



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH  
School of Engineering

# POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT HANDBOOK



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# WELCOME!

Welcome to the School of Engineering at the University of Edinburgh, one of the top-rated Research Schools in the United Kingdom.

We are delighted that you have chosen to continue your studies here in one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Our Graduate School is large and diverse, with around 120 academics and 350 postgraduate students from all over the globe. Our research spans a wide spectrum of modern engineering and we are at the forefront of our research fields. We also have an excellent support team who will be working to ensure the administrative, computing, and technical support aspects of your studies are handled correctly and efficiently, and they will be happy to help you with any questions you may have.

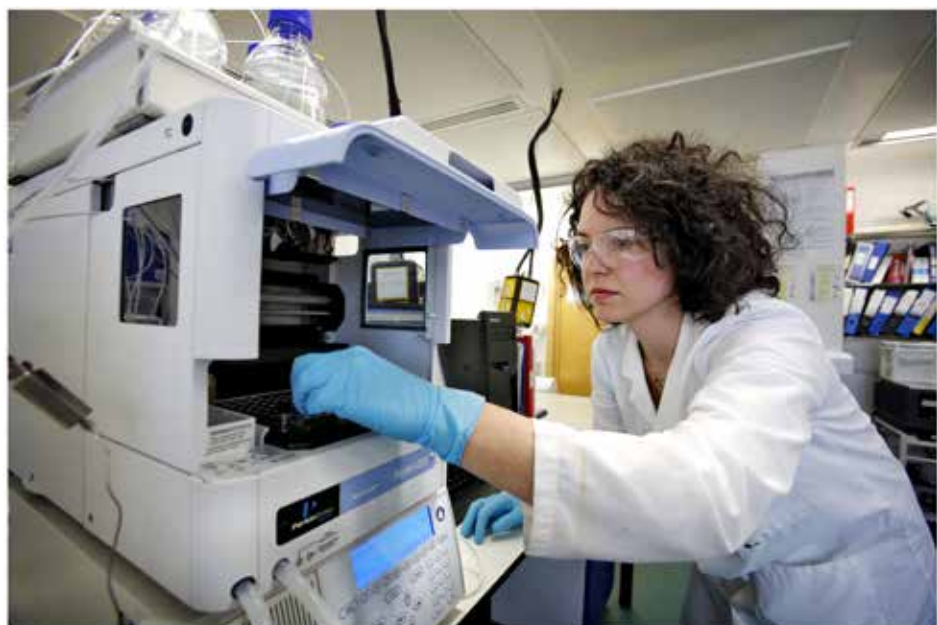
It is very important that you are successful in your research studies and that you complete your postgraduate research degree on time. It is also, however, a period when you will develop your wider interests, meet friends and contacts that you will keep for life, and participate in the life of the School beyond your own research field. Our Engineering Research Society (EngGradSoc) is run by and for postgraduate researchers, and each Research Institute also has its own activities. Take advantage of the courses offered by the University's Institute for Academic Development (described in this handbook), which will develop the skills you will need when you move on to the next stage in your career.

Your postgraduate studies will be amongst the most demanding and challenging years of your life, but they will also be amongst the most exciting, stimulating and rewarding. As well as making a significant contribution to knowledge in your field, we hope you will take advantage of the numerous opportunities available to you. We wish you will leave us with a sense of pride in both your personal development and academic achievement, having been part of one of the top research Schools in the United Kingdom.

Most important of all, enjoy your studies and your time with us.



Dr Tim Stratford  
Head of Graduate School  
The School of Engineering



# 1 REGULATIONS AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This Handbook is an overview for research students in the School of Engineering (including PhD, EngD, MPhil, and MSc by Research), but it does not cover all of the details of your research degree. Some specific research programmes (such as our Centres for Doctoral Training) might have separate handbooks that sit alongside this one.

**You must understand and follow the University's requirements for research students. In particular, you must read the University's Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students:**

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/copsupervisorsresearchstudents.pdf>

Other key documents that you need to read include:

- The School Safety Handbook.
- Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations.
- Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.
- Tier 4 student attendance and engagement policy (for international students).
- University Computing Regulations.

The following wiki page gives links to these key documents:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/uo7zE>



**The Engineering Graduate School Wiki** <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/BTrnCQ>

Our wiki has detailed and up to date information for research students in Engineering, including report submission requirements.

**The College of Science and Engineering Wiki** <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/dIMTBw>

The College is responsible for many of the more formal aspects of your PhD, such as thesis assessment and the Postgraduate Board of Examiners.

# 2 THE GRADUATE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

## THE ENGINEERING GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Graduate School in Engineering is responsible for all matters relating to your postgraduate research studies in the School. We can help with any queries or matters that cannot be addressed by your supervisors, and you are always welcome in the Graduate School Office for advice.

**Head of Graduate School**      [hogs@eng.ed.ac.uk](mailto:hogs@eng.ed.ac.uk)  
Dr Tim Stratford              505722      Rm 3.11, Alexander Graham Bell Building

**Deputy Head of Graduate School**      [dhogs@eng.ed.ac.uk](mailto:dhogs@eng.ed.ac.uk)  
Dr Prash Valluri              505691      Rm 1.075, Sanderson Building

### PGR Academic Advisers

Each Research Institute has an Academic Adviser, who is your first point of contact for PGR academic matters:

Dr Anthony Callanan	507355	IBioE
Dr Nick Polydorides	502769	IDCom
Dr Quan Li	508562	IES
Dr Andrea Semiao	505792	IIE
Dr Jonathan Terry	505607	IMNS
Dr Edward McCarthy	504867	IMP
Dr Prash Valluri	505691	IMT

### The Graduate School Office

The Graduate School Office is part of the Head of School and Administration Offices on the first floor of the Sanderson Building. The Graduate School Administrators are:

Sheila McBain	505573	Graduate School Supervisor
Stephen Graham	517213	Graduate School Administrator
Kate Morris	507815	Administrative Assistant

All graduate school emails should be sent to [EngGradOffice@ed.ac.uk](mailto:EngGradOffice@ed.ac.uk) (rather than individual email addresses), to help ensure you receive a prompt response.

### Deputy Director of Professional Services

Kathy Moore              505676      [Katherine.Moore@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Katherine.Moore@ed.ac.uk)  
Kathy's responsibilities include the Graduate School Office and the Finance Office.

These names will change from time to time. Up to date contacts can be found on the Graduate School wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/xqngEg>



## THE UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE AND WHERE YOU FIT IN

The University's structure can at first appear to be slightly bewildering. This summary explains how the Engineering Graduate School fits within our University.

### **The University of Edinburgh** [www.ed.ac.uk](http://www.ed.ac.uk)

The University of Edinburgh has three Colleges:

- Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
- Science and Engineering

Your research project might involve cross-College work, but all Engineering students are registered for degree programmes in the College of Science and Engineering.

### **The College of Science and Engineering** [www.scieng.ed.ac.uk](http://www.scieng.ed.ac.uk)

As well as the School of Engineering, the College includes the Schools of Biological Sciences, Chemistry, GeoSciences, Informatics, Mathematics, and Physics & Astronomy.

The College is responsible for most of the formal aspects of postgraduate research students' study, such as approving the award of the thesis, or approval of concessions. The College postgraduate research section is located in the Weir Building of The King's Buildings. However, you are unlikely to need to contact them directly, as most matters should first be referred to the Engineering Graduate School.

### **The School of Engineering** [www.eng.ed.ac.uk](http://www.eng.ed.ac.uk)

As well as being part of the Graduate School, you are a member of one of the School of Engineering's Research Institutes:

- Institute for BioEngineering (IBioE)
- Institute for Digital Communications (IDCom)
- Institute for Energy Systems (IES)
- Institute for Infrastructure and Environment (IIE)
- Institute for Integrated Micro and Nano Systems (IMNS)
- Institute for Materials and Processes (IMP)
- Institute for Multiscale Thermofluids (IMT)

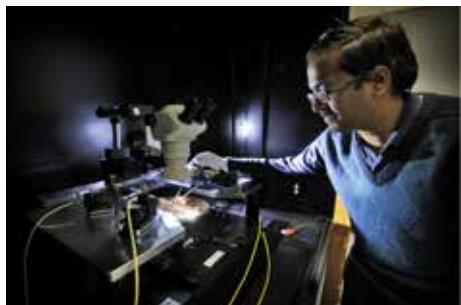
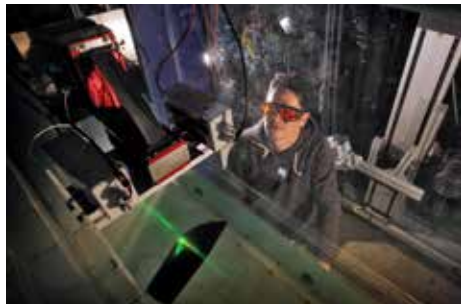
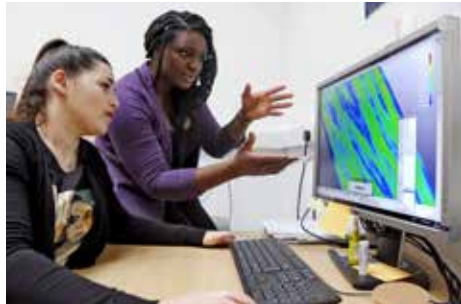
Each of our Research Institutes includes academics, research associates, and PGR students, and organises activities such as research seminars and subject-specific workshops. Office, laboratory and desk space are organised at Research Institute level, by the Head of Research Institute and Research Institute Secretary.

