to change others' lives through the power of research, then DMU is the place for you. We provide an inclusive and stimulating learning and research environment to ensure that our students develop the broad range of skills needed for research which impacts on the world around us.

Our dynamic and diverse community of PhD students form part of the DMU Doctoral Training Programmes. With a range of specialist skills on offer, they enjoy close working relationships with their supervisors, who share their passion and can fully support their individual journeys.

- **Doctoral College** – offering expertise, support, training and space for research, professional and career development for all doctoral students

- **World-class research institutes and centres** – contributing to specialised areas of research that are impacting on society and making a real difference to people's lives

- **A range of study options** – including full or part-time MA by Research and PhD options, see page 11

- **Global opportunities** – take advantage of opportunities through our acclaimed international experience programme DMU Global, visit dmuglobal.com

- **Competitive fees** – with opportunities of discounts and scholarships, visit dmu.ac.uk/DCfees

- **Funding for travel and conferences** – through our SDG Global Fellowships and through other grants and subsidies

- **Opportunities to present work** – at regular Doctoral College lectures and research institute seminars

- **Career support** – during and after your studies

International students

DMU offers flexible ways of studying for international research students. You can either study full-time at DMU's vibrant Leicester campus and enjoy the benefits of being part of a successful research community. Or you can study full-time or part-time in your home country with full remote supervision from DMU. This option offers the potential of studying for a PhD from a UK university while maintaining existing professional and personal commitments.





Centre for Urban Research on Austerity

Described by the *Times Higher Education Supplement* as the first of its kind, the centre explores the effects of austerity, retrenchment and neoliberalisation on urban living and the responses of urban-dwellers. It is concerned with supporting genuinely sustainable development, the elimination of poverty and inequality, and with giving a voice to those marginalised and dispossessed. The centre welcomes applications from students interested in contributing to a radical, research-informed policy landscape, to enable and empower grassroots democratic participation, and overcome intersecting inequalities in urban contexts.

Right now, our research is having a direct impact on reporting human rights violations and definitions of racism. CURA's project, 'Conversing with Goliath? Participation, mobilisation and repression in neo-extractivist and environmental conflicts in Mexico', has produced a 12-year newspaper database review of the extractive industry in Mexico. The database is being used by non-governmental organisations to review human rights violations against landholders and environmentalists in Latin America. Findings from research by the CURA's Dr Ben Whitham have shaped the definition of Islamophobia proposed by a cross-party parliamentary inquiry and subsequently been adopted by political parties, local councils and other organisations. The research explored lived experiences of urban Islamophobia in the context of austerity.

Areas of expertise

CURA has expertise in a variety of fields, disciplines and subjects linked to urban studies, including politics, public policy, sociology, geography, law, industrial relations, business and management. Research interests cover austerity, governance, labour, urban dimensions of racialised inequalities, and revitalizing cities, with four key themes cross-cutting these priorities: the new municipalism, urban informality, intersectionality, culture and Latin American urban studies.

Austerity governance and resistance

- Austerity urbanism and governance under austerity
- Practices of austerity governance
- Spatial governance including neighbourhood and place
- New municipalism

Primary contact

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Urban labour

- Labour activism and collective organisation
- Informal and precarious work and everyday life
- Urban social movements and resistance
- Extractivism and urban violence

Primary contact

Dr Adam Fishwick
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Urban revitalization

- Local economic development
- Quality of life and inclusive growth
- Place making, identity, and the living realm
- Culture, arts, and social-culture equity
- The city as a resource

