



DEPARTMENT OF  
ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING

**RESEARCH DEGREE  
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2017/2018

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Electronic Engineering Department  
Royal Holloway, University of London  
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#### Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2017 and was correct at that time. The Department\* 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.

\* Please note, the term 'Department' may be used to refer to a 'Department', 'Centre' or 'School'.

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# 1 Introduction to the College and your Department

## 1.1 Welcome

Welcome to Royal Holloway and the Department of Electronic Engineering. Royal Holloway, University of London (hereafter the College) is one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities, with twenty-one academic departments spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences.

You are part of our first intake of students and you will be in a privileged position to see our new purpose-designed building take shape as it grows out of the ground during your first year with us on campus. We will be installed in the new building for the second year of your studies. This is an exciting time for all and we hope that you find Royal Holloway a stimulating and friendly place to study.

The College was ranked 173rd in the world and 27th overall in the UK in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2016/17 (published 21 September 2016). Sitting within the top 25 per cent of universities in the UK for research rated 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' by the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, the College was also ranked in the top one per cent of 16,000 higher education institutions across the globe, in the 25th edition of The World List of Universities and Other Institutions. 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. Your successful progress will depend primarily on your own efforts, supported by your supervisor, but also by the research environment in your department, formal and informal interactions with other researchers and the quality of the research training you receive.

## 1.2 Your registration status

Your registration status as a research degree student may change through the course of your studies with the College. For example, students who wish to study toward registration on a PhD are initially registered for an MPhil degree. Additionally, you may also elect to alter your mode of study from full-time to part-time or vice-versa.

You should consult the *Research Degree Regulations*, in the first instance, for further information on the College's criteria for changes to registration status. The *Regulations* also contain important information on the timeframes within which the College expects students to complete the upgrade from MPhil to PhD as well as completion of the degree itself.

## 1.3 How to find us: Department

The department is located in the John Bowyer Building. This can be found on the College [campus map](#) as building 36a.

The department office is located in the John Bowyer building room JB10.

Departmental office 01784 414004

Departmental email: [ElectronicEngineering@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:ElectronicEngineering@rhul.ac.uk)

#### 1.4 Map of the Egham campus

Student parking is limited and a parking permit is required. This can be obtained via an application on the following webpage [Parking on Campus](#).

You will need proof of insurance and a suitable form of photographic ID before a permit will be issued.

#### 1.5 How to find us: the staff

##### CONTACT DETAILS

##### Head of Department:

Professor David Howard

Tel: 3655

Room: JB11

Email: [david.howard@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:david.howard@rhul.ac.uk)

##### Academic Staff:

Dr Stefanie Kuenzel

Tel: 6255

Room: JB13

Email: [stefanie.kuenzel@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:stefanie.kuenzel@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Wenqing Liu

Tel: 6577

Room: JB13

Email: [wenqing.liu@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:wenqing.liu@rhul.ac.uk)

Dr Steve Alty

Tel: 6256

Room: JB13

Email: [steve.alty@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:steve.alty@rhul.ac.uk)

##### Administrative Staff:

Lisa Fell Departmental Manager

Tel: 4004

Room JB10

Email: [lisa.fell@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:lisa.fell@rhul.ac.uk)

##### Technical Staff:

Lisa Fell Technical Manager

Tel: 4004

Room JB10

Email: [lisa.fell@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:lisa.fell@rhul.ac.uk)

Alex Clarke Technician

Tel: 4004

Room JB10

Email: [alex.clarke@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:alex.clarke@rhul.ac.uk)

#### 1.6 The Department: Key Staff

##### Head of Department

The Head of Department has the ultimate responsibility for all the activities within the department. S/he is the responsible for dealing with any disciplinary matters, appeals

or complaints that have not been successfully addressed by the appropriate procedures.

### **Director of Graduate Studies**

The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for the oversight of all the departments' research programmes. S/he ensures that close contact with our students is maintained and you are encouraged to make your concerns about the degree programme, the department or anything else that is relevant to your studies known at the earliest opportunity, by making an appointment to see either the Director of Graduate Studies or your Personal Supervisor.