There are a number of other research groupings and organisations that overlap with our Research Institutes, and which you might also be a part of:

- The Edinburgh Research Partnership with Heriot Watt University  
[www.erp.ac.uk](http://www.erp.ac.uk)
- The Industrial Doctoral Centre for Offshore Renewable Energy (IDCORE)  
[www.idcore.ac.uk](http://www.idcore.ac.uk)
- Centre for Doctoral Training in Integrative Sensing and Measurement
- The Centre for Science at Extreme Conditions
- The UK All-Waters combined current and wave test facility (FloWave)
- UK Carbon Capture and Storage Research Centre
- The Centre for Synthetic Biology (SynthSys)
- The BRE Centre for Fire Safety Engineering
- The Scottish Microelectronics Centre
- The University Defence Research Collaboration

For teaching purposes, the School is also divided into Disciplines. These will only be relevant to you if you become involved in Tutoring or Demonstrating (see Section 7):

- Chemical Engineering
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Electronics and Electrical Engineering
- Engineering Mathematics



## THE ORGANISATION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

### ACADEMIC COMMITTEES

#### **School Postgraduate Progression Committee (SPPC)**

SPPC is responsible for academic matters such as approving your project plan, annual progression, and reviews requests such as Interruptions of Study. The committee also develops postgraduate research support within Engineering. SPPC includes the PGR Academic Advisers and Head of Graduate School. The full committee membership can be found at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/ihrBCg>

#### **College PGR Board of Examiners and Postgraduate Committee**

The PGR Board of Examiners approves the award of the final thesis. Other academic matters (such as requests for extensions and interruptions of study, leave of absence, appointment of examiners) also require College approval. The College and School work closely together. The PGR Board of Examiners is chaired by the College Dean of Students and includes all of the Heads of Graduate School in the College of Science and Engineering.

### POSTGRADUATE TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

#### **School Postgraduate Experience Committee (SPEC)**

SPEC consists of staff and PGR students from each Research Institute. It meets once per semester to discuss any postgraduate experience matters, and is a forum for sharing best practice across the Institutes, and developing events such as the School Research Conference, training opportunities, and inductions. Your views and suggestions on how to improve your experience here are welcome, and you should speak to your research institute representative. The committee membership and minutes from our meetings can be found at <http://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/qhnBCg>.

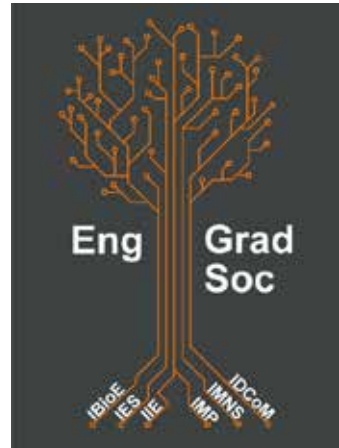
#### **College Researcher Training Committee (RTC)**

The Research Training Committee oversees PGR provision across the College, with a similar but a higher level and more strategic role to SPEC. The committee includes two students (the role rotates around the Schools in the College), who liaise with our own SPEC student representatives.

## Engineering Graduate Society (EngGradSoc)

The Engineering Graduate Society (EngGradSoc) is a vibrant society for all researchers across the School of Engineering, including postgraduate students and post-doctoral research associates. You are automatically a member without having to pay a fee.

The EngGradSoc's aim is to bring together researchers across all of the School's Research Institutes, in joint training, skills and knowledge sharing and social activities that enhance your Edinburgh experience. There are events throughout the year for you to get involved in. These include PhD experience talks (e.g. 'Going Abroad during the PhD'), technology workshops (e.g. about Raspberry Pis), sharing research skills sessions (e.g. MATLAB, Linux, LaTeX, LabView etc), industry visits and talks, monthly coffee breaks, board-game nights and pub tours, or sightseeing trips once every three months.



The committee of the society consist of one representative from each institute and changes annually. They are always looking for new people with fresh ideas. If you are interested in becoming an EngGradSoc representative, please contact: [EngGradSoc@ed.ac.uk](mailto:EngGradSoc@ed.ac.uk)

Keep up-to-date: Join us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EGS.UoE/>



## GRADUATE SCHOOL EVENTS

### The Engineering Graduate School Conference (April)

The Graduate School organises the annual School Research Conference for PGR students. This is a showcase of all the research currently taking place in the School and an opportunity to network with other researchers and academics. By bringing together research students from all parts of the School of Engineering, the Conference allows ideas and skills to be shared, and you will make connections with other researchers in a different part of the School who are tackling similar problems to your project.



All research students are expected to attend this event, together with many academics. Second year PhD students are required to present at the conference (see [Section 3](#)). There are keynote talks from prominent speakers that add context to your detailed research work.

### Graduate School BBQ (September)

This is an opportunity for all staff, researchers and postgraduate students to get together and chat over a burger and a beer (vegetarian and non-alcoholic options are available!). After a hard day's study, come along for a relaxed social where you can meet people from other Institutes.

You will receive an email about the BBQ. Just register to let the Graduate School Office know that you will be coming and turn up on the day.





### **Firbush Residential Trip (May)**

Firbush is the University's Outdoor Centre situated on the banks of Loch Tay in the Scottish Highlands, about two hours from Edinburgh. It is a fantastic location and offers a range of outdoor activities on the water or on dry land.

The Graduate School runs a three-day residential trip to Firbush each year, for first year research students. The trip is focused upon training that will help during the early stages of your research project, with activities to develop your planning, research, and group working skills. It is a valuable opportunity to reflect upon your research project, share experiences, and gain skills that are useful for research, combined with the outdoor activities offered by Firbush.

You will receive an email a few months before the trip with more details. The trip is paid for by the Graduate School, but you will be asked to pay a refundable deposit to secure a place.

# 3 YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE

You are joining a vibrant research community in the School of Engineering, and one that extends across and beyond the University. The academic community is founded on the exchange of ideas, knowledge and skills, and your training during your degree will involve more than your research. There are many training and development opportunities for you to take advantage of (described later in this handbook). However, it is important to recognise that your primary focus must always be upon completing your research degree.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

*The student must have demonstrated ... that the student is capable of pursuing original research making a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of study ...*

(Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulation 39)

You must:

- Submit your completed thesis on time.
- Ensure that the thesis is your own work and acknowledge the work of other scholars and researchers correctly.
- Work diligently and effectively, as a professional independent researcher.
- Ensure that you understand the requirements of your degree (as described in the Regulations and the Code of Practice; see <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/uo7zE>).
- Understand and follow the various procedures described in this handbook.

## THE DURATION OF YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE

A research degree involves sustained self-led work over a long period, but it is very important to submit your thesis on time. If you do not submit your thesis by the submission deadline you will be excluded from study and not able to complete your degree. More information can be found on the Graduate School wiki at:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/b4jgEg>

### How long does a PhD take?

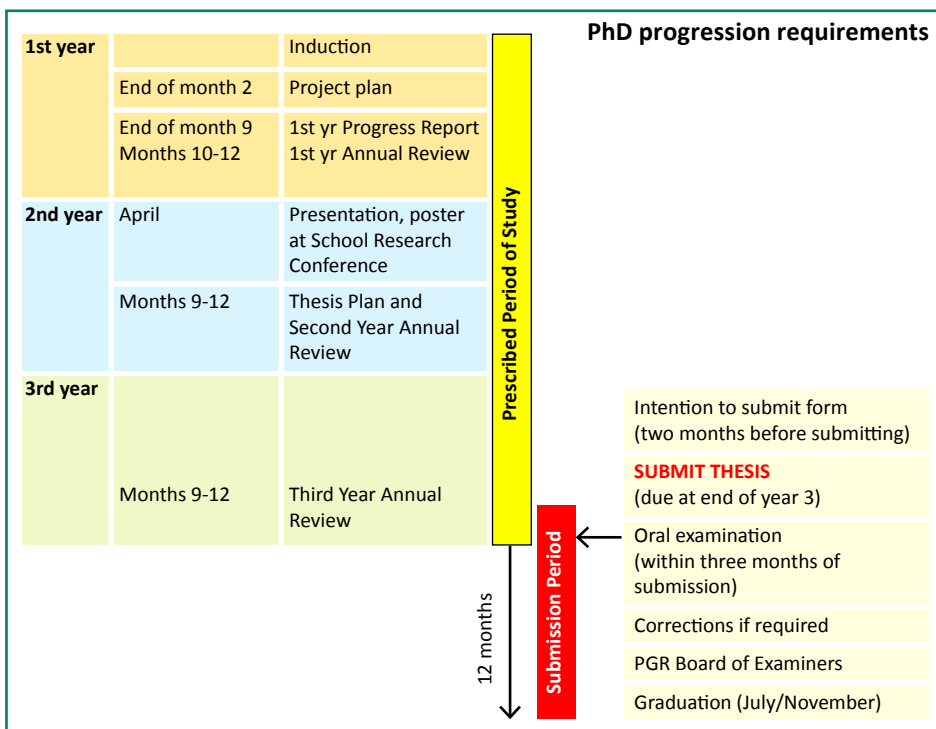
- **The prescribed period of study for a full-time PhD at the University of Edinburgh is three years.** Your thesis is due to be submitted three years after your start date, and the oral examination should normally take place within three months of submission. All of the research (experiments, simulations, analysis, fieldwork...) for your project must be completed by the end of these three years.
- **The University allows an additional twelve-month submission period.** The submission period is only for writing-up.
- The duration of the PhD does not depend upon your funding. A 3.5 year studentship (for example) covers the three year prescribed period of study, plus a 6 month allowance for writing-up during the submission period.

