

## Postgraduate Admissions: Academic and Professional References

### **Taught Masters applicants** (MSc, MA, PG Dip, PG Cert, MRes)

You are required to provide the contact details for one academic referee. We do not usually require a reference, but on occasion further assessment of your application might be needed in which case we will contact your referee to ask for a reference. You do not need to source the reference or submit it yourself as part of your application.

### **Research degrees applicants** (PhD, Phil, MA/MSc by research)

You are required to provide the contact details for two academic referees. As part of your application the Postgraduate Admissions team will contact your referees. You do not need to source the references or submit them yourself as part of your application.

### **Choosing your referee**

References when needed are an important part of the selection process for postgraduate study. It is therefore in your interest to make sure that you choose a referee able to provide an appropriate and informative reference. Normally, we would expect you to provide an academic reference if you have graduated within the last five years. However, if you graduated more than five years ago then alternative professional references will be considered. Professional references could come from your employer, a senior member from a voluntary organisation, or a recognised society.

### **To the referee**

Thank you for acting as a referee for a Postgraduate applicant to the University of York.

If you're unable to supply a reference, please let the applicant know as soon as possible so they can nominate another referee.

#### **What do I need to provide?**

If you are providing an academic reference, please focus on the student's abilities and skills, and, as relevant, provide context of any noteworthy activity, and how these are relevant to the programme they are applying for.

For a student who is yet to complete their degree, please provide their expected final result and any interim grades. It may be useful to explain any discrepancy between the two.

If possible, we ask you to comment on the following specific areas.

- Comment on the applicant's abilities, which can include: analytical reasoning; ability to work independently; originality; ability to work with others.
- Comment on the applicant's personal qualities, which can include: motivation; perseverance; breadth of interest; technical competence.
- Comment on any notable academic or professional achievements that you consider relevant to

the qualification applied for, such as challenges the applicant overcame during study.

Your reference should:

- state your name, your role and in what capacity and for how long you have known the applicant
- provide specific examples of projects or tasks they have conducted and the results achieved
- be between 350 to 1,000 words
- be in English
- either be completed on official headed paper and be signed, or sent from a recognised educational or business email address

Please do not discuss protected characteristics, and, where possible, please write gender neutral references.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), references received by the University may be disclosed to the applicant; you may therefore wish to confine yourself to statements of fact and academic or professional judgement.

Please forward your completed reference directly to [pg-admissions@york.ac.uk](mailto:pg-admissions@york.ac.uk). If you have any queries regarding the submission of references please contact the Postgraduate Admissions team.

**Contact us**

Email: [pg-admissions@york.ac.uk](mailto:pg-admissions@york.ac.uk) or phone: +44 (0)1904 322 142