### **Educational Support Officer**

An Educational Support Officer is a member of the Disability and Dyslexia network and is your port of call if you have an issue that affects your learning needs. If you have not already declared to the Disability and Dyslexia office a long term condition that you may require support for you should do so at the earliest opportunity. Further information can be found under [11](#). Students in need of support.

### **Department Manager**

The Department Manager is the head of the departmental administration. S/he is responsible for all day-to-day running of the administrative processes within in the department and lead the team of administrators who will be your first port of call with issues around your registration, facilities, submissions of work, attendance etc.

### **Technical Manager**

The Technical Manager is the head of the departmental technical team. S/he is responsible for the day-to-day running of the laboratories and overseeing the technicians.

## **1.7 Staff Research interests**

### **Professor David Howard** FEng, CEng, FIET, FIOA, Senior MIEEE

Professor Howard works in the analysis and synthesis of singing, speech and music. Specific areas of interest include: digital speech and singing synthesis based on replicating virtual vocal tracts acquired from magnetic resonance imaging (MRI); the Vocal Tract Organ, voice analyses for singing development, speech in Parkinson's patients; detection of babbling in infants to encourage speech learning.

### **Dr Stefanie Kuenzel** MIEEE, ACGI

Dr Kuenzel completed an MEng and PhD degree at Imperial College London, where she is a visiting researcher. She has worked with Imperial Consultants for the Norwegian power grid operator, STATNETT and National Grid UK and has conducted research for the UK-China Stablenet project. She has also been a visiting researcher at the University of Duisburg. Her research interests include HVDC transmission systems and wind generation and the impact of integration into AC systems.

### **Dr Wenqing Liu** PhD York

Dr Liu has a first degree in Physics from Nanjing University and completed a PhD at the University of York. She was an EPSRC research associate at University of Cambridge and a visiting scholar of Hong Kong University. Her research interest is in the areas of condensed matter physics, nanotechnology, spintronics,

microelectronics, low-dimensional materials and systems, UHV instrumentation.

#### **Dr Steve Alty** SMIEEE, MIET, SFHEA

Dr Alty studied for his BEng (Hons) in Electronic Engineering at Liverpool University and subsequently his PhD at Liverpool John Moores University. He has been a senior lecturer at Kings College London and Head of Division at London South Bank University. His research interests include signal processing, machine learning and pattern recognition with applications in biomedical engineering.

### **1.8 Master of Science by Research in Electronic Engineering**

The MSc by Research is a full-time one year research degree working on a topic that is negotiated with a member of staff during the application stage. This topic will be in an area that fits well within one of our research groups which are listed on the department's web page here:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/electronicengineering/research.aspx>.

There are no formal taught modules and the MSc by Research is assessed on the research work itself in three elements as follows: (1) a research report (70%), (2) a formal presentation (15%) and (3) a viva voce examination (15%). Regular supervisions will underpin the research and there will be opportunities to present progress on the research to internal Research Seminars as well as conferences depending on the area of work and progress. The department will usually provide some degree of financial assistance for attending conferences depending on the location and registration costs.

At the start of the programme, there will be introductory activities on research skills, giving presentations, writing reports and laboratory safety. Students on the MSc by Research programme are able to go along to any of the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year modules taught within the department's MEng programme as desired to support their research (please note that these are **not assessed** as part of the MSc by Research). Modules taught in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years can be found here:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/electronicengineering/undergraduate.aspx>

### **1.9 PhD and MPhil in Electronic Engineering**

The PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) degree is a three year full-time or six year part-time programme of research on a topic that is linked to one of the Department's research groups under the supervision of one of our academic staff who is a specialist in the research field. The core one-word requirement of a PhD is 'novelty'; there has to be something within a PhD that can be deemed to be novel. This has to be demonstrated by reviewing the research literature mainly during the first 9 months or so to establish a specific area of interest where there is scope for moving knowledge forwards. Then some way of exploring that area formally is established, usually through experimentation, and this phase lasts generally into the third year. The writing of the thesis takes place during the last 3-6 months.