### How long are other research degrees?

- A PhD with Integrated Study has a four-year prescribed period of study, because of a year of taught material before starting the research.
- An MPhil has a two-year prescribed period of study and a 12-month submission period.
- An MSc by Research has a one-year prescribed period of study, with no submission period.

### PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to demonstrate adequate progression during their research project. These are compulsory and formal requirements in your degree regulations. The progression reviews are not, however, just hurdles that you need to pass. They act as milestones that help you plan and successfully complete your degree. They provide you with feedback on the progress and overall direction of your work, allow you to compare your work to those around you, enable potential problems to be identified and addressed, and provide a check that your plans are achievable and focused.





### **MPhil progression**

- Project plan at end of month two
- First year report and annual review (months 9-12)
- Thesis plan at end of month 18
- You are encouraged to present your work at the School Research Conference in your second year.

### **MSc by Research progression**

The MSc by Research is a twelve-month degree, and so does not include an annual progression review.

## **PGR STUDENT INDUCTION**

The School of Engineering runs PGR student inductions in October and February every year. These days are very important for new PGR students because they explain the requirements of your degree and how to make progress. All students must attend, whether or not you are new to the University, and even if you have been in the School a few months before the next available induction event.

## **PROJECT PLAN**

### **(Due at the end of month two for PhD and MPhil students)**

The Project Plan is a short initial proposal for the research work you will undertake for your PhD or MPhil. It will become a structure in which to carry out your research and a framework against which your progress can be measured. The plan should be discussed and agreed with your Supervisors before submission, and also with the School's Technical Services team if the project will require laboratory or workshop support.

The Project Plan must demonstrate that you have defined a project that:

- will lead to the Contribution to Knowledge that is required of a PhD or MPhil;
- will be completed on time;
- the necessary resources are available for the project; and
- risks to successful completion have been identified.

The Project Plan is submitted to the Graduate School for approval by the Postgraduate Advisers on the School Postgraduate Progression Committee, and it is also checked by the Head of Research Institute. You will be asked at this stage to confirm that you have attended a School safety induction session, and to attach an Ethics & Integrity form if this is required (see page 19). The detailed requirements of the Project Plan can be found on the Engineering Graduate School wiki at [https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/\\_cngEg](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/_cngEg)

## ANNUAL PROGRESSION REVIEWS

(During months 9 to 12 of every year of study, until thesis is submitted)

Every PGR student (except MSc by Research students) must complete an Annual Progression Review every year. This is a formal assessment of your progress, based upon an Annual Progress Report and Progress Review Meeting. If your progress is not satisfactory, you will usually be offered one additional review meeting; however, you might not be able to continue with your degree.

Each annual progression review involves:

- An **online annual review system** that you will use to record your progress to date and plans for completion. The system will automatically email you to start the annual review process.
- An additional formal **Annual Progress Report**, depending upon your year of study (as described on the Engineering Graduate School wiki). For example, the First Year Progress Report is described below.
- A **Progress Review Meeting**, with a review panel of your supervisors and an independent academic reviewer. The progress review meeting is a valuable opportunity to discuss your future plans, including your research project, plans for publications, and the training that you plan to attend over the next year.

After the review meeting, the panel will make their recommendation according to PGR Assessment Regulation 11 (as listed below). The completed online review is approved by SPPC and the Head of Graduate School, or might be considered by the College Board of Examiners if your progress is less than satisfactory.

- a) *Confirmation of registration for the degree (PhD, MPhil) for which the student is matriculated.*
- b) *A repeat progression review to be held within three months (NB: only one repeat review can be held before confirmation of degree programme).*
- c) *For part-time students only, deferment of the confirmation decision in the first annual review to the following annual review.*
- d) *Registration for a different degree such as MPhil or MSc by Research.*
- e) *Registration for a postgraduate taught degree (MSc) or diploma.*
- f) *Exclusion from study.*

The annual progression review takes place during months nine to twelve of each year of study. However, as it must be completed by the end of month twelve it should be started early to allow time for a repeat progression review if this is necessary. Progress reviews are required every year until you have submitted your thesis.

Further details of the Annual Progression Review process in the School of Engineering can be found on the Graduate School wiki pages at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/zquZEg>

## **First Year Progress Report** **(due at the start of month 9 for PhD and MPhil students)**

The First Year Progress Report is a concise overview of your progress so far and your future plans for successfully completing your research project. You should have made measurable progress by this stage, and your plans will have evolved since the two month Project Plan. This report forms the basis of discussion during the first year progress review meeting.

Your report must demonstrate that your research project will be completed on time and with the resources and funding that are available to you. It should be written for a reader who is not an expert in your research area.

The report is due at the start of month nine so that your annual review can be arranged, leaving enough time for a repeat progress review before the end of the year if this is necessary.

The detailed requirements for your First Year Progress Report are given on the Engineering Graduate School wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/pRKcEg>

## **Second Year Progress Report: Thesis Plan** **(due at the start of month 9 of your second year for PhD students; or the end of month 18 for MPhil students)**

By the end of your second year you should be well along the path to completion, and you should have a good idea of the content that will be in your thesis. For your second year annual review you need to submit a Thesis Plan (with chapter and section breakdowns and a few sentences detailing their content). This is an important stage in drawing your research together, and by acting as a discussion point during your annual review, it helps you talk to your supervisors and the reviewer about the work remaining to successfully complete your thesis. The thesis plan should be uploaded as part of the online annual review process.

## **THE GRADUATE SCHOOL RESEARCH CONFERENCE (Poster and Presentation during Year 2)**

The Graduate School organises a School Research Conference every year to showcase the work being conducted across the School of Engineering. The conference is a celebration of the research within the School, prompts collaboration across the Research Institutes, and includes Keynote presentations from a range of prominent speakers that help you to reflect upon the context of your research and your future career plans. It usually takes place at Pollock Halls towards the end of April.

**Research students from all years are expected to attend.**

During the conference second year PhD students are required to present a poster and give a short presentation about their research. This is a formal progression requirement; however, our School Research Conference is a relaxed and informal opportunity to practice your communication skills. We use a short two-minute presentation format that is fun, rapid, and a great way to make you think about the most effective way to communicate your work. Prizes are given for the best posters and presentations, and the posters are collated into a book (which will be available online) that showcases the School's research.

All second year students will need to:

- Take part in the poster and presentation training courses that the Graduate School and IAD run specifically for this conference.
- Submit your poster and presentation to the Graduate School Office in advance of the conference, to allow the conference book to be compiled and printed. You will be informed of the deadlines by email.
- Read and follow the Engineering Graduate School wiki page, which describes the details of what is required for the School Research Conference, and includes posters from previous years' events.

Students are also invited to contribute to the Research Institute demonstrations at the conference, and students from any year are welcome to bring a poster to the event (although you will need to arrange this with the Graduate School Office in advance).

### **Three Minute Thesis Competition**

The International three minute thesis competition challenges you to present your thesis on a single slide in three minutes. These presentations are excellent inspiration for your two minute talk during the School Research Conference.

The two minute talks are equally good preparation for you to enter the Three Minute Thesis Competition. There are heats in the School early in each year, followed by College level and University competitions, before progressing to UK and International level competitions.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/postgraduate/doctoral/3mt>

## SUBMITTING YOUR THESIS AND THE EXAMINATION PROCESS

The thesis submission and examination process is looked after by the College of Science and Engineering Postgraduate Section, in the Weir Building. The process applies to PhD, EngD, and MPhil students. MSc by Research students do not usually have an oral examination, and should refer to the College Office Wiki for information.

Student sends '**Notice of Intention to Submit**' form to College approximately two months before thesis submission. This is important because it starts the process of identifying and appointing the Examiners for your thesis (who are chosen by the School and your supervisors).



**Thesis submission** to the Weir Building  
(NB: your thesis will not be accepted after the end of the period of study)



The Examiners are officially appointed and the thesis sent to them. They must independently assess the thesis to decide whether or not to proceed with an oral examination, before arranging its date. NB: you must allow 3 months between submission of your thesis and the oral examination (PGR assessment regulation 27).



The oral examination takes place, usually with one External and one Internal Examiner. Your supervisor can be present if you ask them to, but must not contribute. An independent non-participating Chair might also be present.



After the oral examination your Examiners make a **recommendation as to whether or not you should pass your degree**, or the need for any corrections. They will inform you of their recommendation, and they will write a report that is sent to College.



The **College Postgraduate Board of Examiners** (which meets once a month) is responsible for making the final decision.



The extent and time that you are given for any **corrections** will be communicated to you by College (these must also be approved by the College Board of Examiners)



Any corrections will need to be approved by your Examiner(s), who sends a **Certificate of Corrections** for approval by the College Board of Examiners.



If successful, you will be asked to **submit a final corrected copy of your thesis** to College.



**Congratulations, you can now register to Graduate!**

Note that your degree will not be officially awarded (and you will not receive your degree certificate) until the next Graduation Ceremony (in July or November).

