



RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019/20



This handbook should be read in conjunction with the [appendix](#) for your department

Royal Holloway Doctoral School

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Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2019 and was correct at that time. The Doctoral School reserves the right to modify any statement if necessary, make variations to the content or methods of delivery of programmes of study, to discontinue programmes, or merge or combine programmes if such actions are reasonably considered to be necessary by the College. Every effort will be made to keep disruption to a minimum, and to give as much notice as possible.

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1. Introduction to the College

1.1 Welcome

Welcome to Royal Holloway. Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter 'the College') is one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities, with six academic schools spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences and a Doctoral School. The College combines world-class research with a truly global perspective while at the same time offering a campus and community with an intimate human scale. As a student studying toward a research degree with the College, you will have the opportunity to learn from internationally renowned academics and researchers.

During the course of your time with the College, you will pursue independent research in your academic department, which sits within one of the [six academic schools](#). The College offers a number of research degree programmes: Master of Arts by Research, Master of Science by Research, Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy), Doctorate in Professional Studies (DPS) and Doctorate of Medicine (Research) (MD (Research)). Your successful progress will depend primarily on your own efforts, supported by your supervisors, but also on the research environment in your department and the quality of the research training you receive.

1.2 Doctoral School

[Welcome message from Professor Katie Normington, Head of the Doctoral School](#)

The Royal Holloway Doctoral School brings together key aspects of research student life, aiming to ensure that research students are fully integrated as members of the College's research community and to provide you with opportunities to meet and share ideas and experiences across our six academic schools. The Doctoral School will support you throughout your progress, ensuring availability of relevant contemporary research skills and employment training alongside the highest standards of administrative and pastoral support.

The Doctoral School microsite will keep you informed of news and events which may be of interest to you as a postgraduate researcher. It is also a key repository of information and advice on subjects such as funding, changes to your registration status and the examination process. It provides you with easy access to a variety of documentation and guides that you may need during your studies.

Professor Katie Normington is the Head of the Doctoral School
Professor Rosemary Deem is the Doctoral School Director (Quality, Enhancement and Inclusion)

[Discover what the Doctoral School means for you](#)
[Browse the Doctoral School microsite](#)

1.3 Your department and school

Please refer to the relevant department [appendix](#) for details on the staff and research areas within your department and school.

[Find the location of your academic school on the campus map](#)

2 Support and advice

2.1 Research Degree regulations and Code of Practice

The [Research Degree regulations](#) set out the various standards that shape the regulatory framework of your research degree with the College. This contains a variety of essential information, ranging from admissions to academic progression and examination.

The [Code of Practice for Research Degree students and supervisors](#) sets out good practice alongside additional information on the policies and procedures that support the standards and expectations of the College.

2.2 Support within your academic school

Your supervisor or a member of your supervisory team should always be the first point of contact for any questions or concerns you may have about your programme of study or your research. In addition, the School Director of PGR Education exercises overall responsibility for the welfare and academic progress of the research students within your school.

If you are teaching alongside your research, your school administration office will support you with HR queries, as well as dealing with your expenses (in most cases) and study space within the school.

2.3 Doctoral School

The Royal Holloway Doctoral School provides a centre of expertise to support you with [non-academic issues](#) throughout your student journey, from induction right through to your award. You can phone us, email us or come and visit our friendly and knowledgeable team.

Phone: 01784 27 6886
Email: doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Visit the Doctoral School office](#)

2.4 Student Services Centre

The Student Services Centre is located in the Davison Building and provides support for non-PGR-specific areas such as accommodation, fees, enrolment and graduation.

Phone: 01784 27 6641
Email: studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about the Student Services Centre](#)

2.5 Student Advisory & Wellbeing

The College offers a high level of student wellbeing support which includes triage and support through Student Wellbeing, a BACP accredited Counselling Service, dedicated disability & dyslexia support, financial and budgeting advice and support for international students. There is also access to an NHS-run Health Centre on campus.

[Find out more about Student Advisory & Wellbeing](#)
[Student Advisory & Wellbeing staff directory](#)

2.5.1 Student Wellbeing

Student Wellbeing provides advice and guidance to all students on personal and emotional wellbeing, to assist them in maintaining a healthy balanced lifestyle and to support them from transition to university and then in the continuation of their studies towards graduation. The Student Wellbeing team actively encourages all members of the campus community to alert them to concerns or signs of vulnerability to enable proactive engagement with intervention.

