SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS and INFORMATION SECURITY

RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2017/2018

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Disclaimer

This document was published in September 2018 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'.

An electronic copy of this handbook can be found on your departmental website
https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/isg/informationfornewreturningstudents/resourcesforphdresearc
hstudents.aspx **where it will be possible to follow the hyperlinks to relevant webpages.**

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1. Introduction to the College and your Department

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 twenty-one academic departments spanning the arts and humanities, social sciences and sciences.

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. The College offers a number of research degree programmes, including 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 in Medicine (MD). Your successful progress will depend primarily on your own efforts, supported by your supervisors, but also by the research environment in your department and the quality of the research training you receive.

This handbook deals with aspects of research degree study that specifically relates to your Department. This should be read in conjunction with additional College documents as follows:

- The *Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors* sets out good practice alongside additional information on policies and procedures that support the standards and expectations of the College. The Code is available via the **Academic Quality and Policy Office (AQPO)** webpage https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx.

- The *Research Degree Regulations* set out the various standards that shape the regulatory framework of your research degree with the College. This includes a variety of essential information, ranging from admissions to academic progression and examination. The Regulations are available from AQPO via https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx.

- The Doctoral School offers a range of information and advice to research degree students on subjects such as fees and funding or changes to your registration status. The Doctoral School website is a key repository for this information and will provide you with easy access to a variety of documentation and guidance that you may need during your studies https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/iquad/doctoralschool/homepage.aspx.

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 the required timeframe for completion of the degree itself.

1.3   How to find your Department

The school of Mathematics and Information Security is located in the McCrea Building. This can be found on the college campus map as building 17.

1.4   Map of the Egham campus

Please note, 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.
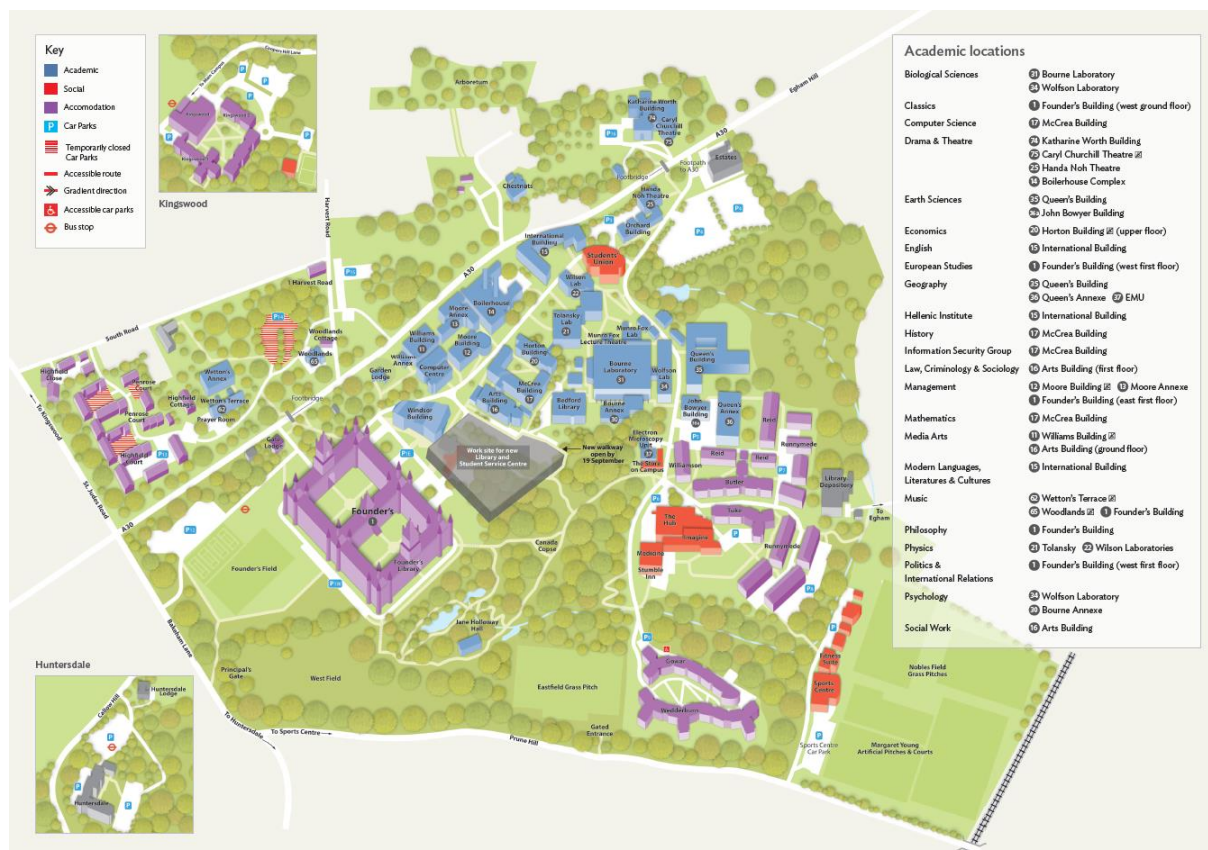
1.5   How to contact us