The College Postgraduate Research Wiki has information on the format of the thesis and the examination process: <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/dIMTBw>

## Timescales for the Submission and Examination Process

The examination process for a PGR degree involves a different set of examiners for every student, and requires the robust process that is described above.

It is important to understand the time required for the process of submission, examination, corrections, approval by the Board of Examiners, and proceeding to graduation.

Your Examiners will hold the oral examination as soon as they reasonably can after submission, but you must not pressurise them into rushing the examination process. For example, it is not reasonable to expect your Examiners or the College Board of Examiners to rush the process so that you can meet the registration deadline for Graduation. It is your responsibility to understand the time required for this process.



## CONDUCTING AND DISSEMINATING YOUR RESEARCH

### **Publishing your Work**

Public dissemination of your findings is an integral part of research. You are expected to publish your work in a timely manner in peer-reviewed academic journals, and to disseminate it through conferences or workshops. Our research outputs are the foundations on which our academic excellence is judged, and publishing your work in high impact journals ensures that it is taken up by future researchers. Publishing your work also helps your examiners to decide whether your work is of publishable quality when they assess your final thesis.

You will prepare a publication plan as part of your First Year Report, and should discuss this with your Supervisors. They can advise you upon the content of your papers and which journals to target, and they must be included as authors on any publications due to their contribution to your project and the paper.

The University requires all research outputs to be published in an Open Access form, and to be uploaded to the University's PURE repository. This is a requirement of any publicly-funded research (such as an EPSRC DTP studentship), but it is also a University requirement to ensure that the research can be considered as part of our Research Excellence Framework submission. As soon as your work has been accepted for publication, your Supervisor must upload the details to the University's PURE system, which populates the public view of the University's research activities (<http://www.research.ed.ac.uk>).

The UK Research Councils (including EPSRC) also require your research data to be made available through Open Data (unless there is a good reason not to).

Further information on publishing your work and data can be found on the School's Wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/2s5-EQ>

### **Research Ethics and Integrity**

The University follows the UK Research Integrity Office's (UKRIO) Code of Practice for Research (which can be found by following the web link below). All research in the School must be carried out to the highest standards of rigour and integrity and conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.

Ethical concerns might include research including human or animal subjects;

research that has an effect on the environment; work with collaborative partners; data protection arrangements; or research that might concern groups which may be construed as terrorist or extremist. The ethical implications of your research project must be examined and addressed in the Project Plan at the end of month two and if necessary, you will be required to complete a Research Ethics & Integrity form.

The School's Research and Integrity policy can be found at:

<http://www.eng.ed.ac.uk/research/ethics/>

### **Academic Misconduct, including Plagiarism**

Discussing and building upon prior research and other people's work are cornerstones of academic research, but it is essential that you acknowledge work that is not your own.

Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, collusion, falsification, cheating, deceit and personation. It is academically fraudulent and an offence against University discipline. All forms of Academic Misconduct are treated very seriously by the University, whether intentionally or unintentional.

Plagiarism is the most common form and best known example of academic misconduct, and unfortunately serious plagiarism cases regularly occur within the University amongst PhD students. It involves the presentation of another person's work as your own, without proper acknowledgement of the source, with or without the creator's permission.

You must read and understand the information on Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism on the University's website at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/conduct>

### **Intellectual Property**

Edinburgh Research and Innovation (ERI) promotes and commercialises the University's research and expertise. ERI can provide advice and assistance in protecting your research project's intellectual property and taking this to the marketplace if appropriate.

If your research results in patent applications or disputes it is very important to have evidence of your Intellectual Property, and consequently we expect you to record your research ideas, observations and meeting notes (complete with dates) in a hardbound notebook. These can be collected from the School of Engineering Stores (see page 42).



ERI also provides advice upon legal agreements relating to your research project. For example, if you are working with an industrial partner or using data from an external organisation, you may be required to sign an Intellectual Property Agreement. Your supervisor will contact the School's Business Development Executive if an IP agreement is necessary.

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/edinburgh-research-innovation>

### **Dignity and Respect**

You will be working within the School's community of researchers to conduct your research project, and interacting with colleagues from across the University. The University promotes a positive culture in which all members of the University can expect to be respected and valued for their unique values and contributions, and it has a long-standing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Integrity, collegiality and inclusivity are central to the University's values, and respect, trust, confidence and fairness are essential elements in the relationship between supervisor and student.

The University's Dignity and Respect policy promotes a positive culture for working and studying, and applies to all members of the University. The policy and information on the University's Dignity and Respect Advisors can be found further information can be found on the University's Equality and Diversity web pages:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity>

Information on the School of Engineering's Equality and Diversity Committee can be found on School Wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/t1B7Dg>



# 4 SUPPORT FOR YOUR STUDY

## **YOUR SUPERVISORS**

The supervisor/student relationship is a key component of a successful research degree, and should become a professional and long-lasting partnership. You will have been allocated a Principal Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor (or very occasionally a Co-Supervisor) before your arrival in Edinburgh. The Principal Supervisor is the person primarily responsible for providing help and advice throughout your studies. The role of your Assistant Supervisor will depend upon your project; they might provide specific expertise or might have more of an overview of your work.

You might also have an Industrial Supervisor or be guided by other people (such as Post-Doctoral Research Associates); however, please note that they will not be able to provide guidance on the regulatory requirements of your PGR degree.

How you and your supervisors choose to manage your relationship is a matter of personal preference and you should discuss this at an early stage. All academics have a wide variety of responsibilities that keep them busy, so one of your challenges as a research student will be to manage how you interact with your Supervisors. You need to take the lead in arranging meetings, should prepare for them in advance, and should keep notes of what was discussed during the meetings. You should normally expect to meet for about an hour per week; however, this will vary in frequency and duration depending upon the stage of your project.

The University requires you to produce a record of your meetings and to forward it to your supervisor for agreement. This should record the date of the meeting, its purpose, any specific problems identified, and action points (see the Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors, section 3.1.1).

## **RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR YOUR RESEARCH**

The School of Engineering provides every PhD student with:

- a desk for the duration of their period of study;
- a standard specification computer; and
- a small research costs budget that is administered by your supervisor.

Any research costs above the budget will require additional funding, which must be discussed with your Supervisor in advance. You should not plan a research project for which there is insufficient funding and you will be required to demonstrate this when you submit your Project Plan (at the end of month two).

The School has a range of other resources, such as laboratories, workshops and equipment, and our technical support and IT support teams, which are described later in this handbook. These resources are finite and are shared across all of the School's activities. Their availability must be discussed at the start of your project, as they might not be available for your research.

Students on research degrees other than a PhD should consult the Graduate School Office about the resources available for their project.

## SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING SUPPORT

### Research Institute Support

The Research Institute Secretaries provide administrative support for each Institute and can help with Institute-specific queries such as desk allocations or travel arrangements.

Pauline Clark (IES)	<a href="mailto:Pauline.Clark@ed.ac.uk">Pauline.Clark@ed.ac.uk</a>	505646
Diane Reid (iBioE/IMP)	<a href="mailto:Diane.Reid@ed.ac.uk">Diane.Reid@ed.ac.uk</a>	507343
IIE/IDCOM	<a href="mailto:RIs@eng.ed.ac.uk">RIs@eng.ed.ac.uk</a>	505719
IMNS/IMT	<a href="mailto:RIs@eng.ed.ac.uk">RIs@eng.ed.ac.uk</a>	507474

### The Finance Office

The Finance Team is in the Head of School and Administration Offices on the first floor of the Sanderson Building (in the same place as the Graduate School).

Helen Gilmour	<a href="mailto:Helen.Gilmour@ed.ac.uk">Helen.Gilmour@ed.ac.uk</a>	507362
Gillian Harrison	<a href="mailto:Gillian.Harrison@ed.ac.uk">Gillian.Harrison@ed.ac.uk</a>	505564
Karen Miller	<a href="mailto:Karen.Miller@ed.ac.uk">Karen.Miller@ed.ac.uk</a>	505745

The School's finance team look after all matters relating to finance. These include placing orders for goods and services (such as lab supplies, materials, conference registrations, etc.), expense claims, administering stipends, etc.

### **The School IT Team**

IT Helpline and Helpdesk: <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/mYLMCQ>

The University uses a managed helpline for IT enquiries: <https://ed.unidesk.ac.uk>  
Alternatively contact [seesup@ed.ac.uk](mailto:seesup@ed.ac.uk), or 515151

The Engineering IT helpdesk (Rm A116, Alrick Building, 10.00-12.00) is primarily for picking up/dropping off equipment or account information, and it is unlikely that the helpdesk will be able to solve IT problems (but will be able to help you complete the managed helpline).

The University of Edinburgh has one of the best academic computing networks in the UK, and the benefits of this are felt by students as well as researchers. The School has a range of computing facilities, overseen by the School IT team in the Alrick building and led by David Stewart. You will have been allocated a personal office computer when you arrived, but there are also a number of computing facilities with specialised equipment and software. The School IT team is responsible for managing and maintaining your office computer, and for the network and applications supporting it. If you need anything specific, you should speak with your Supervisor and the IT team.

### **Technical Services**

Technical Services Wiki page: <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/HhgtDw>

The School's Technical Services team is located in G.167 on the ground floor of the Fleeming Jenkin building.