The MPhil (Master of Philosophy) degree is a two year full-time or four year



part-time programme of research on a topic that is linked to one of the Department's research groups under the supervision of one of our academic staff who is a specialist in the research field. It differs from the PhD (see above) in that there is no expectation of 'novelty'. Rather, the MPhil degree is based around excellent research that furthers knowledge but that additional knowledge does not have to be novel. This has to be demonstrated by reviewing the research literature mainly during the first 6 months or so to establish a specific area of interest where there is scope for moving knowledge forwards. Then some way of exploring that area formally is established, usually through experimentation, and this phase lasts generally well into the second year. The writing of the thesis takes place during the last 3-6 months.

A PhD thesis should not contain more than 100,000 words and an MPhil thesis not more than 60,000 words (excluding the bibliography and appendices) and should be properly referenced and of a satisfactory literary presentation. Advice is available to guide on the writing of a Thesis. Full guidance on what is expected of a Thesis can be found in the Research Degree Regulations. Examination is by a Viva Voce (often referred to as a 'viva') examination in English with an Examiner who is expert in the field who is almost always an academic who does not work at Royal Holloway (and is therefore known as the 'External Examiner'). Also in the viva is a second examiner who is Internal to the University of London. The supervisor is invited to sit in on the viva unless the student has indicated at the time of the formal entry that they do not wish this to happen.

It is essential that you make yourself familiar with the Research Degree Regulations as before starting to prepare your thesis. If in doubt, please bring up any questions or issues you might have with your Supervisor during a Supervision session.

#### 1.10 Useful College contacts

- **Library**

The College's **Library Service** is located in the Emily Wilding Davison Building.

Phone: 01784 443823

Email: [library@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:library@rhul.ac.uk)

Website: <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/library/home.aspx>

- **Student Services**

The **Student Services Centre** is located in the Emily Wilding Davison Building and provides a single point of contact for all non-academic related queries including accommodation, fees and funding, enrolment and graduation.

Phone: 01784 276641

Email: [student-enquiries@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:student-enquiries@royalholloway.ac.uk)

Website: <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ssc>

- **Student Administration**

Student Administration manage and facilitate a variety of the College's core academic functions, from examinations, results and course registrations right through to the processing of final results and producing proof of study documents. This includes the administration for all research degree examinations within the College.

You should find all the information you need regarding examinations, assessments and research degrees on their webpages here <http://www.students.royalholloway.ac.uk/study/exams-assessments-and-results/> and they can also be contacted via the following details:

Email: [researchdegrees@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:researchdegrees@royalholloway.ac.uk)

Website:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/restricted/contensis/exams/studentadministration/home.aspx>

## 2 Key Information and Services

Your Supervisor should always be the first point of contact for any questions or concerns you may have about your programme of study or your research. The College also provides a much broader framework of advice and support services, alongside key points of contact in your Department such as your **Director of Graduate Studies (DoGS)**. Some additional sources of advice and support are listed below.

- **Support & Advisory Services (Welfare and Wellbeing)**

Phone: 01784 443394

Email: [welfare@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@royalholloway.ac.uk)

Website: <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/welfare/home.aspx>

- **SURHUL Advice and Support Centre**

Phone: 01784 246700

Email: [advice@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:advice@su.rhul.ac.uk)

Website: <http://www.su.rhul.ac.uk/advice/>

### 2.1 Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London (SURHUL)

The **Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London (SURHUL)** is a registered charity (Registered No: 1141998) and actively represents the students of Royal Holloway University of London.

SURHUL is led by sabbatical officers and Executive Officers who work alongside a team of permanent staff. SURHUL promotes your needs and interests by offering employment, participation, entertainment, support & advice, your clubs & societies, catering, transport, volunteering, campaigning and advocacy. All of which complement your academic study, ensuring that your University experience is the

best that it can be. For further information please refer to their website at <http://www.su.rhul.ac.uk/about/>.

## 2.2 Your College Email Account

The College provides an email address for you free of charge and stores the address in a College email directory (the **Global Address List**). Your account is easily accessible, both on and off campus, via the **Student Portal** <https://campus-connect.royalholloway.ac.uk/cp/home/displaylogin> (Campus Connect) or direct via **Outlook.com** <http://outlook.com/>. It is **essential** to note that this email account will be used for all routine correspondence and news from the College and its departments and services. Your College email will very likely also be used for **urgent communication**, including correspondence from your supervisors, or to give or confirm instructions or information related to teaching 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. You can find detailed instructions on **how to forward mail** by visiting <http://help.outlook.com/> and searching for 'forwarding'. In the event that you experience any problems, please contact the IT Service Desk.