Phone: 01784 44 3395 / 44 3132 / 27 6757
Email: wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about Student Wellbeing](#)

2.5.2 Disability & Dyslexia Services (DDS)

If you have a disability, long standing medical condition or specific learning difficulty, it is important that you bring it to the College's attention as soon as possible.

The College Disability & Dyslexia Services support dyslexic and disabled students and those with mental health or chronic medical conditions to demonstrate their academic abilities by arranging support packages, dyslexia assessments and study skills sessions.

Phone: 01784 27 6473
Email: disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about Disability & Dyslexia Services](#)

2.5.3 International Student Support Office (ISSO)

The International Student Support Office offers advice to international students on visa queries, working in the UK, opening a bank account, processing federal loans and police registration.

Phone: 01784 27 6222 / 6168
Email: internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about the International Student Support Office](#)

2.5.4 Financial Wellbeing

The Financial Wellbeing team offer advice and guidance on a variety of financial matters

Phone: 01784 414633
Email: moneymatters@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about Financial Wellbeing](#)

2.6 Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London (SURHUL) Advice and Support Centre

The Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London (SURHUL) is a registered charity and actively represents the students of Royal Holloway University of London. SURHUL promotes your needs and interests by offering employment, participation, entertainment, support and advice, your clubs and societies, catering, transport, volunteering, campaigning and advocacy.

Phone: 01784 27 6700
Email: helpdesk@su.rhul.ac.uk
Website: su.rhul.ac.uk

2.7 IT Service Desk

The College IT Service Desk offers a range of support covering all aspects of IT services, such as email access, connecting to the College's wireless network, connecting devices such as iPads and making use of College printing facilities. The IT Service Desk will also be able to provide expert advice and guidance on a range of more specific IT issues, should you experience any problems. They offer a range of free software, including Microsoft Office 365, Sofos Antivirus, NVivo and SPSS.

Phone: 01784 41 4321
Email: itservicedesk@royalholloway.ac.uk
In person: Visit the IT support office in the Davison Library (ground floor)

[Find out more about IT services](#)

3 Communication

3.1 Your College email account

The College provides an email address for you free of charge and stores the address in a College email directory. Your account is easily accessible, both on and off campus, via [CampusNet](#) or direct via [Outlook.com](#). It is essential to note that this email account will be used for all routine correspondence and news from the College. Your College email will very likely also be used for urgent communication, including correspondence from your supervisors so it is vital that you check your emails regularly.

In the event that you would prefer to use a commercial email service, you are able to connect your College email account so that it automatically forwards any messages you receive.

[Instructions how to forward mail](#)

3.2 Internal post

All post addressed to you in your department will be delivered via internal mail to the department's student pigeonholes (alphabetical by surname). At the end of each term student pigeonholes are cleared of accumulated mail so please try to ensure you check it at regular intervals. Please also note that Professional Services within the College will often send correspondence by internal post and your supervisor(s) may also return work to you via the pigeonholes.

3.3 Your contact information

It is imperative that the College has the most up-to-date contact details for you. Please ensure that you update the following via the Campus Connect student portal as quickly as possible once they are changed: your telephone number (mobile and landline), postal address (term-time and forwarding), email address and emergency contact details.

You can find out about how the College processes your personal data by reading the [Student Data Collection notice](#).

3.4 Researcher Monthly

The Doctoral School will send a '[Researcher Monthly](#)' email to your Royal Holloway email address at the end of each month. This provides details of events and opportunities for postgraduate researcher which are coming up in the following month, as well as updates on the research landscape.

4 Facilities and resources

4.1 Facilities and resources within your department and school

Please refer to the relevant department [appendix](#) for details on the facilities and resources within your department and school.

4.2 Computers

There are ten open access PC Labs available on campus which you can use, including three in the Computer Centre. For security reasons access to these PC Labs is restricted at night and at weekends by a door entry system operated via your College card.

[How to find an available PC](#)

4.3 Library

The College library, housed in the Davison Building, is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It provides more than 450,000 books and 36,000 journals in both print and digital format and a dedicated postgraduate room on the 2nd floor. The library contains a large number of PCs and provides laptops to borrow.