Fiona Alderson	Technical Services Manager	<a href="mailto:tsm@eng.ed.ac.uk">tsm@eng.ed.ac.uk</a>	505617
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#### Technical Services Officers

Bill Leslie	Electrical and electronics	<a href="mailto:Bill.Leslie@ed.ac.uk">Bill.Leslie@ed.ac.uk</a>	505657
Chris Sturgeon	Civil, mechanical, fabrication	<a href="mailto:Chris.Sturgeon@ed.ac.uk">Chris.Sturgeon@ed.ac.uk</a>	505709
Steve Gourlay	Mechanical, fabrication, CNC	<a href="mailto:S.Gourlay@ed.ac.uk">S.Gourlay@ed.ac.uk</a>	505797
Bryan Mitchell	Buildings issues*	<a href="mailto:buildings@eng.ed.ac.uk">buildings@eng.ed.ac.uk</a>	504865

\* lighting, furniture, fault reports, etc.

Our Technical Services Team provide technical assistance in the laboratories, fabrication in the workshops, and coordinates building work and repairs. They have a wealth of practical knowledge and skills, and involving them early in your plans can help ensure your project runs as smoothly as possible.

Your first point of contact if you require technical support should be either the technician associated with your laboratory, or one of the Technical Services Officers (TSOs). After discussing the feasibility, resources, scale, and timelines for the project you will be asked to submit a Technical Job Request, so that technician time can be allocated, materials and components ordered, and work scheduled. A technical job request is required before any work starts. In general, the technical job request system works on a first-in, first-out basis, but at peak times of the year (such as during undergraduate thesis projects in semester two), the TSOs must prioritise jobs that are particularly pressing, making it especially important to discuss your work well in advance. See the Technical Service Wiki (above) for further information such as the Technical Job Request system, and the technicians associated with each laboratory.

### **Safety in the School**

School of Engineering Health and Safety information:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/JBa6CQ>

University Health and Safety Department: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety>

Dr Andy Bunting

School Safety Advisor

[safety-advisor@eng.ed.ac.uk](mailto:safety-advisor@eng.ed.ac.uk), 505610

The School safety committee is chaired by the Head of School, and is divided into subcommittees for the different buildings in the School, plus two specialist safety advisors:

Dr Rory Hadden

AGB / WR / John Muir / Structures

Dr George Serghiou

Alrick / Faraday / Fleeming Jenkin / Hudson Beare

Dr Jeff Steynor

Flowave

Dr Xianfeng Fan

Sanderson

Dr Anthony Walton

SMC

Dr Andy Downes

Laser Safety Advisor

Prof. Alistair Elfick

Biological Safety Advisor

Each laboratory has a named academic who is responsible for safety (displayed on the lab door or noticeboard).

## UNIVERSITY SUPPORT SERVICES

The University has a strong network of services to help and support you.

### Library

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery>

email: [ls.Helpline@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ls.Helpline@ed.ac.uk)

The University has several Library sites, including the Main Library in George Square. However, the most relevant site for Engineers is the Noreen and Kenneth Murray Library at The King's Buildings. As well as the physical and printed collections, the University has an extensive collection of electronic journals and books that are available online, and subscriptions to numerous search databases (accessible via EASE).

### The Student Disability Service

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service>

3rd floor of the University's Main Library in George Square

0131 650 6828; [disability.service@ed.ac.uk](mailto:disability.service@ed.ac.uk)

This service provides support for students with a range of disabilities, including those with a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia, an autistic spectrum disorder, a visual or hearing impairment, a long-term illness, mental health conditions, physical impairments, a temporary disability such as a broken arm, and any other impairments.

If you believe you require support or provision to be made in relation to your research project, written submissions, and formal assessment (such as your annual reviews or the oral examination at the end of your degree), you must register with the Student Disability Service. You can make an appointment with their advisers, who can assess what arrangements are required needed to ensure that you are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who are not disabled. These are written up in a Learning Profile, which is sent to you and to the School. The member of staff in the School responsible for supporting research students with disabilities is the Graduate School Office Supervisor.

### International Student Advisory Service

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/international-office/student-advisory-service>

0131 6515294; [isas@ed.ac.uk](mailto:isas@ed.ac.uk)

The International Student Advisory Service provides professional advice and student support services to all non-UK students. This includes specialist visa and immigration advice, and they provide both students and staff with expert guidance upon Tier 4 visa requirements. The International Student Advisory Service also provides a programme of orientation and induction activities, and social and cultural support.

### **The Advice Place**

[https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support\\_and\\_advice/the\\_advice\\_place/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/)

King's Buildings House, or Potterrow (Bristo Square)

0131 650 9225 / 0800 206 2341; [advice@eusa.ed.ac.uk](mailto:advice@eusa.ed.ac.uk)

The Advice Place are a team of professional, trained staff, who can help you with any queries or concerns you may have about accommodation, finances, the University, personal health, wellbeing and anything else you may have concerns with. Advice is free, impartial and confidential. The Advice Place is run by Edinburgh University Students' Association. You can drop in for friendly confidential advice during opening hours (which are shown on their website), or call, email, text, or Facebook them. There are also lots of handy advice guides on their website.

### **Student Counselling Service**

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-counselling>

Weir Building, King's Buildings (semesters only)

Main Library, George Square (year round)

0131 6504170; [Student.Counselling@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Student.Counselling@ed.ac.uk)

The University's Student Counselling Service helps students work through difficulties, understand themselves better, and find ways of managing a situation. It offers confidential support to help you make the most of your student experience, by providing self-help resources, drop-in presentation workshops, short term counselling and consultation.

### **The University Health Service**

<http://www.health-service.ed.ac.uk>

Richard Verney Health Centre, Bristo Square

0131 6502777; [univhealthserv@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:univhealthserv@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)

All students must register with a General Practitioner (GP) in Edinburgh. This will allow you to access health services quickly and easily while you are at University. The University Health Service is an independent GP in Bristo Square, although you could instead register with any other GP in the area.

### **SUPPORT FOR STUDY POLICY**

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/support-for-study>

The University has a Support for Study Policy to help students who may be struggling with their studies due to health conditions or disabilities.

## WHO SHOULD I TALK TO IF THINGS GO WRONG?

Your research degree should be one of the most rewarding periods of your life; however, it is a large piece of independent work, finding your way through it can be daunting, and we all go through difficult times. The University will go to lengths to help you, but can only help if you let us know about it. In all cases where there is something that is disrupting your studies (whether academic or personal), the most important thing to do is to talk to someone from the list below.

### Supervisors

- Your **Principal** or **Assistant Supervisor(s)** should be the first people you turn to.

### Other Academics

- The **Independent Reviewer** during your Annual Review is there to discuss any issues preventing you from successfully completing your PhD, and you can approach them outside the review meeting.
- **Another academic** (e.g. female students may prefer to approach a female academic). All academics will do what they can to help.

### The Graduate School (see page 4)

- The **PGR Academic Advisers** in the Research Institutes.
- Sheila and Stephen in the **Sanderson Graduate School Office** can help with a wide range of concerns, or put you in touch with someone who can help.
- The **Head of Graduate School or Deputy**.
- The **Deputy Director of Professional Services** (Kathy Moore) can be consulted about Graduate School matters.

### Students, friends or family

- Talking to your fellow **PGR students, friends or family** can often be a good first step to resolving issues or identifying a way forward. However, you must seek advice on any academic matters from an Academic or the Graduate School.
- Issues relating to general Graduate School matters can be raised by your **SPEC student representative**.

### UNIVERSITY SUPPORT (see page 27)

- The **Advice Place**.
- The **Student Counselling Service**.
- The **International Student Advisory Service**.
- The **University Health Centre**.



## WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE IS A DELAY TO MY PROJECT?

### **Delays that are a normal part of research**

Unexpected results, changes to your research plans, waiting for data from external sources, waiting for materials to be delivered or waiting for equipment to become available are part of a normal research project. These delays can be anticipated early in a research project (e.g. when you prepare your Project Plan or First Year Report). They can be avoided by proper planning, or alternative arrangements can be made. If your research work is delayed, you should first discuss with your supervisor how the project scope and plans can be adapted to complete your research work before the end of the prescribed period of study. Note that extensions to the period of study (see below) are not granted for being too ambitious in your research project, due to poor planning, or because of delays that should have been anticipated during planning.

### **Exceptional and Unforeseen Circumstances**

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, it is possible for your supervisor to request a concession. There are two types of concession that change the end of your period of study: an Interruption of Study or an Extension to the Period of Study.

Hopefully you will not require a concession, but it is important to understand the two different types of concession and the circumstances under which you can apply for them. Concession requests must be made as soon as the circumstances takes place and certainly no later than one month before the end of your submission period.

### **Interruption of Study**

If you are unable to work for a significant period due to circumstances beyond your control (such as extended illness or absence) it may be appropriate to apply for an Interruption of Study. This 'stops the clock' for your degree. Supporting evidence will be required, such as a medical certificate, and the application must be made as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Maternity, paternity, and family leave will usually result in an Interruption of Studies. Further information can be found on the Graduate School Wiki.

Note that an Interruption of Study is only granted for circumstances outside your control. It would not, for example, be granted to allow you to take a few months out of your PhD to enter employment.

### **Extension to the Period of Study**

An Extension to the Period of Study is granted for tightly defined circumstances:

- where progress has been hampered by unforeseen difficulties with facilities or equipment and hence completion of the thesis has been delayed; or
- where progress has been hampered by unforeseen difficulties in obtaining or analysing data.