Head of School

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1.6 Your School

The School of Mathematics and Information Security at Royal Holloway is a lively and friendly place with an international reputation for the quality of its teaching and research. Academic staff are active in pioneering research which is making an impressive impact on the world stage. This strong research culture influences our curriculum, helping students to keep in touch with the latest developments in the field.

The school contains more than forty full-time academic faculty members, including a mixture of computer scientists, mathematicians and social scientists. These are supported by several research assistants and a large number of research students.

1.7   Research areas within your Department

The Mathematics Department at Royal Holloway pursues research in a wide range of topics in pure, applied and applicable mathematics, including algebra, discrete mathematics, number theory, quantum dynamics, information security and statistics. The ISG's research profile takes advantage of the group's interdisciplinary nature to tackle major challenges in many different areas of information security. current research interests include, Cryptography and its applications, Security of systems and technologies, The application of socio-technical and organisational theory to cyber security, The application of economics and game theory to cyber security, Smart cards, tokens and applications, Critical infrastructure protection, Authentication, identity management and authorisation. The research of the Information Security Group has led to Royal Holloway being recognised as an Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Research (ACE-CSR in Cyber Security.) Our vibrant research environment having over 60 PhD students, who organize their own weekly seminar and reading groups. We also have weekly seminars on Information Security, Pure Mathematics and Quantum Dynamics

1.8   Master of Arts by Research in your Department

1.9   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
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
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
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
  Website: https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/welfare/home.aspx

- **SURHUL Advice and Support Centre**
  Phone: 01784 246700
  Email: 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 Post Room – 221 McCrea 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/studentservicescentre/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, 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, your annual review will be conducted with at least one member of your supervisory team present plus one member of staff who is completely independent of your supervisory team. Where you are undertaking a review for the purpose of upgrading your degree to PhD, your panel will include a minimum of three members, with at least one member of your supervisory team and one member of staff who is completely independent of your supervisory team in attendance. A member of your panel may be present via video conferencing, with your prior agreement, in cases where there are extenuating circumstances that mean they are unable to be present in person.

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, the panel will likely decide not to permit the student to upgrade.

In the event that your first attempt to upgrade from MPhil to PhD is unsuccessful, your panel may permit you to have a second and final attempt which must take place within twenty-four months of full-time study or forty-eight months of part-time study. These periods are defined in line with the College's *Research Degree Regulations* available online via
http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx.

At the end of your annual review/ upgrade meeting your panel will fill in a **Research Degree Student Review - Annual Review Form or Research Degree Student Review - Upgrade Form**. This will detail the outcome of your review/upgrade and will provide you with an opportunity to add your own comments. Further information on annual reviews and upgrades along with the relevant forms is available online via
http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/examinations/researchdegrees/upgrades.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) 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.