Phone: 01784 44 3823
Email: library@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about the library](#)

4.3.1 **Research Support**

The **Research Support team** in the library provides support on research information including copyright, Open Access publishing and developing your research information. The team can also provide advice for meeting research funders' requirements regarding Open Access. The team works with the Information Consultants to provide support throughout the research information cycle, from researching bids through to searching and accessing information for articles, books and other outputs through to submission of the PhD thesis and future career plans.

For training sessions and subject specific support, contact your Information Consultant who will be able to help you. Their details will be on the relevant **Subject Guide**, where you can also find details of resources available to you at Royal Holloway.

4.3.2 **Access to other libraries**

If you cannot find the specific items that you require in the College library, you also have access to the following:

- **Senate House Library**

This is the central library of the University of London, where you can borrow up to twelve books with a library ticket which you can obtain using your Royal Holloway College ID card

Address: Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU

Phone: 020 7862 8461

Website: senatehouselibrary.ac.uk

- **The British Library**

The British Library is the national collection and holds copies of all books published in the UK and Ireland, alongside an extensive collection from other countries. A Reader Pass will be issued subject to your need to see specific items in the collections. Royal Holloway theses are available via Ethos, the British Library's electronic theses service which contains approximately 400 000 records of UK theses including 160,000 available for immediate download of the full text.

Address: 96 Euston Road, London, NW1 2DB

Phone: 020 7412 7000

Website: bl.uk

- **SCONUL access scheme**

Royal Holloway participates in this national university access scheme which allows student to use other university libraries in the UK.

[SCONUL website](#)

4.4 Postgraduate research spaces

The College offers a number of areas specifically for postgraduate students outside of your own department.

- **The Herringham Room** (Founder's East)

The recently refurbished Herringham Room is designed as a space to bring together groups of staff and PGR students to work, relax and socialize, individually and collectively. It can be accessed via the SCR or from the Founder's Reading Room corridor in the South Tower.

[Find out more about the Herringham Room](#)

- **Research Postgraduate room in the library** (Davison Building)

The second floor of the library contains a [dedicated study area](#) for postgraduate students.

- **Highfield Common Room**

The room is for those living in postgraduate accommodation on the Highfield site. It can be booked through the reception at Highfield. The room offers easy chairs, TV and video, and food- and drink-vending machines. The room must be vacated by 11pm.

4.5 Careers & Employability Service

The College's Careers & Employability Service, based in the Davison Building, runs a number of industry themed weeks and a range of standalone events during the academic year including a careers fair in October.

One to one appointments are available all through the year, where you can talk over your career ideas or get your CV, cover letter or application checked. You can also book a practice, in person or video interview.

The Careers & Employability Service holds workshops over the academic year as part of the [Researcher Development Programme](#). The workshops deal with finding academic and non-academic roles and making relevant applications and interview skills.

Phone: 01784 44 3073

Email: careers@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about the Careers & Employability Service](#)

4.6 Parking on campus

Student parking is very limited and a parking permit is required, which can be obtained via Security. You will need proof of insurance and a suitable form of photographic ID before a permit will be issued

[Find out more about parking on campus](#)

5 Research skills and teaching

You should discuss your research skills training needs with your supervisor and adviser soon after you start your research degree and fill out the [Research Student Training Log](#) with details of courses that you should attend during the year.

5.1 Researcher Development Programme

The College's Researcher Development Programme is series of transferable skills courses designed for research students to help you to develop your skills alongside your research. Some of these courses are specifically designed to help students complete their research degree, while others help develop more general skills and enhance your employability.

Email: pgtraining@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about the Researcher Development Programme](#)

5.2 Teaching experience and training

Your department may be in a position to offer you opportunities to undertake teaching and/or demonstrating opportunities. In the event that you are employed in a lead teaching role, you are required to register for the College's inSTIL programme (Programme in Skills of Teaching to Inspire Learning). If you are teaching as part of a team, you may choose to do this programme but are not required to do so. You must be engaged in teaching at the same time as participating in inSTIL, as teaching observations are an intrinsic element of the programme. The inSTIL programme is worth 15 M level credits and counts as seven days towards your skills training objectives. Successful completion of inSTIL confers Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy: a valuable professional recognition.

Email: edc@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about the inSTIL programme](#)

6 Your registration status

Further details regarding the areas outlined in this section can be found in the [Research Degree Regulations](#).