Extensions are not granted because you need more time to complete your thesis, you have started paid work, your research project was too ambitious, you failed to apply for an Interruption of Studies earlier in your PhD, or you want to write papers.

### **Further Information on Interruptions and Extensions**

Other important details can be found on the Engineering Graduate School Wiki at [https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/tJW\\_E](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/tJW_E). Tier 4 students should be aware that there may be additional restrictions due to the requirements of your visa.

### **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Special Circumstances are exceptional circumstances that have an adverse impact on performance in an assessment. For PGR students, this only usually applies to an annual progression review meeting or the final oral examination. Disruption to other stages of your study should normally be taken into account through an Interruption of Study (described above), or potentially through adjustments that have been agreed with the Disability Office. They should always be discussed with your Principal Supervisor in the first instance.

See Section 4.2 of the Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors for more information.

# 5 TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A research degree is more than the project you are studying, and it is far more than a continuation of undergraduate study. It is the first step in your future career and presents a huge range of opportunities to explore that you are unlikely to get later on. The School and the University provide a wide range of training activities spanning from specific research skills to the more generic planning and communication aspects of projects. These transferable skills complement your day-to-day research.

**Training is a necessary and required part of your PGR degree**, and all PGR students are required to take part in a programme of training and personal development. All PGR students should:

- Attend and present your work in our **Research Institute Seminars** (and other School research seminars).
- Take part in the **School Research Conference** (in April) every year, including presenting your work in your second year.
- Take part in a **programme of training**, including core courses provided by the School, and a range of courses offered across the University.
- Take advantage of **other training and development opportunities** within and outside the University, such as presenting at conferences and workshops, public engagement, open days and school outreach activity, Professional Institution events, or participation in committees and event organisation.

## TRAINING COURSES AND RESOURCES

The Engineering Graduate School delivers training specifically developed for our PGR students. In addition, there are a very wide range of courses that are delivered by the University's Institute for Academic Development (IAD). The Graduate School and IAD work together to deliver our training programmes.

The IAD website includes information upon all of their courses, including a brochure describing these and a PhD newsletter that you can sign up to. Many of these courses take place over a half day or full day; however, there are also a range of courses that are delivered online or spanning over several weeks.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/postgraduate/doctoral>



## EXEMPLAR TRAINING PLAN

This exemplar training plan is intended to help you plan your skills training during your PhD. Everybody's training needs differ and will depend upon their project, and also whether you are intending to follow a career in industry or a career in academia.

PhD students should develop their own training plan that is similar to this exemplar plan; however, it must be discussed and developed with your Supervisors. The plan combines:

- Core training courses (shaded) that are a part of every PhD student's training.
- Examples of other training you can take part in, but these are only a selection of the courses that you might consider.

## EVERY YEAR

Course	Approximate Date	Delivered by
<b>CORE TRAINING</b>		
Research Institute / School Seminar Series and other talks and workshops	Throughout the year	Research Institute / Engineering
School Research Conference	April	Engineering
Tutor and demonstrator training and experience	Semester 1 / 2	Engineering

## FIRST YEAR

Course	Approximate Date	Delivered by
<b>CORE TRAINING</b>		
School of Engineering PGR Induction	October & February	Engineering / IAD
Firbush: research skill development and reflection	May (three-day residential)	Engineering
Preparing for your first year review	March / April	Engineering / IAD
<b>EXAMPLES OF OTHER COURSES</b>		
Basic engineering workshop skills	November	Engineering
Prepare for doctoral success (interactive online course)	4 weeks from early October	IAD
Finding Academic Literature	Several	IAD
Course on statistics, data management, academic writing, research ethics and integrity	Online	IAD
COMPASS programme: Orientation for international PGR students	Throughout the year	IAD

## SECOND YEAR

Course	Approximate Date	Delivered by
<b>CORE TRAINING</b>		
<b>Writing a Research Paper (Engineering)</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>Engineering / IAD</b>
<b>Writing and Designing your Academic poster (Engineering) *</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>IAD</b>
<b>Presenting your work (Engineering) *</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>IAD</b>
<b>School Research Conference (Poster and Presentation) *</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>Engineering</b>
<b>EXAMPLES OF OTHER COURSES</b>		
Academic writing for Engineering. (Initially developed for international students, but open to all engineering students).	Wednesday afternoons in semester 2	Engineering / the English Language Teaching Centre
Academic Writing Masterclass	June	IAD
Team building and leadership fundamentals	October	IAD

\* Presenting at the School Research Conference is a mandatory progression requirement, and these two courses are preparation for the School Research Conference.

## THIRD YEAR

Course	Approximate Date	Delivered by
<b>CORE TRAINING</b>		
<b>PhD Thesis Writing Workshop</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>Engineering / IAD</b>
<b>EXAMPLES OF OTHER COURSES</b>		
3 minute thesis international competition	February onwards	Engineering / IAD
Local GRADSchool (places highly competitive)	Three-day residential in Edinburgh	IAD
Research, Researchers and Media - A Hands on Approach to Communicating your Research	Three days in February	IAD / BBC

The Graduate School wiki gives links to these courses, including the dates (if known).  
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/hcvgEg>

## **SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY SEMINAR SERIES**

Seminars from across the University are publicised on a central University Seminar Site (<https://talks.is.ed.ac.uk>).

School and Research Institute seminars are publicised via the School website and also be local email distribution lists (<http://www.eng.ed.ac.uk>).

## **BOOKING TRAINING**

Some of the training run within the School of Engineering should be booked with the Graduate School, and you should look out for emails about these events.

IAD courses (including many that are run jointly with Engineering) are booked online, via the IAD website. Bookings generally open one month before the start of the course.

The majority of these courses are paid for by the School and the University using our Researcher Development Fund. The vast majority are completely free for PGR students to attend. However, the provision of free courses must not be abused:

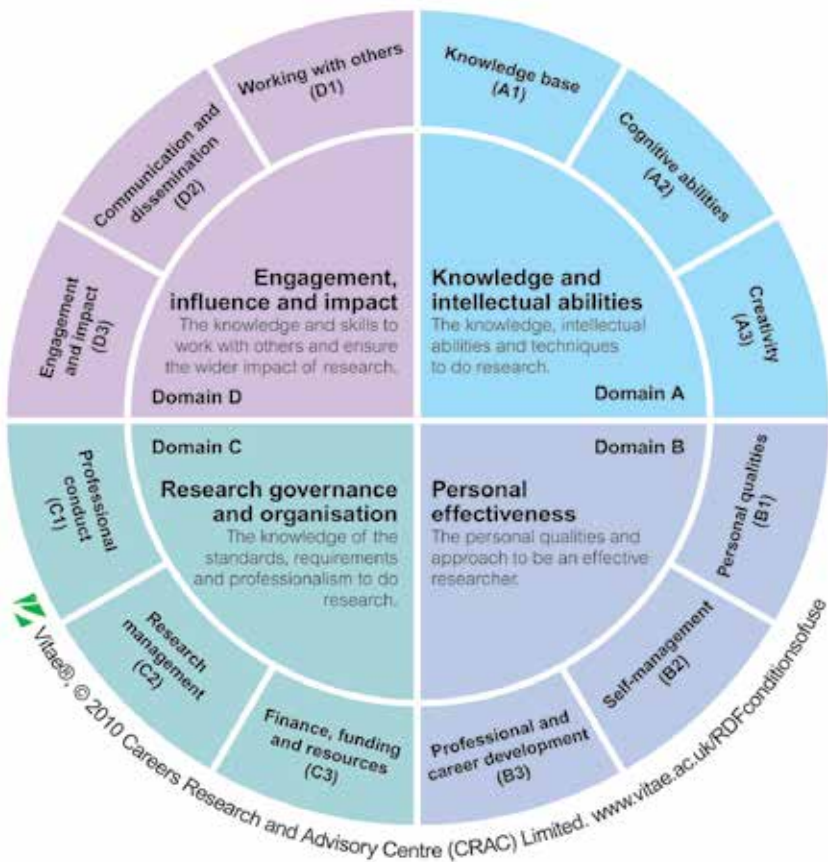
- You should always discuss and agree your training needs with your supervisor before signing up. Do not sign up for lots of courses that are not targeted on your requirements.
- If you have signed up, please make sure you turn up. If you need to cancel, always let the course organiser know. If you fail to turn up without telling the course organiser you will be denying someone on the waiting list a place, you will be wasting part of our Researcher Development budget (because although the course is free to you, it needs to be paid for by the Graduate School), and you could be blacklisted from future courses.

If any of the courses are full, you will be placed on a waiting list. You can also email the Engineering Graduate School, and if there is sufficient demand we may be able to arrange an additional session.

## PLANNING YOUR TRAINING

The Researcher Development Framework (RDF) shown below was developed by Vitae ([www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf)) to describe the knowledge, behaviour, and attributes of successful researchers and to guide your training. You can register with Vitae using your University email account. The RDF can be used to help you plan your training.

You should prepare a training plan and discuss this with your supervisors. Part of the Annual Review process is to record the training you have taken part in during the past year and to decide upon your training needs for the next year.



## FUNDS FOR RESEARCHER-LED INITIATIVES

If you have ideas for new skills development activities that are not currently provided, you can apply for funding to support this.

- IAD run the University's Researcher-Led Initiative Fund, for developing new ideas that will benefit groups of researchers.
- The Graduate School runs a competition for funds to support initiatives that support the researcher training and benefit researchers across the School. You are most welcome to raise ideas for cross-School training or support via the School Postgraduate Experience Committee.

## PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Professional bodies provide further training opportunities, events relevant to your field and development for your future career. It is not possible to give a complete list here, but some of the most relevant institutions include:

- The Institution of Chemical Engineers [www.icheme.org](http://www.icheme.org)
- The Institution of Civil Engineers [www.ice.org.uk](http://www.ice.org.uk)
- The Institution of Mechanical Engineers [www.imeche.org](http://www.imeche.org)
- The Institution of Structural Engineers [www.istructe.org](http://www.istructe.org)
- The Royal Society of Edinburgh [www.royalsoced.org.uk](http://www.royalsoced.org.uk)
- The Royal Academy of Engineering [www.raeng.org.uk](http://www.raeng.org.uk)
- The Institution of Engineering and Technology [www.theiest.org](http://www.theiest.org)
- The Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining [www.iom3.org](http://www.iom3.org)



# 6 ADMINISTRATION (IMPORTANT THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW)

## COMMUNICATION

The University treats email (via your University email account) as the official and sufficient form of communication. It is your responsibility to check, read, and take action upon emails that relate to your degree and your research. These emails can be from the Graduate School, or elsewhere in the School of Engineering, the College Office, or University. You may also need to respond to calls for information from organisations such as the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey or ResearchFish. If you are not sure whether you need to reply to a particular email, please check with the Graduate School office.

You must also keep your postal address and other personal information up to date using the MyEd system.

It is also your responsibility to read and understand the University regulations that relate to your PGR degree, as listed at the start of this handbook.

## ABSENCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Links to the School's Absence Request form and other related procedures can be found on the Graduate School Wiki on this page [https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/YKW\\_E](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/YKW_E)

PGR students are expected to be present in the School of Engineering during normal working hours, Monday to Friday. Travel, fieldwork, work with project partners and work outside normal hours are often a necessary part of PGR research; however, it is essential that any absence from the School of Engineering is arranged in advanced with the Graduate School, whether it is related to your work or not. You should also record periods of absence in your Office365 calendar, and set an out-of-office autoreply for your email, but neither of these is a substitute for following the procedures described below.

All absence requests must be made sufficiently early to allow them to be approved, and normally at least one week in advance. Requests for a Leave of Absence will need to be made further in advance.

### Out of Hours Work

(see the School Safety handbook, <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/kgf9Cg>)

The School's buildings are normally unlocked from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. If you need to be in your office outside these hours, you must sign the Out-of-Hours book that is located at the main entrance to each building. Out-of-Hours access to the laboratories is not allowed without prior risk assessment, and without at least two people present.

The School's offices are for work purposes only and it is not acceptable to use the offices (or any other space) as overnight accommodation or to store personal belongings.

**Annual Leave: Use the School's Absence Request form**

PGR students are entitled to six weeks (30 working days) of annual leave every calendar year. These cannot be carried over from one calendar year to the next without prior agreement.

Annual Leave must be requested in advance using the School's Absence Request form and the absence is only approved once you have received a confirmation email. The Graduate School records the number of days' absence taken each year.

Eight of the days from your annual leave entitlement need to be reserved for the University's Winter shutdown. The University closes for four UK public holidays (Christmas Day, Boxing Day, 1st & 2nd January), plus an additional four (or sometimes three) days. The University's buildings are closed and you cannot be at work during this period. The University does not close for other public holidays; these days are included in your annual leave allowance so that you can choose when to take them.

**Work Related Absence: Use the School's Absence Request form**

The absence request form must also be used if you need to be away from the School for any short period of work-related absence, such as conferences, meetings, or short field trips. You may need to give additional information, including the details of accommodation and risk assessments relating to your travel and activities.

**Leave of Absence for Extended Absence due to Work Related Reasons**

Some research projects require you to study away from Edinburgh for an extended period. This might be at another research organisation, for fieldwork, or at an industrial partner. Extended absence for work-related reasons requires a Leave of Absence (see section 3.3 of the Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors), which must be approved by the Graduate School or possibly (for longer absences), the College.

**Unplanned Absence for Illness or other Unexpected Reasons**

If for any reason you are unable to be present in the School due to medical or other circumstances, you must inform your Supervisor and the Graduate School Office by email as soon as possible. For absences longer than five days you will need to provide copies of formal documentary evidence (such as a dated medical certificate) and when you return to full health or are able to return to your study, you should confirm this in writing.

If your absence has a significant impact upon your ability to work on your research project, it may be appropriate for your supervisor to apply for an Interruption of Study, which must be done as soon as is practicably possible.

### **Distance Working or Flexible Working Arrangements**

In exceptional cases, a PGR student's normal place of work might be somewhere other than the University of Edinburgh. For example, the research project might involve using specialist equipment that is only available at an external research organisation. The University allows distance working, as long as arrangements have been discussed and agreed in advance (which is normally before the start of a PhD project). This must be discussed with the Graduate School, and requires permission from College.

If there is a sufficiently good reason, it might be possible to agree flexible working arrangements that mean that you do not need to be in the School during normal working hours, Monday to Friday. However, this must be discussed and agreed with your Supervisors and the Graduate School, and will depend upon the nature of your research project.

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS HOLDING A TIER 4 VISA**

If you hold a Tier 4 visa, the University is the sponsor for your visa. When a visa is issued it comes with responsibilities upon both you and the University. It is your responsibility to understand and to comply with these conditions, and failure to do so could result in the loss of your visa.

You can seek guidance from the University's International Student Advisory Service (see page 26), and information about your rights, responsibilities and restrictions as a Tier 4 visa holder can be found on the University's International Office webpage, <http://www.ed.ac.uk/international-office/immigration>

### **Engagement monitoring**

The University's legal duties as part of our sponsorship of your visa include:

- monitoring your attendance on and engagement with your programme; and
- reporting to the Home Office if you suspend or withdraw from your studies, complete them early, fail to register or are repeatedly absent to the point of being excluded from studies.

The University records your attendance and engagement through a combination of:

- Your attendance at Tier 4 Census points, which are organised by the University and which you will be notified of by email.
- Your engagement with your research project, which is recorded periodically by your supervisor in the University's EUCLID system.
- Engagement might also be recorded at training and similar events.

You must ensure you are engaged with and make good progress upon your research project, and you must respond promptly to any requests concerning your whereabouts your studies, even if you are not in the UK. The University is required to monitor your engagement until our sponsorship of your visa has finished, even if you return home.

It is especially important that you follow the Absence from University procedures described in the previous section; however, you must note that your Tier 4 visa places additional restrictions upon your absence from the University.

The Graduate School's Wiki gives further information on how engagement is recorded for Tier 4 students in the School of Engineering, and explains the escalation procedure that we follow if you are not engaged with your research.

[https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/\\_IHtEg](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/_IHtEg)

## **FINANCE**

All finance inquiries should be addressed to the School Finance Office (see page 23).

### **Research Costs**

The support for your PhD will depend upon the source of funding. You should discuss what funding is available to support your research project with your Supervisors, because this will determine the work that you can undertake.

If you receive a studentship from the School or University, or are self-funded, the School provides a small research costs budget that is sufficient to enable you to successfully complete a desk-based PGR degree (see page 22). The Research Costs of laboratory work, specialist software licenses, conference attendance, and dedicated technical support time all need to be covered. Research projects requiring large research costs (such as large experimental investigations requiring substantial lab work and technical support time), are not possible unless there is a budget for this work. Your supervisor might have arranged for these costs to be covered through a grant or through funding from an industrial partner, but if the funding is not in place, you must plan your project accordingly.

### **The Terms and Conditions upon Studentships**

If you receive a studentship or other funding for your PGR degree, you will need to understand and comply with any terms and conditions. For example, these might relate to Intellectual Property, or requirements, publishing your research findings, or providing information to your sponsors. You should discuss these with your supervisor.

If you have secured your own funding, you must tell your supervisor about any conditions as soon as possible. For example, supervisors of students who are funded by their home government might be required to send progress reports, and there are sometimes strict requirements upon the duration of study. Please note that unless these terms and conditions were discussed and agreed before you accepted your place as a student at the University of Edinburgh, they are not covered by the offer letter that you received from the University.

### **Stipends**

If you receive a stipend from a School studentship, this will be paid monthly through payroll. You will receive payment directly into your bank account on the 28th day of the month. No tax or National Insurance is paid on stipends.

New students will receive a cheque on arrival that is equivalent to three months' stipend and your first bank payment will be at the end of three months. If you do not have a UK bank account, you must organise this as soon as possible and give the account details to the Finance Office.

Studentships are for a fixed duration (which will have been notified to you when the studentship was awarded). They are not extended if you fail to submit your thesis on time.

### **Ordering Goods and Services** (<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/ewu6CQ>)

Orders for goods, services and travel must be placed through the School's online requisition system. The requisition system ensures that funds are available for the order, allows the University to claim back VAT, and takes advantage of special agreements and discounts that we have with many of the supplier on the system. You will need to consult your supervisor about the account that the order should be charged to.

You must not purchase items yourself and claim them back on expenses (unless this has been agreed in advance with the Finance Office and your supervisor) and cannot purchase from eBay or similar services.

Goods are delivered to the School of Engineering Stores in the Alrick Building, and you will be emailed once they have arrived. The Stores also hold a variety of engineering components and materials, which can be signed out against a grant code.

