Postgraduate Research Student Induction

24 September 2019

School of Life Sciences and the Environment

ROYAL HOLLOWAY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Today's session

- Welcome from the School Director PGR Education
- School of Life Sciences and the Environment structure
- Links to key references
- Expectations by year - incl. attendance / engagement (Tier 4)
- How to work with your supervisor - incl. supervision log / frequency of meetings
- Research training
- Review of academic progress
- Ethics
- Staff Student Committee
- Health and Safety / Doctoral School / Wellbeing - intros. from College representatives

Welcome from the School Director PGR Education

- A brand-new school, bringing together four world-leading departments
- Huge disciplinary coverage from arts and humanities, to social sciences, to clinical research, to natural and physical sciences
- We have students embarking on MSc by research degrees, DClinPsy degrees (Psychology), and MPhil/PhD degrees
- Postgraduate research students (PGRs) supported at departmental, school, and college level
- Ambition is for the school to help support interdisciplinary and collaborative research at PGR level
- Whether you are here for one or six years, I hope you will find your time here stimulating, supportive, and memorable

• School of Life Sciences and the Environment structure

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Biological Sciences

PGR Lead **Dr Mikhail Soloviev** (Mikhail.Soloviev@rhul.ac.uk)

PGR Deputy **Dr Laurence Bindschedler** (Laurence.Bindschedler@rhul.ac.uk)

Earth Sciences

PGR Lead **Professor Margaret Collinson** (M.Collinson@rhul.ac.uk)

Geography

PGR Lead **Dr Innes M. Keighren** (Innes.Keighren@rhul.ac.uk)

Psychology

PGR Lead **Dr Dawn Watling** (Dawn.Watling@rhul.ac.uk)

PGR Deputy **Professor Narender Ramnani** (N.Ramnani@rhul.ac.uk)

• Links to key references

Research degree regulations:

https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/assets/docs/pdf/academic-regulations/academic-regulations-2019-20/14.-research-degree-regulations-2019-20fv.pdf

Code of practice for research degree students and supervisors:

https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/assets/docs/pdf/academic-regulations/academic-regulations-2019-20/15.-code-of-practice-for-research-students-and-supervisors-2019-20fv.pdf

PGR Student Handbook: https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/pgr-student-handbook-201920.aspx

Doctoral School microsite:

https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/home.aspx

• Expectations by year for MPhil/Phd students (MSc by Research explained at departmental level)

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	Your PhD Research	PhD Training, etc.	Career Planning
Year 1	▪ A clearly defined research topic ▪ Ethical clearance ▪ A draft of good quality written work ▪ Fieldwork/labwork	▪ Researcher Development Programme (RDP) ▪ Annual reviews ▪ PhD Annual Conference/Symposium ▪ RHUL Annual PhD conference ▪ Departmental Seminars	▪ Career direction ▪ Workshops to improve your skills ▪ Create a PURE profile
Year 2	▪ PhD upgrade ▪ Fieldwork/labwork ▪ Analysing data ▪ Writing up the thesis ▪ Writing up publications	▪ Researcher Development Programme (RDP) ▪ Annual reviews (including upgrade meeting if not in Year 1) ▪ PhD Annual Conference/Symposium ▪ RHUL Annual PhD conference ▪ Departmental Seminars	▪ External conferences, etc.
Year 3	▪ Analysing data ▪ Writing up the thesis ▪ Writing up publications	▪ Researcher Development Programme (RDP) ▪ Annual reviews ▪ PhD Annual Conference/Symposium ▪ RHUL Annual PhD conference ▪ Departmental Seminars	▪ CV/job application ▪ Publications ▪ External conferences

• Study timeline

Level of programme	Deadline for upgrade to PhD	Deadline for submission of thesis*
Masters by Research	N/A	1 year (FT – full time)
MPhil	N/A	3 years (FT)
PhD	1st attempt within 20 months (FT) 2nd attempt (if required) within 24 months (FT)	4 years (FT)

* If you are studying part-time, double the period.

As these deadlines are based on the start date on your student record, it is very important that this start date is recorded correctly. If your start date has been postponed, make sure you submit a change of start date form within the first 6 months of your study.

• Tier 4 (General) student visa

The Tier 4 visa imposes some important conditions/restrictions:

- You are not permitted to change your start date in our records once you have used your CAS in a visa application.
- If you interrupt your studies, the College will withdraw its sponsorship for the duration of your interruption and you are obliged by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to leave the UK for this period.
- You will not be permitted to change to part-time, under the restrictions of our sponsorship.
- It is a requirement of your visa that you attend classes and supervisory sessions, and complete assessments. The College has a legal responsibility to report any student admitted to the College on a student visa who does not appear to be meeting the attendance requirements to UKVI.
- Please ensure that you receive approval from your supervisor prior to undertaking research abroad so that the College can update details of your study location with the UKVI, as required by the UKVI. If you do not do this you will be risking the continuation of your Tier 4 sponsorship with the College.
- You may be eligible for the Doctorate Extension Scheme, which allows you to remain the UK for another 12 months after your PhD study has ended.