## 2.3 Post

All post addressed to you in your Department will be delivered to student pigeonholes (alphabetical by surname) in the John Bowyer Building]. 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, Registry, among other 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.

## 2.4 Telephone and postal address

It is imperative that the College **has the most up-to-date contact details for you**. As such, please ensure that you update your telephone number (mobile and landline) and postal address (term-time and forwarding) **as quickly as possible** when they are changed via the Student Portal (Campus Connect) <https://campus-connect.royalholloway.ac.uk/cp/home/displaylogin>.

Please note, it is the policy of the College that staff are not permitted to disclose or share your information, including your contact details, with anybody else (including parents, relatives or fellow students) without your prior written permission to release this information. For further information please refer to the **Information Compliance** webpage via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/aboutus/governancematters/accesstoinformation/home.aspx>.

## 2.5 IT Services

The College **IT Service Desk** <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/it/home.aspx> 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 also offer a range of free software, including Microsoft 365, NVivo and SPSS. For more information visit their website at <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/it/studentpurchasing.aspx>.

## 2.6 Withdrawal of visa

If you are in receipt of a **Tier-4 Student Visa** sponsored by Royal Holloway, it is a requirement of your Visa that you attend classes and supervisory sessions and complete assessments. This is also a requirement of the College's academic regulations.

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.

Further information on visa and immigration information for current students is available from Student Services via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/studentsservicescentre/visas/home.aspx>.

## 3 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 at the **Annual Review**, 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.

The Department expects that: (a) all students will keep a **Training Log**, (b) that all supervision meetings will be recorded on a **Record of Supervision Meetings Form** and (c) that an **Annual Review** of every research students' progress will be carried out and recorded on the **Annual Review Form**. All completed forms will be stored on the Department's shared drive where blank forms are available. Students can request blank Training Log forms from their Supervisor or a Departmental Administrator.

The **Annual Review** will be conducted with at least one member of your supervisory team present plus a senior administrator who will take notes, and it will be chaired by

the Director of Graduate Studies or Director of Research or a member of the professoriate (the Chair must not be involved in the supervision of the research itself).

MPhil to PhD upgrades for students registered for an MPhil/PhD, are conducted in a face-to face meeting between you and a panel. If upgrading, your first attempt must occur within the first 20 months of study if full-time (40 months if part-time). It is important to remember that the upgrade from MPhil to PhD is **not an automatic right**. In the majority of cases the 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 and the upgrade will not be granted. If your first upgrade attempt to upgrade from MPhil to PhD is unsuccessful, you have the right to have a second and final attempt which must take place within 24 months if full-time (48 months if part-time). These periods are defined within the College's *Research Degree Regulations* available online via <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx>.

### 3.1 Research Degree Student Deadlines

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.

In the case of circumstances relating only to your performance at an upgrade or review meeting or the oral examination (viva), you should inform the panel members or examiners of the circumstances prior to the meeting or oral examination and submit the statement and supporting evidence within **seven days** to your department in the case of upgrade/review meetings and Student Administration ([researchdegrees@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:researchdegrees@rhul.ac.uk)) in the case of an oral examination. You must submit the request in writing and ensure it is accompanied by appropriate supporting evidence, in line with the **Instructions to Candidates** available online via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/examinations/examinations/home.aspx>.

## 4 Research poster session

All research students are expected to present a conference-style poster (a PowerPoint template will be provided and printing costs will be met by the department as applicable) during their research time in the department. For PhD and MPhil students this will occur in the second year and for MSc by Research students in their first year. The posters will be displayed in a public area of the department and scrutinized by a group of research staff who will rank order them for clarity, presentation and impact. One or more prizes will be awarded for the best poster(s) during a reception.