Primary contact

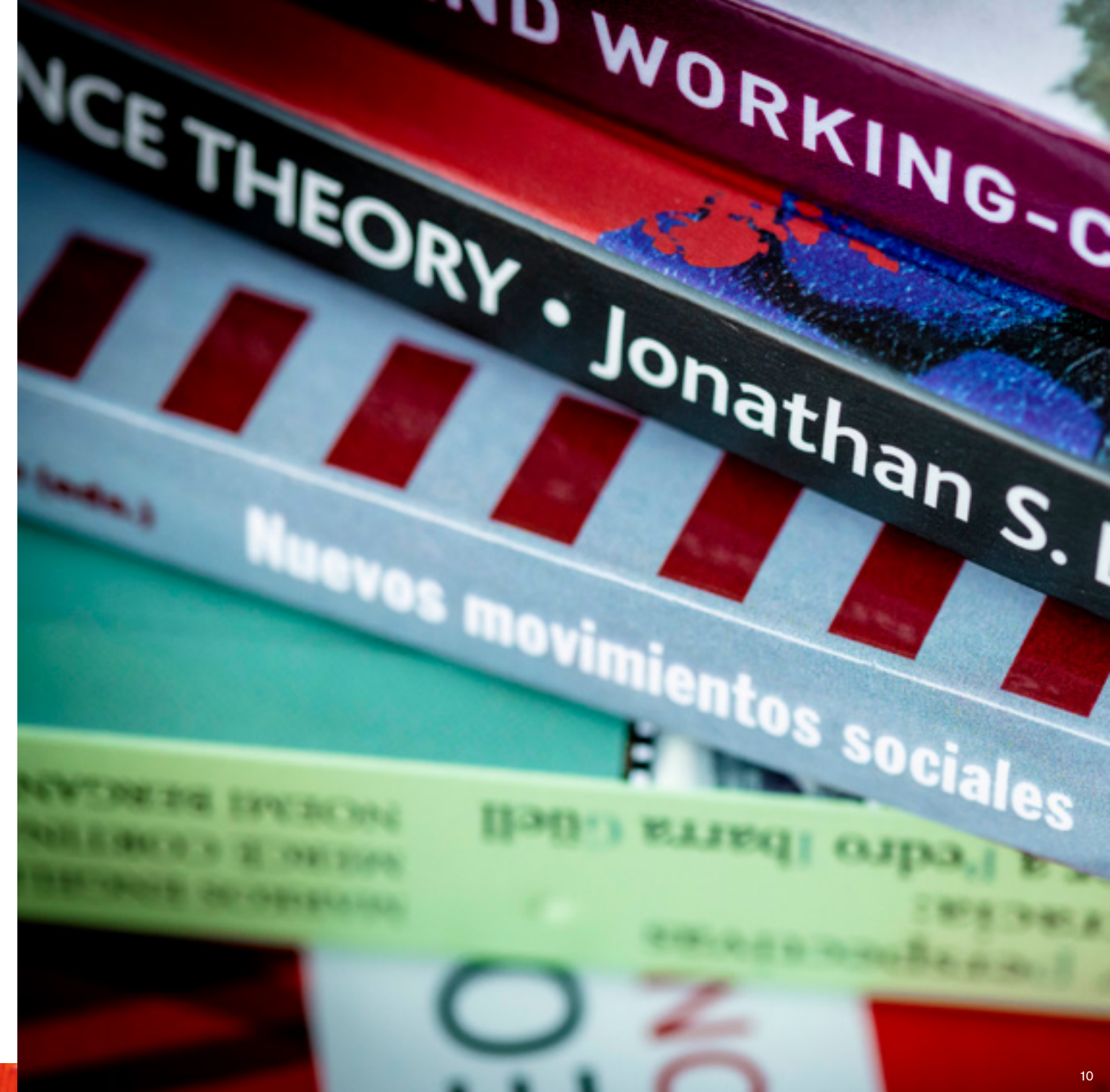
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Racialised inequalities

- How austerity is produced through and experienced as racialised violence
- Gendered dimensions of racial inequality
- The racialisation of urban space and resistance
- Structural inequalities intersecting with race - class, gender and disability

Primary contact

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Postgraduate research study options

There is a vibrant community of postgraduate research students within our institute, and students are included in its seminar series, conferences, workshops and training events. Students are also supported by the Institute Head of Research Students and can access additional training and support from the DMU Doctoral College.

Enquiries are welcomed from potential postgraduate research students in politics, public policy, sociology, geography, law, industrial relations and business and management. Research interests span across three themes of austerity governance, labour, and revitalizing cities. For further information about specific areas of research within these themes, and potential supervisors for projects visit the institute webpage at dmu.ac.uk/cura

MA in Urban Studies

This new taught MA is a high-profile research-led international programme in Urban Studies. It draws on the critical urban research traditions developed in close collaboration with CURA. Combining the study of politics, urban studies, urban geography and political economy and the development of a participatory action research project, this course provides the theoretical knowledge, analytical tools and professional skills needed to address urban topics such as local governance, local socio-political and economic innovation, social inequalities and urban sustainability.

MSc in Urban Studies by Research

If you would like to experience carrying out research but are not sure that you want to commit to long-term study then the MSc by Research is an excellent introduction. This offers the opportunity to pursue an individual research project in an area of your interest while benefitting from the support of expert supervision. For full-time students the course takes 12-15 months, or 24-30 months for part-time students.

Research degree PhD

This offers the opportunity to pursue an in-depth individual research project in an area of your interest while benefitting from the support of expert supervision. For full-time students, a PhD takes two to three years, or three to four years for part-time students. The major distinction between the Master's and Doctorate awards is that your training within the PhD programme will prepare you for your future role as an independent researcher, which is highly valued by employers both in academic research and other walks of life.

For both master's and doctoral level study you will have two supervisors who are experts in your research area to support you.

For further information, please contact:
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Funding and tuition fees

Access to funding for research degrees including MA, MSc, or a PhD will form a key part of the decision-making process, and there are several opportunities to explore. To find out more, visit dmu.ac.uk/DCscholarships



How to apply

Entry criteria

Applicants should typically:

- Have a UK bachelor's degree equivalent to a 2:1 or higher for PhD study, Masters with at least Merit, or an academic or professional qualification which the Research Degrees Committee Review Panel deems to be equivalent
- Be able to demonstrate competence in the use of the English language. A minimum score of 6.5 in an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or equivalent is required. This includes a minimum score of 5.5 in each of the test components, taken no more than two years prior to entry

For more information, contact the Doctoral College by emailing pgradmissions@dmu.ac.uk

English language support

Our dedicated Centre for English Language Learning offers a range of courses designed to help international students improve their language skills, before and during their studies.

The centre is accredited by the British Council for the quality of its teaching, so students can be sure they are receiving the highest standard of English language tuition. It is also a member of the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes.


For more information visit dmu.ac.uk/cell

Start dates

There are typically three start dates each year:

- January – application submission deadline is in November
- April – application submission deadline is in February
- October – application submission deadline is in August

For more information, contact the Doctoral College at pgradmissions@dmu.ac.uk



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The content of this document is correct at the time of going to print. You are advised to check our website before making an application in case there are any changes to the course you are interested in, as the contents of the website will always take precedence.

September 2020