



DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND CRIMINOLOGY

APPENDIX TO THE MPhil/PHD DEGREE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023/24

This appendix should be read in conjunction with the [core MPhil/PhD student handbook](#)

The Department of Law and Criminology sits within the School of Law and Social Sciences which covers the following disciplines: Economics, Law, Criminology and Social Work and Politics, International Relations and Philosophy (PIRP).

Welcome to your School

We would like to welcome you to the School of Law and Social Sciences at Royal Holloway, University of London. Our school includes: [Department of Economics](#), [Department of Law, Criminology and Social Work](#), [Department of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy](#). All three departments are highly regarded for their research and teaching and have an active and vibrant research culture. We strive for excellence in research and generating real-world impact beyond academia.

Being a postgraduate research student in our School, you become an integral part of our research community. We offer a stimulating research environment and advanced training in both research-specific and transferable skills. Our MPhil and PhD student community is relatively small, thereby ensuring a consistently high level of interaction between the students and academics. Across the School, we have over ninety research students representing more than 20 different countries, bringing diverse perspectives, experience and skills to our departments.

You will find support in your studies not only from your immediate supervisory team but also from the PGR contact in your home department:

- Economics: Professor Manolis Galenianos (Manolis.Galenianos@royalholloway.ac.uk)
- Law, Criminology and Social Work: Professor Jill Marshall (Jill.Marshall@rhul.ac.uk)
- PIRP: Professor Jennifer Piscopo (Jennifer.Piscopo@royalholloway.ac.uk)

Dr Emily Glorney
School Director of PGR Education

Welcome to your department

The Department of Law and Criminology provides a close-knit, innovative and supportive environment for world-class interdisciplinary research and education, underpinned by a sense of global and social justice. We offer undergraduate degree programmes in Law – including several

joint honours variants – Criminology and Sociology, and Criminology and Psychology. We offer postgraduate taught degrees in Terrorism and Counterterrorism, Forensic Psychology, and Social Work, alongside our thriving research degrees.

The PhD programme provides students with a friendly and stimulating research environment. During the four years (or up to eight years for part-time students) of the programme, students engage in independent research work that produces an original contribution to the field. The PhD community is growing, with between 40-50 students enrolled, thereby ensuring a high level of interaction between research students and academic staff. Being a PhD student at the multidisciplinary Department of Law and Criminology means that you have regular opportunities to engage with students and staff from disciplines that are related to – but not the same as – yours, so challenging and enriching your thinking about your research. You will also become an integral part of our research community.

Graduates of our PhD programme have gone on to undertake careers in a variety of roles across academia, industry, and further research posts.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Email	Phone	Room
Executive Dean	Professor Matthew Humphreys	Matthew.Humphreys@rhul.ac.uk	01784 276482	McCrea 1-04
Head of Department	Professor Ravinder Barn	r.barn@rhul.ac.uk	01784 443678	ABF17A
School Director of PGR Education	Dr Emily Glorney	Emily.Glorney@rhul.ac.uk	01784 276283	ABF23
Department PGR Lead	Professor Jill Marshall	Jill.Marshall@rhul.ac.uk	01784 443682	ABF 19
School helpdesk*		LSS-school@rhul.ac.uk	01784 276883	McCrea 1-01

* For the majority of your non-academic related issues, please contact the [Doctoral School](#). However, for queries about teaching contracts, expenses and study space within the school, please contact the School of Law and Social Sciences helpdesk.

Staff

Read the list of academic staff in the [Department of Law, Criminology](#) and [Social Work](#)

Research areas

The Department of Law and Criminology at Royal Holloway has a thriving research culture and staff regularly publish work on a wide range of subjects spanning law, criminology, forensic psychology, social policy, social work, and sociology. Our staff work together in research clusters to organise events, submit funding applications, publish, and create a supportive environment around four main research themes of: Crime and Punishment; Families and Children; Health and Social Care; Rights and Freedoms. Staff also benefit from research collaborations with other Departments in Royal Holloway, such as Information Security, Psychology, Politics and International Relations.

[Find out more about staff's research interests](#)

Staff-Student Action Meeting

The purpose of the PGR Staff-Student Action Meeting is to maintain and foster communication within the School. The meeting is a platform to receive and to discuss matters of concern to both students and staff. As such, it provides a formal means of communication between students and the School Board.

The PGR Staff-Student Action Meeting meets at least once every term. You can use the Meeting to raise any issues by either attending one of the meetings or passing the information to the current student representatives. Course representatives are there to represent your views and ultimately, to help improve the quality of education provided by the University.

Facilities and resources

PhD students on the programme are provided with facilities for carrying out their research. The University IT department has most of the software packages required for data analysis and managing references/citations, and you can download these via the IT website.

The department encourages students to present their work at discipline-specific annual conferences. There is an annual budget allocation (varying each year) to PhD students to support presentation of research at conferences and to cover research-related costs and any specialised training required. Any costs over this limit must be paid for by the student. All requests for funding must be discussed with the supervisors in the first instance. In keeping with University policy, all travel arrangements must be made in accordance with the University Travel Policy.

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.

Seminars and workshops

Part of the training throughout the programme is attending the departmental seminar series, managed through the four research groups. There are also seminars available throughout the

University. Please attend as many of these seminars as you can; there is always something to learn and you might discover a new approach to your own research, even if the topics are not directly related to yours. There are also workshops specific to postgraduate research students; you are expected to attend these and be an active contributor to support the community of doctoral students in the department. The postgraduate research conference takes place in June – an opportunity to develop and refine your presentation skills to a friendly audience of peers and staff.

Teaching experience and training

As part of the financial support offered to selected research students, the department employs a number of students as Teaching Assistants. There is also an opportunity for research students to lead on the organisation of the annual departmental postgraduate research conference, which is a great addition to a CV.

Annual reviews and upgrades

Although you will meet with your supervisor regularly during the academic year, your academic progress is formally reviewed at least once every twelve months, regardless of whether you are studying full or part time.

- [Core annual review details](#)
- [Annual reviews in the Department of Law and Criminology](#)

All MPhil / PhD students start their programme on the MPhil and have to pass the upgrade review meeting in order to be eligible to submit for the PhD.

- [Core upgrade details](#)
 - [Upgrades in the Department of Law and Criminology](#)
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Mock vivas

If you would like to practice a viva (usually when you are close to submission or have recently submitted your thesis), ask your lead supervisor to arrange a mock viva. The mock viva will take place with your annual review team (the independent academics will ask the questions) and your supervisors can be present. Some general tips include:

a) Plan concise (2–3 minute) answers to all the obvious general questions you may be asked:

- How did you select your subject?
- What overall contribution to scholarship does your thesis make?
- What is the state of the secondary literature on *and around* your subject?
- What important topics did you omit for lack of space?
- What are the weaknesses of the thesis and how can they be remedied?
 - re-read your thesis carefully, noting with ruthless honesty all the points at which it might be vulnerable, such as:
 - gaps in the argument;
 - inadequate supporting references;
 - obvious objections not considered etc.

- b) Take an annotated copy of the thesis to the (mock) viva.
- c) Carefully read any important contributions to your field that have been published since you submitted.
- d) For the viva, read your two examiners' published work to anticipate how they might approach your subject, where your conclusions conflict or chime with their arguments.