6.1 Study timelines

In order to retain your registration status as a postgraduate research student at Royal Holloway, you should be aware of the following timelines (if you are studying part-time, double the period). Please note that all PhD students start on the MPhil must successfully complete their upgrade review in order to be eligible to submit for the PhD:

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

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. If you are sponsored on a Tier 4 (General) student visa, you are not permitted to change your start date in our records once you have used your CAS in a visa application.

These deadlines will be affected if you interrupt or change mode of attendance during your studies e.g. if you formally interrupt for 6 months, your submission deadline will extend by 6 months.

If you would like confirmation of your official start date or any of your deadlines, please contact doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk. If there are extenuating circumstances which make it unlikely that you will be able to meet these deadlines, it is essential that you raise this with your supervisor / supervisory team as soon as possible.

6.2 Interrupting your studies

The [Research Degree Regulations](#) permit you to interrupt your studies for up to twenty-four months (whether consecutively or otherwise) on financial, medical or personal grounds on the recommendation of your supervisor. Any period of interruption will normally only be permitted on exceptional grounds and must be approved by the Doctoral School Director (Quality, Enhancement and Inclusion). Students are also entitled to request an interruption of studies for reasons of [maternity, paternity or adoption leave](#).

[Find out more on how to interrupt your studies](#)

It is essential that you contact your supervisor or the Doctoral School at the very earliest possibility, should you find that you require a period of interruption to your studies. Please note, a back-dated (or retrospective) interruption will only be considered on the most exceptional grounds and in cases where the interruption sought is for a very limited period.

It is also essential that adequate supporting evidence is submitted with the request. See appendix B of the College's [Extenuating Circumstances guidance notes](#) for advice on this. If you are still uncertain what evidence is suitable, please contact doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk. Where

applications are submitted that lack adequate supporting evidence, it is very likely that they will be denied or subject to significant delays.

During the course of your interruption of studies, you remain a registered student with the College and are subject to College Regulations. Unless you are interrupting your studies on the grounds of maternity, paternity or adoption, or in exceptional circumstances relating to mental health conditions, you do not have the right to use College facilities or receive supervision during the period of interruption, other than occasional access to your supervisor by arrangement.

6.2.1 *Interrupting if you are sponsored by the College on a Tier 4 (General) student visa*

If you interrupt your studies and you are in receipt of a Tier 4 (General) student visa sponsored by Royal Holloway, 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.

[Find out more on how to renew your visa](#)

In exceptional circumstances, you may be permitted an authorised absence for a period less than sixty days. Under this type of authorised absence you are permitted to remain in the UK for the duration but this will impact the amount of leave remaining on your visa to complete your studies. Authorised absence must be approved in the same way as an interruption. To discuss the authorised absence process please contact student-administration@royalholloway.ac.uk.

6.2.2 *Interrupting if you are funded by a Research Council or College scholarship*

It is essential that, prior to requesting the interruption, you check with your funding body whether the conditions of your scholarship permit you to interrupt your studies. For advice about this, please contact doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk.

If you are funded by a Research Council, please be aware of the following:

- Although the thesis submission deadline set by the College may be extended due to the interruption, it may not be extended by your Research Council. In such cases, the earlier Research Council deadline takes precedence. If you have queries regarding this, please contact doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk.
- If you have requested up to 13 weeks sick leave, your thesis submission deadline will not normally be affected by this period of leave.

[Find out more about interrupting when you are funded](#)

6.3 Changing your mode of attendance

The [Research Degree Regulations](#) permit you to change your mode of study from full-time to part-time within the first 2 years of your study and from part-time to full-time at any point.

If you are sponsored on a Tier 4 visa, you will not be permitted to change to part-time, under the restrictions of our sponsorship.

[Find out more about changing your mode of attendance](#)

6.4 Engagement with studies

According to the [Research Degree Regulations](#), if your attendance, academic performance or productivity is unsatisfactory, the termination of registration may be requested following a formal warning process. It is therefore essential that you alert your supervisor / supervisory team as soon as possible if you are experiencing difficulties with engaging with your studies so that the appropriate support and advice can be provided.

6.4.1 *Withdrawal of Tier 4 (General) student visa for non-engagement with studies*

If you are in receipt of a Tier 4 (General) student visa sponsored by Royal Holloway, it is a requirement of your visa that you attend classes and supervisory sessions, and complete assessments (see section 5 of the [Code of Practice for Research Degree students](#) for more details).