3.2   Your department's annual review and upgrade process

(i)   Although students will meet regularly with the supervisor during the academic year, their academic progress is formally reviewed at least once every 12 months, unless they have interrupted their studies, in which case the review will take place no later than two months after they have formally resumed your studies. Annual reviews and upgrades are conducted in a face-to face meeting between the student and a panel consisting of the supervisor(s), adviser and at least one other academic from outside the supervisory team. Every research student has a formal Annual Review before the end of each year of study. Thus, for research students who commend their studies at the start of the academic year, the Annual Review should take place in September. The Annual Review need not coincide with a Quarterly Review Meeting, but it may be appropriate that it does. The purpose of the Annual Review is to take a broader look at progress and future plans than is typically done at Quarterly Review Meetings. The Annual Review is a formal meeting between, at a minimum, the research student and an Annual Review Panel consisting of:
• the supervisor;
• the adviser;
• another member of academic staff (from the Department).
Should the adviser not be available then it is the responsibility of the supervisor to find a further member of staff to attend this meeting (in this case the Annual Review Panel will be the supervisor and two further members of academic staff). At this meeting, the Annual Review Panel should seek to understand the progress that has been made towards the research degree, and provide feedback on progress and future research plans. The discussion at the meeting should be sufficiently detailed to enable the panel to complete the Research Degree Student Review form. Any extenuating circumstances that may have affected performance should be submitted to the supervisor at least one week before the Annual Review. Whilst the precise form of the meeting is up to the supervisor, the following arrangements are typical:

(ii)   The supervisor will ask the research student to commence with a short (e.g. 15 minute) presentation covering the research work that has been conducted over the past year. This should also include plans for the next year and mention of all research training and development activities that have been undertaken. If the research has progressed sufficiently (and necessarily if the Annual Review is also an Upgrade Meeting) plans for completion of the thesis should be discussed. The research student should expect to answer questions from the panel during this presentation

• In advance of the meeting, the research student should produce a short (around two pages) written Annual Report covering much of the same ground as the presentation, to be circulated either prior to the meeting or at the meeting itself. The research student should be prepared to discuss any issues arising from this report during the meeting.

• The research training activities undertaken in the past year should be reviewed by inspection of the Research Student Training Log and research training needs for the next year identified.

• If the registration of the research student has not yet been upgraded from MPhil to PhD then the requirements to be met before this can happen should be discussed.

• The Research Degree Student Review Form should be completed and signed by all present (the section relating to upgrades can be ignored unless the Annual Review is also an Upgrade Meeting).

If appropriate, the latest PhD Quarterly Review Meeting Report Form should also be completed and signed (this identifies shorter term goals). At the end of the annual review/upgrade meeting the panel will fill in a Research Degree Student Review, which will be signed by panel members present at the review/upgrade, and will provide details of the outcome of this meeting. The student will be given an opportunity to fill in comments at the end of the form, should they so wish. In most cases the panel will indicate that they are satisfied with a students' progress (and may also confirm that the student has successfully upgraded from MPhil to PhD, where relevant). However, in some cases the panel may feel that the work presented is not of the required standard. In the case of an upgrade, the panel may decide not to permit the student to upgrade at that time. Where work presented is unsatisfactory, details of the problems and the course of action to be taken will be noted in the Research Degree Student Review. Additionally, the panel may decide that it is necessary to issue a formal warning. Details of the formal warning process, which could lead to termination of registration, are outlined in the Research Degree Regulations in the section regarding Termination of registration. Further guidance is available here. At the end of the meeting the following documentation should be returned to the departmental office in McCrea 247:

1. Completed and signed Research Degree Student Review Form.
2. A copy of the students Annual Report.
3. The hard copy of the latest version of the Research Student Training Log.
4. Completed Student Feedback Questionnaire (this is a very basic confidential and anonymous feedback form that should be completed by the research student but not shown to the supervisory team, and can also be downloaded from the departmental website).
5. Completed and signed PhD Quarterly Review Meeting Report Form (if appropriate).

Part-time (PT): Annual reviews for part-time research students should take place as face-to-face meetings, except in exceptional circumstances (in which case, for example, a conferencing tool could be used as a substitute)

(iii) **MPhil to PhD Upgrade.** All research students are initially registered for the degree of MPhil, with the opportunity of upgrading to the PhD programme within the first two years of full-time study (four years of part-time study) following a formal review of progress. Only when candidates are exceptionally well qualified (for example, if

they already hold an MPhil degree) will Royal Holloway consider initial registration for the PhD degree.

IMPORTANT: Please note that research students **must upgrade before the end of 24 months for full-time study (30 months for CDT students) or 48 months of part-time study (60 months for CDT students)** . If upgrade has not happened within this period then research students cannot complete a PhD and may only submit a thesis for an MPhil degree. Royal Holloway considers the upgrade meeting as an examination and, as such, only permits two attempts at upgrade to take place. **A first upgrade attempt must be made within the first 20 months of full-time (26 months for CDT students) and 40 months of part-time study (52 months for CDT students).**

The most common stages at which to conduct upgrade are:

• At the first year Annual Review meeting: this applies to research students who have made excellent progress in the first year and are already have a reasonable idea of the direction of their future research work (and final thesis topic).