## 5 Interrupting your studies

The College's *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 and Director of Graduate Studies. Any period of interruption will only normally be permitted on exceptional grounds and must be approved by the College Board of Examiners Executive Committee (CBEEC). Students are also entitled to request an interruption of studies for reasons of maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

In the first instance, please contact your department to discuss your interruption of studies. A request for interruption of studies must be submitted online on your behalf by your department using the required form via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/services/academicqualityandpolicyoffice/forms/pgywaiver.aspx>.

**It is essential that adequate supporting evidence is submitted with the request.** For further information on supporting evidence, please refer to Appendix B of the College's guidance notes available online via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/documents/pdf/exams/extenuatingcircumstances-guidanceforstudents.pdf>. If you are still uncertain what evidence is suitable, please contact [researchdegrees@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:researchdegrees@royalholloway.ac.uk) for advice. Where applications are submitted that lack adequate supporting evidence, it is very likely that they will be denied or subject to significant delays. The request will be sent to the Vice-Principal (Education) for consideration on behalf of the CBEEC and you will be informed whether the request has been approved or not.

It is essential that you contact your supervisor or department 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.

### 5.1 Interruptions for students who are sponsored by the College on a Tier 4 visa

If you interrupt your studies and you are in receipt of a **Tier-4 Student Visa** sponsored by Royal Holloway, the College will withdraw its sponsorship for the duration of your interruption and you are obliged by the **Home Office** to leave the UK for this period. Before you return from interruption, you will need to apply for a new visa. For further information on this process please refer to the Student Services webpage at <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/studentsservicescentre/visas/home.aspx>.

In exceptional circumstances, and if your interruption is for a period less than sixty days, you may be permitted to remain in the UK during the period of interruption. To discuss the possibility of this '**authorised absence**', please contact [student-administration@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:student-administration@royalholloway.ac.uk).

### 5.2 Interruptions for students 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 [scholarshipadministration@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:scholarshipadministration@royalholloway.ac.uk).

If you are funded by a Research Council and would like to request maternity leave

or short term (up to 13 weeks) sick leave, please click refer to the Doctoral School webpage for further information <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/home.aspx>

### 5.3 Your thesis deadline and status during an interruption of studies

If your interruption request is approved, your period of interruption will be added on to your thesis submission deadline (e.g. a student with a 22 September 2018 deadline who interrupts for 6 months would now have a new submission deadline of 22 March 2019). Please note, exceptions do apply where you are funded by a Research Council as below:

- Although the thesis submission deadline set by the College may be extended, it may not be extended by your Research Council. In such cases, the Research Council deadline takes precedence. If you have queries regarding this, please contact [scholarshipadministration@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:scholarshipadministration@royalholloway.ac.uk).
- If you have requested up to 13 weeks sick leave, your thesis submission deadline will not be affected by this period of leave.

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 Submission of your thesis and your viva

As the thesis is nearing completion you will need to submit a formal entry to the final examination to the Student Administration Office. Full details on entry for the examination (or re-entry in the case of resubmissions), submission and examination of the thesis are available on **Examinations webpage for Research Degree students** <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/examinations/researchdegrees/students.aspx>. Students should also consult the *Research Degree Regulations* for further details about, for example, the requirements of the thesis (word length), the conduct of the final examination, and possible outcomes of the examination <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx>.

### 6.1 Electronic submission of the final PhD theses

In order for your research degree to be awarded, an electronic version of your PhD thesis needs to be submitted to the College's research information system, **Pure**. 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 <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/research/puresupport/ethesis/ethesis.aspx>.

## 6.2 Random submission of theses 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 Director of Graduate Studies in your department. Should concerns be raised you will be notified by the department.

## 7 Preparation for the final examination

The College offers viva training for research student's final examination with sessions run for students in Arts and Social Sciences, Science and Management, Economics, and Law. Further information on these courses is available via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/home.aspx>. This training is compulsory for research degree students.

### 7.1 Departmental viva preparation

The viva voce examination can be a stressful event and the time running up to it can also cause anxiety. Your supervisor will be able to guide you on what to expect and how to approach the viva; there are one of two techniques that can help you if you feel nervous or uncertain about the process. Bear in mind that your External Examiner also may fall anxious and keen to set up a rapport with you that enables the conversation (for that is really what the viva really is). The External is there to assess your contribution to knowledge, the novelty (if it is a PhD viva), your understanding of the subject and the research work you have carried out. When I act as an External Examiner I am very aware that I am being asked to evaluate 3 years work by reading a Thesis and conducting a Viva for a few hours in a few hours and I am very conscious about giving candidates space to become themselves in answering questions about their research. The viva is not about your 'performance', rather it is about offering the chance for you to show off your research in its best light.

