Durham University
School of Education
Visiting Scholar Policy

Title:	Visiting Scholar Policy
Policy effective from:	AY2021-22
Latest approval/review date:	August 2026
To be read in conjunction with:	

Introduction

The School of Education welcomes applications from academics and practitioners to its Visiting Scholars Programme. The School is recognised as one of the top Education Departments both in the UK and globally.

Visitors will have the opportunity to be involved in some of the activities within the School of Education and are encouraged to contribute to the School's research environment. Amongst the benefits, the visitor will be entitled to make use of the University's research facilities and libraries, in addition to attending seminars, lectures and other academic gatherings ordinarily closed to the general public.

Visitor Programme Objectives

We expect the Visiting Scholar Programme to contribute positively to the overall research and learning environment of the School of Education and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The aims of the Visitor Programme are to:

- Offer external academics and interested professionals the opportunity to carry out research with a view to publishing their work.
- Enhance the research community at the School of Education through the active participation of visiting scholars in academic life at Durham, for example through the delivery of guest lectures or through their participation in the various projects and centres.
- Further develop and promote external research links with other universities, institutions, and practitioners in the United Kingdom and overseas.
- Provide School of Education staff and research students with the opportunity to work with and learn from academics from outside Durhams.
- The Visiting Scholars Programme is not intended to be used to mainly audit teaching modules, and therefore it will only be possible for a visitor to audit one module during their visit.

Provision of Resources

The visitor will receive:

- A University Card.
- The sponsorship of a School of Education staff member, who will meet with the visitor and provide guidance and advice when the visitor first arrives in Durham. It should be noted that it is up to the individual visitor to arrange this initial meeting with their sponsor.
- Full access to the Durham University Library and all other University Library Services.
- Permission to attend lectures and seminars run by the School of Education (by arrangement).
- Permission to join in the activities of the various discussion groups that are active during term time (by arrangement).
- The visitor’s email address will be added to the staff mailing list, and they will be notified of any School of Education events that may be of interest or relevance.
- The visitor is also welcome to attend other School talks, lectures, and events as appropriate.
- Visiting scholars may identify themselves as 'Visiting Scholar, School of Education' during their period at the school.
- Durham University provides wireless access points throughout the School of Education and on campus, to which visitors will have access. Visitors are therefore welcome to bring their own laptops with them but must be aware that all laptops must have suitable and regularly updated anti-virus software and must have up-to-date critical updates for Windows.
- An induction to using the library can be arranged by prior arrangement.

Visitor Contribution

Visiting Scholars are expected to contribute actively to academic life in the school, through participating in research seminars relevant to their research. The following is a list of other ways in which a visitor can make this contribution:

- Invite or organise a reciprocal visit to your own institution for a member/members of the school or graduate students.
- Participate in the organisation of an event (seminar, workshop, conference) within the School of Education.
- Participate actively in one of the research groups (by arrangement with the cluster lead of that research cluster). For a list of research groups, see Clusters & Projects - Durham University

Duration

Visiting Scholars may be based at Durham for a period from a month to a year. We give preference to applications for longer stays to allow scholars to engage in research with academics working in related fields. Applicants are strongly encouraged to plan their stay to cover at least part of an academic term, to maximise their exposure to the research community in the department. Members of the School of Education may be less available outside of these Academic Dates - Durham University

Sponsorship

Although the Visiting Scholar will be independent and responsible for his or her own research activities and work agenda whilst in Durham, the School of Education considers it a priority that visiting scholars be welcomed into our research community and be integrated as much as practicable in the work of the department. The expectation that visiting scholars contribute actively to the research environment at Durham is met through the provision of a sponsor.

Prospective visiting scholars must identify a possible sponsor and contact them prior to submitting an application. Staff lists and research interests can be found at People - Durham University

Once that sponsor has been identified, applications should ask the sponsor for a brief statement of support (no more than one A4 page or about 250 words). The sponsor should indicate clearly that they are familiar with the applicant's work and support the application, and that they undertake to act as the applicant's sponsor during their research stay. Sponsors should also indicate how they might promote the active participation of the visiting scholar at Durham.