• How to work with your supervisor

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First steps

Arrange your first formal meeting with your supervisor (know, variously, as your main, lead, first, or principal supervisor)

Establish mutual expectations

- Frequency of meetings
- General ways of working and communication
- What do you prepare in advance for each meeting?
- Record meetings using the log? https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/assets/docs/doc/pgr-record-of-supervisor-contacts.docx

Agree your supervisory team (everyone should have, at least, a supervisor, a second supervisor and/or an adviser)

Discuss potential training needs – Training needs and analysis tool

https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/assets/docs/doc/updatetrainingrequirementsandneedsanalysistool-2016.docx

• How to work with your supervisor

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Next steps

Attend the RDP session 'Getting the Most from your Supervisor'

What your supervisor does for you

- Consolidate your research topic/question
- Suggest appropriate reading materials
- Advise on techniques and methods
- Provide feedback on work practices (including written work and oral presentations)
- Identify research ethics queries
- Advise on career development (including conference attendance and publication plans)

• How to work with your supervisor (cont.)

What you can do for your supervisor

Keep in regular contact with your supervisor **(Respond to your emails!)**

Keep to deadlines

Send materials promptly, allowing time to read

Keep to agreed working practices

Be clear in terms of the guidance you need (never be afraid to ask questions)

Research Training

All full-time MPhil/PhD students* should attend an average of at least **5** days training per academic year, (2.5 days for part time students) which can be made up of the following

- RDP – Moodle https://moodle.royalholloway.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=1861.

  Details at College Induction.

- Department-specific training

  Each department offers a programme of discipline-specific training, seminars, workshops, and events. Further details will be provided at the departmental induction.

- External training, events, and conferences

  Events organised by learned societies, research councils, etc. count towards your training days.

Remember to discuss and complete your 'Training Needs Analysis Tool' during your first term. Thereafter keep a 'Research Training Log'. This forms part of your annual review.

* MSc by Research students welcome to attend too in almost all cases.

• Review of academic progress

All full- and part-time students should be formally reviewed at least once every 12 months. MSc by Research students reviewed during the year.

Each department has specific protocols and expectations for these review meetings. These will be explained in the departmental inductions.

All documents can be found on the Doctoral School microsite

https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/pgr-student-lifecycle/annual-review-and-upgrade/annual-review-and-upgrade.aspx

• Review of academic progress

Approximately mid-way in the doctoral programme, you will have an upgrade meeting that reviews your progress to date.

Research degree students who wish to submit for a PhD are required to have a first attempt at an upgrade from the MPhil to PhD programme within the first 20 months of study (Full-time) or 40 months (Part-time).

Should the first attempt not be successful, students have an opportunity for a second, and final attempt at an upgrade from MPhil to PhD before the end of their second year of study (24 months Full-time) or four years (48 months Part-time).

For the upgrade meeting, you typically submit **a)** a substantial piece of written work with a full bibliography, together with any other required pieces of work, or a piece of practice-based work relevant to their chosen topic of study; **b)** an 'annual report' of work done, including evidence of an understanding of the literature (e.g., a literature review or an appropriate piece of written work), with a timetabled research plan for the next year / completion.

• Ethics

As part of the annual review process, you will need to be able to confirm that you have discussed the ethical implications of your research with your supervisor.

All researchers have a duty to:

- Ensure that all research is subject to active and appropriate consideration of ethical issues.
- Comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, and by employers, funders and other relevant stakeholders.

Full details of the relevant policies can be found on the College website:

https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/staff/research/research-and-enterprise/research-enterprise/ethics/home.aspx

• Ethics

You should record an ethical self assessment before commencing work on a new research project. This should be completed with your supervisor.

You will be guided as to whether ethical approval for their project is required and, if so, an automatic link to the online ethical review form will be generated.

1. Will the research project involve the use of human participants or human tissue (with or without their knowledge or consent at the time)?
2. Are the results of the research project likely to expose any person or community to physical or psychological harm?
3. Will the research project involve the use of animals as research subjects?
4. Will you have access to personal information that allows you to identify individuals or company confidential information (that is not covered by confidentiality terms within an agreement or by a separate confidentiality agreement)?
5. Does the conduct of the research project present a significant risk to the environment or society?
6. Are there any other ethical issues raised by this research project that in the opinion of the PI require further ethical review?
7. Does the PI believe that the results of this research could reasonably lead to legal action or negative press coverage, for which the PI would require University support?

• Staff Student Committee

The School is committed to ensuring that it is an effective, fair, and supportive environment for its postgraduate researchers.

We are keen for your voice to be heard in order to help us shape our provision and the School's strategy.

A new PGR Staff-Student Committee will be formed this autumn on which postgraduate representatives from each of the four departments will sit.

The Committee, supported by the Doctoral School, will meet each term.

Details of the Committee (and the appointment of representatives) will be circulated soon.

• Next steps

In the coming days, there are induction events at departmental and college level:

Biological Sciences	Earth Sciences
Date: Wednesday 25 September Time: 9:45am - 3pm Venue: Bourne 602-3	Date: Tuesday 24 September Time: 2 - 4:00pm Venue: Queens Building 205
Geography	**Psychology**
Date: Tuesday 24 September Time: 11am - 3pm Venue: Queens Building 136 Plus: PG Forum - Wednesday 25 September - Queens Building 170. 11am.	Date: Tuesday 24 September Time: 2 - 5pm Venue: Wolfson 130a
College induction for PGR students	
Date: Wednesday 2 October Time: 2 - 4:30pm Venue: Windsor Auditorium	