## 8 Special arrangements for the annual review, upgrade or viva

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 final examination (viva) you should consult Section 16 paragraph (10) the *Research Degree Regulations* <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx> for details of how to make such a request. Should you need similar adjustments for your annual review/ upgrade meeting, these should be discussed with your supervisor ahead of the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

## 9 Research Skills and Training

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. Further information and guidance can be found online via



<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/doctoralschool/researchskillstraining/researchskills.aspx>.

### 9.1 Research Development Programme

The College's **Researcher Development Programme** is a 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. The programme is structured using the **Vitae Researcher Development Framework**. For further information please refer to their website at <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/428241/Researcher-Development-Framework.html>.

### 9.2 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) <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/registry/educational-development/prof-dev/instil-overview.html>.

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 five days towards your skills training objectives. Further details on the programme are available via telephone on +44 (0) 1784 41 6337 or +44 (0) 1784 27 6250 or by contacting **Educational Development** at [edc@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:edc@rhul.ac.uk).

In the event that you are not engaged in teaching activities but would like to learn more about teaching in higher education, the College offers a series of '*Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*' workshop. Further information is available online via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/doctoralschool/researcherdevelopmentprogramme/researcherdevelopmentprogrammecourses.aspx>.

## 10 Academic writing skills

The College offers courses on academic writing, which can count towards your skills training objectives. For further details on these courses and additional support that is available please refer to the Research Skills Training pages at <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/doctoral-school/home.aspx>.

CeDAS will offer you additional support in the event that English is not your first language. These courses do not, however, count towards your training requirements. CeDAS also 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. For further details, please refer to the

CeDAS webpage [www.royalholloway.ac.uk/cedas](http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/cedas).

## 11 Students in need of support (including disabled students)

The College offers a high level of student welfare support which includes a comprehensive Health Centre, a highly regarded Counselling Service, dedicated educational and disability support, as well as a wealth of financial, career and other advice. Further details of each service can be found on the **Help and Support** pages at <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/help-and-support.aspx>

If you have a disability or specific learning difficulty, it is **important** that you bring it to the College's attention as soon as possible. Your first point of contact for advice and guidance is your **Disability & Dyslexia Services (DDS)** representative in your Department (details below).

**Name:** Lisa Fell

**Email:** [lisa.fell@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:lisa.fell@rhul.ac.uk)

**Phone:** 01784-414004

Please also contact **DDS** directly via [disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk) or 01784 276473.

## 12 Plagiarism and other academic offences

The College takes the issue of plagiarism and other assessment offences extremely seriously. The College defines what constitutes an assessment offence (e.g. plagiarism, collusion, falsification) as well as the procedures to be followed for the investigation of an alleged assessment offence and possible outcomes in the College's *Regulations on Assessment Offences*

<http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx>.

## 13 Appeals and Complaints

In the event that you wish to submit an appeal or a complaint please refer to the *Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors* and the *Research Degree Regulations*. Both of which are available online via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx>.

Further information on the College's appeals and complaints processes is available here:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/services/academicqualityandpolicyoffice/home.aspx>.

### 13.1 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 either through **Campus Connect** (e.g. for end of year assessment results) or **by letter** (e.g. annual review, upgrade, final viva examination). This can include reference to a past complaint made and investigated.

Please note, only the following can be investigated through the appeals process:

- The outcome of Boards of Examiners, such as the outcomes of coursework or examinations, academic progression, degree classification or degree award, and termination of registration by the College Board of Examiners. This includes decisions made by an upgrade panel or an MPhil/PhD viva panel.
- Termination of registration on academic grounds through the formal warning procedure
- Penalties applied for examination and assessment offences
- Reconsideration of requests for exam access arrangements
- A decision made by a Fitness to Practice Panel

In the event that you wish to submit an academic appeal, please refer to the following guidance:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/academicappealsandcollegecomplaints.aspx>.