• At a special Upgrade Meeting sometime during the second year: in this case it is common for targets to have been set during the first year Annual Review that must be met in order to enable upgrade to take place. Any decision to upgrade can only be taken with the agreement of an Upgrade Panel consisting of the supervisor, adviser and another member of academic staff (the same rules of membership of the Upgrade Panel apply as for the Annual Review Panel). The following minimum conditions must be met by any student who is upgrading from MPhil to PhD:

• The Upgrade Panel should be convinced that the research student is capable of completing a PhD degree within the remaining permitted time. This decision should take into consideration all the work that the research student has performed since first registering for the research degree.

• The first year requirements have been met.

 Before the Upgrade Meeting the research student should submit a short Upgrade Report similar in content to the Annual Report for Annual Reviews, which must include plans for completion of the thesis (if these meetings are being combined then the Upgrade Report is the Annual Report).

Any extenuating circumstances that may have affected performance should be submitted to the supervisor at least one week before the Upgrade Meeting. At the end of the Upgrade Meeting the Upgrade Panel will fill in a Research Degree Student Review Form, which will be signed by panel members present at the Upgrade Meeting, and will provide details of the outcome of this meeting. The student will be given an opportunity to fill in comments at the end of the form, should they so wish. If a student fails to upgrade from MPhil to PhD on the first attempt, the panel may permit them to have a second and final attempt, which must take place before the end of 24 months for full-time study or 48 months of part-time study. If there is agreement that the research student merits being upgraded, then the Upgrade Panel will complete the following documentation and return to the **Director of Graduate Studies**:

1. Completed and signed Research Degree Student Review Form (this is the same form that is used for Annual Reviews and has a special section for upgrades).

2. The hard copy of the latest version of the Research Student Training Log.
3. A copy of the students Upgrade Report.
4. A substantial piece of scientific work written by the student as evidence of ability to write a thesis (an obvious candidate is the First Year Report).

Part-time (PT): The timing of upgrade for part-time research students varies much more than for full-time students. Unless exceptional early progress has been made, this process should normally occur two to four years into a part-time research degree. The conditions for upgrade are exactly the same as for full-time research students. The Upgrade Meeting should take place as a face-to-face meeting, except in exceptional circumstances (a conferencing tool could be used as a substitute). Full details of the regulations governing the annual review and upgrade process are outlined in the Research Degree Regulations in the section on Reviews of academic progress.

4   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/pgrwaiver.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 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.

4.1   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/studentservicescentre/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.

4.2   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.

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

4.3   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.
- 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.

5   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.

5.1 Departmental guidance on your thesis and viva
As your 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
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. Students first registered on Research Degree programmes in or after September 2006 must submit the thesis for examination within the following periods of study, otherwise their registration with the College may be terminated under the provisions of Section 10 of these regulations.

(a) For programmes of study leading to the award of MPhil, the thesis must be submitted within three years of full-time study (4 years for CDT students), or six years of part-time study (8 years for CDT students).

5.2 For programmes of study leading to the award of PhD, the thesis must be submitted within four years of full-time study (5 years for CDT students), or eight years of part- time study (10 years for CDT students). These registration periods must always be kept in mind. If severe difficulties are encountered during a registration period then research students should consider taking a formal Interruption of Studies. Note that as well as a maximum limit to the period of registration, there is also a minimum time. This is two years for full-time research students and four years for part-time research students. It is not possible to submit a thesis before these minimum registration periods have passed.

Writing up. Once a research student has achieved sufficient progress in their research then they will need to prepare a thesis reporting on this research. An important role of the supervisory team is to give advice to the research student on when this point has been reached. Of course, in many cases it will not be completely clear whether or not there is sufficient material until the writing up process is well under way. In any event, it is much better to start on the writing up process earlier rather than later. The act of writing up will itself often prompt a research student to identify and conduct the extra work necessary to fill in gaps in the existing research.