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 UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Therefore, if you fail to meet UKVI visa requirements and/or fail to respond to informal and formal warnings from the College in this regard, you could have your sponsorship withdrawn, your visa cancelled and your registration with the College terminated. The termination of registration due to a breach in visa requirements is conducted independently of the College's formal warning process and the decision is not open to appeal.

[Find out more about visas and immigration](#)

6.4.2 *Holiday*

You are entitled to up to eight weeks holiday within a 12 month period of registration. You should notify your supervisor in writing of any holidays taken.

7 Annual review and upgrade

Although you will meet with your supervisor regularly during the academic year, your academic progress is formally reviewed at least once every twelve months, unless you have interrupted your studies, in which case the review will take place not more than two months after you have formally resumed your studies.

Annual reviews, and upgrades for students registered for an MPhil/ PhD, are conducted in a face-to-face meeting between you and a panel. As a minimum the panel must consist of:

Annual review panel: At least one member of your supervisory team plus one member of staff completely independent of your supervisory team

Upgrade to PhD panel: Three members, with at least one member of your supervisory team and one member of staff who is completely independent of your supervisory team

It is important to remember that the upgrade from MPhil to PhD is not an automatic right. In the majority of cases, a panel will indicate that they are satisfied with a student's progress. In some cases, however, the panel may feel that the work presented does not meet the required standard for doctoral research. In such cases, your panel may permit you to have a second and final attempt.

See [section 6.1](#) for the deadlines by which the 1st and 2nd attempts at upgrade must take place. At the end of your annual review/ upgrade meeting, your panel will fill in a form detailing the

outcome of your review/upgrade, which provides you with an opportunity to add your own comments.

[Find out more about the annual review and upgrade process](#)

7.1 Ethics approval

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.

Email: ethics@royalholloway.ac.uk

[Find out more about the College's ethical approval process](#)

7.2 Your department's annual review and upgrade process

Please refer to the relevant department [appendix](#) for details of your department's annual review and upgrade process.

7.3 Special arrangements

If you have a disability, specific learning difficulty or impairment and wish to ask for reasonable adjustments to be made to the conduct of the viva, please discuss these with your supervisor ahead of the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

7.4 Extenuating circumstances

If you want the annual review or upgrade panel to be made aware of extenuating circumstances that have affected your study, you should submit your statement and supporting evidence to the panel Chair within the deadline set by the department/school for the submission of material for the upgrade or review (see department [appendix](#) for details).

In the case of circumstances relating only to your performance at the upgrade or review meeting, you should inform the panel members and submit the statement and supporting evidence within seven days of the meeting to the Doctoral School.

8 Research degree exam process

[Overview of Masters by Research exam process](#)

[Overview of MPhil / PhD exam process](#)

8.1 Submission of thesis

At least two months prior to submitting your thesis (or dissertation for Masters by Research candidates), you should submit an [exam entry form](#) to doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk, so that your examiners can be approved and be invited in good time before you submit. If there is a

delay in submitting the entry form, this does not affect your submission deadline but does mean that there may be a delay in the exam process once you have submitted the thesis.

The Research Degree Regulations stipulate that you must submit two bound copies of your thesis and one electronic copy of your thesis to the Doctoral School by your thesis submission deadline.

See [section 6.1](#) for thesis submission deadline information.

Please refer to the [Research Degree Regulations](#) and the [Instructions and notes on submission](#) for the requirements of the thesis.

[Find out more about the research degree submission process](#)

8.1.1 *Departmental guidance on your thesis*

Please refer to the relevant department [appendix](#) for your department's guidance on the thesis.

8.1.2 *Royal Holloway proofreading scheme*

CeDAS oversees the [Royal Holloway proofreading scheme](#), which enables students to pay for an approved third-party proofreader to identify surface error in final drafts. Please note, the College does not permit the use of paid third-party proofreaders who are not part of this scheme.

8.1.3 *Random submission of thesis to Turnitin*

To help deter plagiarism, it is College policy to select a random sample of final research degree theses for submission to the plagiarism detection software, Turnitin, before the examination process is initiated. Exemptions are in place for theses covered by commercial confidentiality agreements. Turnitin reports are reviewed by the School Director of PGR Education. Should concerns be raised, you will be notified by the Doctoral School.