Further information on the appeals process is also available in the Sections 21 and 22 of the *Research Degree Regulations*. It is essential that you refer to this in the first instance as it outlines the grounds upon which an appeal against an academic decision may be submitted

<http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx>.

## 13.2 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 for Students 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, you should first discuss it informally with your Supervisor(s), Advisor, Director of Graduate Studies or another member of staff in the Department 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. Full details of how to pursue complaints through both informal and formal routes are set out in the College's *College Complaints Procedures* for students

<http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/complaints/complaints.aspx>.

Where you have submitted an academic appeal and your grounds for appeal are effectively dependent on the outcome of the complaint, the College may determine that the nature of your appeal requires investigation under the Complaints Procedure first. In this situation your case will be referred to the College Secretary's Office. You will be notified of this and provided with further guidance. Please note, in such cases 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 that your appeal is unsuccessful.**

For further information on the complaints process, please refer to the AQPO webpage

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/home.aspx>

## 14 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

<http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/aboutus/governancematters/studentcharter.aspx>.

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. You can find further information about student life online here

<http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studentlife/home.aspx>.

As a research degree student you will also be asked to complete the College's online feedback questionnaire for research degrees. This internal survey is conducted every two years, and is available to complete online from early April until mid-May. It is important that you take the time to complete this questionnaire as it is often a requirement for your annual review or upgrade. Each alternate year, the College also takes part in the national **Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)**.

## 15 Library Services, Facilities and Resources

### 15.1 Computers

There are a total of fourteen open access PC Labs available on campus which you can use, including six 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. Details of these PC Labs, including access times and maps showing how to get to them can be found under the descriptions

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/it/home.aspx>

## 15.2 Graduate Spaces

The College offers a number of areas specifically for postgraduates.

<http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/postgraduate/facilitiesandacademicsupport.aspx>. Below is a list of these spaces together with a brief description of what they offer:

- **Emily Wilding Davison Building**, second floor

The second floor of the new library building, opening in September 2017, contains a dedicated study area for postgraduate students. The building is open for use twenty-four hours a day.

- **International Building Common Room**, room IN030

This room is conveniently placed on campus and within easy reach of most academic buildings and the Students' Union. IN030 offers good computer facilities with seventeen PCs, a DVD/CD ROM burner and scanning/printing facilities. There are also some easy chairs. The room is available for use twenty-four hours a day with a card-swipe/code system for out-of-hour access (code provided by the Computer Centre). Please be aware that some sessions around research skills training may be running in IN030 (dates are advertised).

- **Founders Common Room**, Founders East, second floor, room FE241

Code to enter can be obtained at the Security desk, Founders reception, by showing the College Card (as a way of proving to be a PG student). The Common Room has tables, chairs and sofas. There is also one computer and printer and wireless internet access. The kitchen area includes a fridge, microwave, kettle and toaster with shared cutlery.

- **Arts Building**, second floor, room AS17

Fifteen online PCs DVD/CD ROM with burner Scanning/printing facilities. The room is open to all students (PG and UG) during normal office hours and to Postgraduates and Staff between 7pm and 7am (please obtain code from the Computer Centre).

- **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.

## 15.3 The Library

The library is housed in the Emily Wilding Davison Building. Details, including Library Search, dedicated subject guides and opening times can be found online from the library home page: <http://libguides.rhul.ac.uk/training>

There are plenty of study areas and bookable rooms to carry out group work as well

as many areas to work on your own, including a dedicated postgraduate reading room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The Library contains a large number of PCs and has laptops to borrow to use in other study areas.

If you cannot find the specific items that you require in the library, it is possible to gain access to the online resources of Senate House Library as well as access to use the library's physical collections or other university libraries. You can obtain further information on this here:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/library/usingourlibraries/otherlibraries/using-other-libraries.aspx> .

The Information Consultant for your Department is Leanne Workman who can be contacted at [leanne.workman@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:leanne.workman@rhul.ac.uk).