The role of the supervisory team in helping a research student prepare a well-structured thesis with appropriate content is crucial. Research students often have little idea of how to prepare such a large and complex document. Research students should discuss the provisional structure of the thesis with the supervisory team before starting to write the thesis, and should continue to discuss the structure and content of the thesis as it develops. In terms of word length students should be aware that College regulations stipulate a maximum length for MPhil and PhD theses. If the student exceeds the word length stated in the Regulations or produce a thesis that is deemed to be too short, the examiners may refer the thesis for resubmission requiring it to be shortened to meet the word length requirement or extended to include more content, respectively.

Consulting existing theses on related topics is also a very worthwhile exercise. Many theses produced by recent research students are available as departmental technical 18 reports, and all graduating research students are encouraged to make their thesis available to a wider readership in this way.

Departmental technical reports are available here.

Submitting for the examination. As the thesis is nearing completion you will need to submit a formal entry 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 here:

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. Note that the Entry Form should be submitted at least two months before submission. Examination entry will cease to be valid eighteen months after submission of the Entry Form. A research student should not submit a thesis for examination without having it approved by the supervisory team.

Choosing examiners. Two examiners must be appointed by Royal Holloway to examine every research student who submits a thesis. Normally, one examiner will be internal to the

University of London and one will be *external* (not from the University of London). Neither the internal nor the external examiner should have worked with the research student prior to the examination, or have any other significant connection with the research student. Whilst the formal appointment of examiners is outside the control of the supervisory team, they are nevertheless required to nominate candidates for these two roles. This is not something in which the research student will be involved.

Note that the research student must not make any direct contact with either of the examiners prior to the examination.

5.3   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.

5.4   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.

6   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.

6.1 Departmental viva preparation

Preparation for the final examination. The College offers viva training for research students final examination as part of the Research Skills Programme. In addition, also our Shared Computer Science, ISG and Maths Training Programme offers a viva training tailored towards the specific needs of students in our School. This training is compulsory for students. As well as Research Skills Programme training, it is often useful for the supervisory team to arrange a mock viva, prior to the real event, where two members of staff (e.g. the supervisor and adviser) spend some time acting as internal and external examiners. This will enable the research student to get a feel for what types of question might be asked.

The supervisor is responsible for arranging the viva, including negotiating the date and time with the examiners, booking a room in which to conduct the examination, etc. Typically, the viva will be held in the department at Royal Holloway. Guidance on the conduct of the viva is available here. The supervisor may be present at the viva if the research student wishes. Past practice in this area varies, but in most cases the supervisor does not attend. If the supervisor is present during the viva then they can only act as an observer, and may only speak in this area varies, but in most cases the supervisor does not attend. If the supervisor is present during the viva then they can only act as an observer, and may only speak

7 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.

8 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/doctoral-school/home.aspx

8.1 Research 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. 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.

8.2 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.

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.

9   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/iquad/doctoralschool/researchskillstraining/researchskills.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.

10   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 Cavey
Email: Lisa.Cavey@rhul.ac.uk
Phone: 01784 443085

Please also contact **DDS** directly via disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk or 01784 276473.

11   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.

12 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.

12.1 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 Practise 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/home.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.

12.2 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/academicappealsandcollegecomplaints.aspx.

13 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)**.

14 Library Services, Facilities and Resources

14.1 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

14.2   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.

14.3   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 2nd 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 / 01784 414425

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

14.4 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.ull.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/inrrooms/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/inrrooms/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

14.5   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.

15   Health and Safety Information

15.1   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**.

15.2   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 08:00 – 18.00
Outside of Academic Terms: Monday – Friday 08:00 – 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**.

16   Equal Opportunities Statement and College Codes of Practice

16.1   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.

16.2   Additional College codes of practice

Postgraduate research students pursue independent research in academic departments, leading to the award of the degree of MPhil or PhD. Successful progress depends primarily on their own efforts, supported by those of their supervisors, but also on the research environment in the department and on the quality of their research training. The College's Code of Practice sets out the practices and procedures which underpin these efforts and outlines, amongst others, the responsibilities of student, supervisor, advisor and the students' department(s). As a research student of the College you should therefore ensure that you familiarize yourself with the content of the Code as well as with the Research Degree Regulations which set out the regulations governing all aspects of MPhil/ PhD study from admission to completion. A range of useful information is also available through the College's Postgraduate Research Students page.