8.1.4 *Plagiarism*

The College takes the issue of plagiarism and other academic misconduct extremely seriously. All new PGR students are required to complete the 'Avoiding Plagiarism' course in Moodle (moodle.royalholloway.ac.uk) prior to their first annual review. This 60 minute interactive online course is designed to ensure that students across all discipline areas follow best practice in referencing, paraphrasing and using citations

Please refer to the College's [Regulations on Academic Misconduct](#) for what constitutes academic misconduct, as well as the procedures to be followed for the investigation of alleged academic misconduct and possible outcomes

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8.2 *Viva*

If you are submitting for a Masters by Research, the default is that you will be assessed on the dissertation alone and will not be required to have an oral examination (viva) on your dissertation. Please note however that the examiners do have the discretion to request a viva once they have read the dissertation.

If you are submitting for an MPhil or PhD, however, you will be required to participate in a viva to defend your thesis. The viva should be organised by your supervisor.

8.2.1 Viva training

The College offers viva training for research student's final oral examination via the [Researcher Development Programme](#).

8.2.2 Departmental viva preparation

Please refer to the relevant department [appendix](#) for the viva training available in your department.

8.2.3 Special arrangements

If you have a disability, specific learning difficulty or impairment and wish to ask for reasonable adjustments to be made to the conduct of the viva, please indicate this on your exam entry form.

For further details, see section 16 of the [Research Degree Regulations](#)

8.2.4 Extenuating circumstances

In the case of extenuating circumstances relating to your performance at your viva, you should inform doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk prior to the viva, so that they can advise the examiners as appropriate and a decision can be made whether the viva should go ahead. If the viva does go ahead, you must submit an official request for the extenuating circumstances to be taken into account. This should be in writing and accompanied by supporting evidence and sent to doctoralschool@royalholloway.ac.uk within seven days of the viva.

8.2.5 Audio recording of viva

It is College policy that an audio recording will be made of all vivas.

- The recording will only be made during the viva between you and the examiners. No recording will be made of any discussion held before or after the viva when you are not present
- The recording will only be listened to in the event of an appeal made against the viva outcome and then only by a small number of staff who are involved in the investigation into the appeal
- The recording will be kept securely for 6 months after you have been informed of the outcome, after which time it will be destroyed

8.2.6 Viva outcomes

Please refer to the [Research Degree Regulations](#) for the range of outcomes available to your examiners.

8.3 Award process

8.3.1 Approval process

Once your examiners have confirmed to the Doctoral School that you have satisfied the criteria to be awarded your Masters by Research, MPhil or PhD, the outcome and examiners' reports will be sent to your School Director of PGR Education to approve on behalf of the College. The date of your award will be the 1st of the month following this approval.

If you have been awarded a Masters by Research, there are no further requirements before your award can be processed.

8.3.2 *Electronic submission of the final MPhil or PhD thesis*

If you have been awarded an MPhil or PhD, you need to upload an electronic version of the finalised thesis on to the College's research information system, Pure, before the award can be processed. The College strongly recommends that you check the details of these requirements well in advance of submission as they contain important information on copyright and Open Access.

[Find out more about submitting an e-thesis in Pure](#)

8.3.3 *Documentation*

Once your award has been processed by the Doctoral School, you will be sent an award letter on College headed paper which includes the date of your award and your thesis title. Your degree certificate will be sent to you by the Diploma Production Office in central London within 3 – 6 months of the award letter.

8.3.4 *Graduation*

As a postgraduate research student, you can attend either the Summer or the Winter Graduation ceremony.

To be eligible to attend the summer ceremony:

- Your award date must be no later than 1 June of that year
- You must have submitted your finalized thesis to Pure by 30 June at the very latest

To be eligible to attend the winter ceremony:

- Your award date must be no later than 1 November of that year
- You must have submitted your finalized thesis to Pure by 30 November at the very latest

[Find out more about the Graduation ceremonies](#)

8.3.5 *Doctorate Extension Scheme*

If you are being sponsored by Royal Holloway on a Tier 4 visa, 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. The timing of a Doctorate Extension Scheme application is key. Because of the forward planning that goes into the timing, we recommend getting in contact with the International Student Support Office about the scheme when you are ready to submit your initial thesis.