The Library provides a range of training sessions, as well as one to one sessions, designed to enhance your existing library and research skills. These are available in both class-based and self-study formats. For information on available sessions and to book a place, go to:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/library/helpandsupport/researchsupport/researchsupport.aspx>

#### 15.4 Research Support

The **Research Support Team** in the Library provides support on research information including copyright, Open Access publishing, developing your research information profile and useful services. 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.

Royal Holloway theses are also available via Ethos which is 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 (<http://ethos.bl.uk> )

The Team also offers training sessions and are very happy to provide advice. More information and contact details can be found at <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/library/researchsupport/researchsupport.aspx>.

You will also have access to the following libraries:

**Senate House Library** (Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU. Tel: 020 7862 8461; <http://www.ucl.ac.uk>). This is the central library of the University of London, where you can borrow up to twelve books with a library ticket (<http://www.senatehouselibrary.ac.uk/membership>) which you can obtain using your RHUL College ID card.

- **The British Library** (96 Euston Road, London, NW1 2DB. Tel: 020 7412 7000;

<http://www.bl.uk>). 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. It also has an impressive collection of medieval and modern manuscripts. A Reader Pass <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/inrooms/stp/register/howreg/howtoregister.html> will be issued subject to your need to see specific items in the collections. Other libraries or sources may be more appropriate to your research and British Library staff will advise you accordingly. Further information is available online via <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/inrooms/stp/refteam/refteam.html>.

- **SCONUL Access Scheme** Royal Holloway participates in this national university access scheme which allows student to use other university libraries in the UK. Details of the application process can be found at: <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/library/usingourlibraries/otherlibraries/sconulaccess.aspx>

## 15.5 Careers information

The College has a **Careers & Employability Service**, housed in the Horton Building, which is open to any student during normal College hours. <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/careers/home.aspx>.

## 16 Health and Safety Information

### 16.1 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** is available online via <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/onlinestudenthandbook.aspx> and should be read in conjunction with **The Student Disciplinary Regulations** and **The Student Complaints Procedure**.

### 16.2 Lone working policy and procedures

The College has a '**Lone Working Policy and Procedure**' that can be found at <http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/services/healthandsafety/policiesandprocedures/loneworking.aspx>.

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.

Lone working is intended to cover all work proposed to be undertaken alone where the risk to the lone worker may be increased either by the work itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong.

Lone working can occur:

- During normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace.
- When working outside of normal working hours.

Under either of these circumstances, the College's guidance on lone working on campus will apply. Normal working hours are defined as:

**During Academic Terms: Monday – Friday 09:00 – 17.00**

**Outside of Academic Terms: Monday – Friday 09:00 – 17.00**

Work undertaken at weekends, bank holidays and when the College is closed (i.e. discretionary days) will be considered outside of normal hours.

Any health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of the Departmental 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 contained in the above section will apply to **students undertaking duties off campus**.

## 17 Equal Opportunities Statement and College Codes of Practice

### 17.1 Equal opportunities statement

The University of London was established to provide education on the basis of merit above and without regard to race, creed or political belief and was the first university in the United Kingdom to admit women to its degrees. The College is extremely proud to continue this tradition, and to commit itself to equality of opportunity in employment, admissions and in its teaching, learning and research activities.

The College is committed to ensure that;

- all staff, students, applicants for employment or study, visitors and other persons in contact with the College are treated fairly, have equality of opportunity and do not suffer disadvantage on the basis of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, age, marital or parental status, dependants, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or social origins
- both existing staff and students, as well as, applicants for employment or admission are treated fairly and individuals are judged solely on merit and by reference to their skills, abilities qualifications, aptitude and potential
- it puts in place appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity
- teaching, learning and research are free from all forms of discrimination and continually provide equality of opportunity



- all staff, students and visitors are aware of the Equal Opportunities Statement through College publicity material
- it creates a positive, inclusive atmosphere, based on respect for diversity within the College
- it conforms to all provisions as laid out in legislation promoting equality of opportunity.

### 17.2 Additional College codes of practice

The Research Degree Regulations and the Code of Practice for research degree students and supervisors can be found on the **Attendance and regulations** webpage.

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/study/our-college-regulations/attendance-and-academic-regulations.aspx>

It is **important** to read the [Code of practice for research degree students and supervisors](#) in conjunction with this document.