The statement of support from the academic sponsor should be included with the application. It is up to the applicant to identify a prospective sponsor and to contact that person to request a statement of support. No application will be considered without a statement of support from a School of Education staff member.

Upon arrival at Durham, the Visiting Scholar's sponsor will introduce the scholar to other members of the research community at Durham who work in similar areas of research, will invite visiting scholars to any research clusters or other events, and will otherwise be available to provide some assistance to visiting scholars. The sponsor should also facilitate the visiting scholar's active contribution to research (see Section 4, 'Visitor's Contribution', above).

It may come to pass that a sponsor may not be present for the duration of a scholar's research stay. In such situations, the sponsor and the visiting scholar will be responsible for approaching and identifying a second academic sponsor who might continue to provide support in their absence.

Financing

Visiting Scholars are charged a bench fee of £2000 per annum or £175 monthly.

Visiting Scholars should apply for research funding schemes through their own home institution or equivalent. The academic visitor will be responsible for his/her own travel, accommodation and maintenance costs. Scholars are responsible for ensuring that they have the correct travel documentation, including visas.

Visas and Work Permits

The School of Education can supply an official letter confirming acceptance as a Visiting Scholar that can be used to support any application that made, but unfortunately the School of Education cannot assist the applicant

with an application for a visa or work permit for the purpose of the visit.

Reporting

Prior to their arrival, Visiting Scholars will be asked to provide the School of Education with a short biography and a statement about what they intend to do during their visit.

At the end of their stay, Visiting Scholars will be asked to provide a short report, providing a brief account of any research or other activities undertaken and how they have contributed to the School during their stay.

Visiting scholars will agree to work with their academic hosts to produce Visiting Scholar Reports for the Research Committee. These reports should include a summary of the research activity undertaken and the outcomes achieved (or progress towards them) as set-out in their applications. For visitors who are at the School of Education for six months or longer, an interim report is required half way through their visit and then a final report at the end of their visit. For visitors here for up to six months, only a final report is required at the end of the visit.

In addition, the School of Education requests that any Visiting Scholar who uses their visit for research purposes, and subsequently publishes material arising from this research, send the School a copy or off-print of any book, article or any other publication which results.

Application Procedure

Please note this is the ONLY way to apply to be a Visiting Scholar in the School of Education. Applications that do not follow this procedure will not be considered. This scheme is not available to PhD researchers. If you are currently a postgraduate research student, please see visiting research students.

The following information will be required in the application:

- A completed Visiting Scholars Application form.
- Letter of support from the School of Education contact person (see sponsorship above) and the name(s) of any members of the School's staff with whom you have previously had academic contact. The letter of support must indicate how the visiting scholar will contribute to research in the School.
- A curriculum vitae, including a list of publications.
- Two references.
- A statement to the effect that the visiting scholar has sufficient fluency and command of oral English to enable them to participate actively in individual and group discussions throughout the period of their stay.

Please email your completed application form and accompanying documents to ed.research@durham.ac.uk

Please note no application will be considered without a supporting letter from a School of Education staff member.

Due to the large number of applications we receive each year, the School of Education is unable to accommodate all those who express interest in visiting for research purposes. In selecting applicants for visiting scholar status, the school's Research Committee considers the nature of the applicant's proposal [including the anticipated research output(s)], the expected duration of their research, prior academic experience, and the contribution that the visit will make to the research environment of the School of Education. Applicants are expected to be affiliated with a university, research institute or governmental programme in their home country.

An application does not guarantee acceptance, and we can only offer places within the School of Education to visitors under the sponsorship of a staff member. It is important to note that there are times during the academic year when there may not be a suitable member available to act as sponsor, and therefore we may have to refuse such an application.

All applications will be reviewed by the school's Research Committee.

If the application is successful, we will contact the Visiting Scholar to agree the exact dates, activities, and practicalities.