[Find out more about the Doctorate Extension Scheme](#)

9 Appeals and Complaints

9.1 Appeals

By submitting an academic appeal, you are making a request for a decision made by the College relating to your academic studies or academic progress to be reconsidered. This must be done within 15 working days of the date on which you were formally informed about the decision.

Sections 21 and 22 of the [Research Degree Regulations](#) set out the grounds on which you can appeal and the process to be followed.

If you have also submitted a complaint and your grounds for an academic appeal are effectively dependent on the outcome of the complaint, the College may determine that the complaint should be investigated first under the Complaints Procedure. The complaint investigation will be carried out first and your appeal investigation will be delayed until the complaint investigation is complete. The College will endeavour to complete these processes as quickly as possible. However, a thorough investigation takes time, so the College strongly advises that you continue to make plans on the basis of the decision as it currently stands.

[Find out more about academic appeals](#)

9.2 Complaints

A complaint is where, as a result of your experience at the College, you feel dissatisfied about the provision of services or facilities and would like your concerns to be investigated. Your concerns may be investigated under the Complaints procedure but normally only within three months of the incident or action being complained about.

If you have a complaint relating to any aspect of the department, or its staff, or to any academic or College matter, it is recommended that you first discuss it informally with your supervisor(s), advisor, School Director of PGR Education or another member of staff in the department or school as soon as possible. In the majority of cases complaints can be resolved through such an informal route.

In those cases where the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, you may want to submit a formal complaint.

[Find out more about complaints](#)

10 Student charter

The College aims to bring all students into a close, harmonious relationship with each other and with the wider community. The [Student charter](#) outlines how you can support the College in achieving these goals and also seeks to encourage you to act as an effective ambassador for the College, during your time as a student and later as part of the College's alumni

This charter is not intended to constitute a binding agreement but is offered as a framework of aspirations, designed to be of benefit primarily to you as a student and to underpin the College's aim of ensuring that you have a highly enjoyable and rewarding experience during the course of your research degree.

11 Feedback

11.1 Your School's PGR student-staff committee

PGR student-staff committees are held at school level. Please refer to the relevant department [appendix](#) for details of your school's PGR student-staff committee.

11.2 Surveys

As a research degree student, you will be asked to complete an online survey to feedback on your experience each year. This anonymous survey is really important and helps us make improvements around the College and tells us how well we're doing. It's a chance for us to gain valuable data to inform enhancements to the experience of postgraduate research.

12 Paid work

According to the [Code of Practice for Research Degree students and supervisors](#), any paid work you undertake to support your studies should not exceed 20 hours per week if you are registered as a full-time student. Once you have submitted your thesis however, this limit no longer applies. If you are a part-time student, there is no limit.

If you are an international student, you must also ensure that any working restrictions, as stated on your visa, are also adhered to.

13 Research abroad

If you are undertaking research abroad, please ensure that you agree this with your supervisor and ensure that details of the location and dates have been approved prior to undertaking the research.

If you are sponsored by the College for a Tier 4 (General) student visa, please ensure that you receive approval from your supervisor prior to undertaking the research 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.

14 Health and Safety Information

General health and safety policies

14.1 Code of practice on harassment for students

The College is committed to upholding the dignity of the individual and recognises that harassment can be a source of great stress to an individual. Personal harassment can seriously harm working, learning and social conditions and will be regarded and treated seriously. This could include grounds for disciplinary action, and possibly the termination of registration as a student.

The College's [Code of Practice on personal harassment for students](#) should be read in conjunction with the [Student Disciplinary regulations](#) and the [Complaints procedure](#).

14.2 Lone working policy and procedures

The principles and guidance around lone working are often highly applicable to the nature of postgraduate research and the variety of activities this might involve. As such, awareness and planning around any lone working you may be required to undertake are essential.

Any health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of your school's Health and Safety Coordinator or the College Health and Safety Office. It is likely that most activities will take place on College premises. However, the principles also apply to students undertaking duties off campus.

[Find out more about the College's Lone working policy and procedure](#)

15 Equal opportunities statement and College Codes of Practice

15.1 Equal opportunities statement

The College values diversity and promotes equality of opportunity for all, both in its employment practices and admissions decisions, and in its teaching, learning and research activities.

[Royal Holloway's equal opportunities statement](#)