The Stores is not to be used for personal non-work related deliveries. There are a variety of local collection facilities, such as the Collect+ service at Cameron Toll.

## **Expenses**

Expenses claims are made via the University's eExpenses system. Your supervisor will need to provide an account for you to charge your expenses to, and they will need to be authorised. You will also need to send your receipts to the Finance Office.

See the Finance Office Wiki page for more information, including how to register for the system: <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/Ugu6CQ>

## **IT**

All IT issues should be addressed to the School IT Team using the IT Helpline (page 23).

## **Software**

The University has a wide range of Engineering software, on its managed computer system. If you need other software, consult your supervisor and then contact the IT team via the Helpline. You must never install or use unlicensed software, on either University computers or your own computer that is used within the University. See the University's Computing Regulations for further information.

## **Email**

Email is the primary means of communication within the University, and students are required to use their University address (not any other personal email address) in all communications with the University and staff. Using your University address ensures that messages are not blocked by our spam filter, guarantees information security and authenticity, and can be important legally, for example, for a patent application.

PGR students and staff use the University's Office 365 emails service, which can easily be set up upon a wide range of computers, phones and tablets, as described here:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/computing/comms-and-collab/email>

## **The University's Calendar System**

All University staff and students use the Office365 calendar system. This can be used to check your supervisors' availability, to book meetings and rooms, and to plan your work. You should use the Office365 system to organise your work and so that other people can tell when you are absent from University.

Information on setting up and accessing the Office365 calendar can be found here:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/computing/comms-and-collab/office365/email-calendar>

## File Storage

The School and University provide network filestores with backup/restore facilities and ensure data security. Do not store research data on the local hard disk of a PC or a USB because neither of these are backed up and the data is easily lost. Every year researchers lose vital researcher results and thesis text because they have not kept their files on the network.

You have access to a personal network space on the School of Engineering filestore. You will also have access to the RDM DataStore, which is for storing large amounts of research data (but which should not be used for running jobs on). For more information, see <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/0L02D>

The University's DataSync service is a "Dropbox" style synchronisation service that allows you to synchronise your local computer with the network filestore, which is described here:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/computing/desktop-personal/datasync>

You also have access to cloud storage via your University Office365 account. You must not use other cloud services (such as Dropbox or Google Drive) for research data or any personal information or marks (e.g. if you are involved in teaching). The University cannot manage the data security on external systems, and will not provide support if your files go missing.

Additional information on the School IT services (for example, remote access) can be found on the School's IT wiki: <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/PdMoAw>

## **PRACTICAL WORK: LABORATORIES AND TECHNICAL SERVICES**

Laboratory, fieldwork, or other practical work is accompanied by challenges that are not present in desk-based work. Materials need to be ordered, parts fabricated, equipment sourced, and everything needs to be completed within the project budget. Proper planning is essential to avoid delays to your research project, and these must involve the technical support team, laboratory manager (and any other people who you will rely upon) at an early stage.

The procedure for requesting technical support is shown on page 24.

### **Laboratories**

Access to the University's laboratories must be discussed and arranged in advance, and the availability of space and equipment will necessarily depend upon its availability, and upon the resources that are associated with your project. Every laboratory has a named academic who is responsible for space in the lab, its organisation, and safety. This might be your supervisor, but can often be somebody else.

### **Technical Support and the Workshops**

Our technical support team provide support within the School's laboratories, and fabrication in the School's workshops. The team works across the School's research and teaching activities, and the amount of technical support that you can expect must be agreed at the start of the project between the technical support team and your supervisor.

You must involve our technical support team early in the planning stage to take advantage of their knowledge, skills, and understanding of what is possible and how long it will take. For example, they might be able to suggest modifying your plans to take advantage of a particular piece of equipment, or to use off-the-shelf materials instead of needing to wait for more expensive special-order materials to arrive. The technical support team will tell you if your project is too ambitious or too expensive for the resources that are available to support your PhD, which is important to understand before your project has progressed very far.



## SAFETY

All research students must attend a general School safety induction, which is held on the first Wednesday every month. The Graduate School Office can arrange for you to attend, and you must have completed this induction before submitting your Project Plan at the end of month two. The general School safety induction covers basic safety in the University. If you are carrying out practical work, you will also require a safety induction that is relevant to the specific laboratory that you are going to be working in. These are arranged by the academic who is responsible for the laboratory, or you can contact the relevant School safety committee member for more information (see page 25).

### KEY SAFETY INFORMATION

The **University's Emergency Services Number** is **2222** (from an internal telephone on the 650 exchange) and should be used on discovering a fire or for persons trapped in a lift, etc.

For an **ambulance**, dial **999** (9999 from an internal phone). If possible, any call for an ambulance should be followed up with a call to the University's Emergency Number so that additional support can be given.

**The University Security Service: 502257**

### Accident and Incident Reporting

All accidents or incidents must be reported using the online form:

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/accident-reporting/accident-form](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/accident-reporting/accident-form)

**Fire Procedures:** Fire procedures and names of Fire Stewards are displayed in every building and you should familiarise yourself with these.

**First Aiders:** The names and contact details for University First Aiders for each area are displayed in each building, alongside the Fire Notices.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE (such as safety glasses, safety boots, lab coats and gloves) is mandatory in many of our laboratories, and the PPE requirements will be displayed on the lab door or noticeboard. If you require PPE, you should discuss these with your Supervisor and Stores (in the Alrick Building).

# 7 WORK OUTSIDE YOUR DEGREE

There are many opportunities to get involved in work beyond your research project. We actively encourage you to get involved in activities outside your research degree, and our research community relies on students who help to run events such as our seminar series or EngGradSoc. Our PGR students also get involved in teaching and gain valuable training by being employed as tutors or demonstrators.

## **Completing your PGR Degree must be your main focus**

Taking part in activities outside your degree must not prevent you from completing your PGR degree on time. If you are enrolled on a full-time degree programme, the expectation is that you will work on your degree full-time. EPSRC studentships, for example, stipulate that you should not do more than six hours per week of paid work (including tutor and demonstrating work).

Your PGR degree is your primary purpose for being at University, and other activities must not become excuses for neglecting your research degree. For example, if you are involved in teaching a tutorial at the same time as the PGR student induction, the induction must take precedence and you must make alternative arrangements for your teaching to be covered. You should discuss any work outside your degree (including tutoring or demonstrating work) with your supervisor before you commit to it.

## **Research Community Activities**

Many of our PGR students enjoy being involved in our School Postgraduate Experience Committee, EngGradSoc, organising our seminar series, or workshops. These are valuable and demonstrable experience for your future career, and they underpin the research community within the School and the wider research environment beyond the University.

## **EMPLOYMENT DURING YOUR PGR DEGREE**

### **Tutoring & Demonstrating**

PGR students often work as Tutors or Demonstrators (T&Ds) in the School's tutorials and laboratories for undergraduate courses. These are very important and rewarding roles and our T&Ds are responsible for helping deliver high quality teaching. T&D work also gives you valuable experience by developing important skills and sharing experience with other students.

Tutoring and Demonstrating is arranged by the Engineering Teaching Organisation (ETO). T&Ds require formal contracts, must attend training sessions, and can work a maximum of six hours per week. For more information (and the School's Handbook for

Tutors and Demonstrators), see the ETO Wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/m8SqCg>

### **Other employment opportunities**

MyCareerHub is the University Careers Service's tool for finding part-time employment opportunities, including one that can match the requirements of your degree. You can access MyCareerHub via the Careers Service's website, [www.ed.ac.uk/careers](http://www.ed.ac.uk/careers)

Remember that it is your responsibility to manage your time so that you can meet the requirements of your research degree. The University does not consider paid employment to be a reason for requesting an extension to your period of study. If you are an overseas student on a visa, you must check and comply with any restrictions on the number of hours that you can work in paid employment.

### **Placements**

Some PhD projects will involve an industrial placement or placement at another research organisation as part of the research project. These require a Leave of Absence (see page 39), but as they are part of the research project they do not result in an extension or interruption to your period of study.

A placement that is not part of your research project is paid employment that will prevent you from making progress on your research degree. It might be possible to arrange such a placement during your prescribed period of study, but this would require an Interruption of Study. This must be discussed well in advance with both your Supervisor and the Graduate School, who will together need to put a case to the College Postgraduate Board of Examiners.

### **THE UNIVERSITY CAREERS SERVICE**

[www.ed.ac.uk/careers](http://www.ed.ac.uk/careers)

The Weir Building, King's Buildings	505773
Main Library, George Square	504670

The University's Careers Service provides guidance, bookable appointments and advice for students and recent graduates from the University. There is a wide range of online information, including material specifically for PGR students. Their website gives information on their event programme, such as the careers fairs that they run.

Matt Vickers (506706) is the Careers Consultant for the School of Engineering. During the taught semester he can be found in the EngInn between 1-3pm on Thursdays, where he is available on a drop-in basis.

## FACILITIES ON CAMPUS



### **My supervisor has told me to find an obscure paper**

Head to the Noreen and Kenneth Murray Library at KB Centre which holds the Engineering and Science collections of books and journals. The KB library study centre includes the uCreate facility for self-service poster printing and multimedia services. (Posters can also be printed via the KB Copy Centre, Rm. 2300, JCMB.)

A large range of online resources that you will use during your research are available through the University.

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/library-museum-gallery/finding-resources/subject-guides/engineering](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/library-museum-gallery/finding-resources/subject-guides/engineering)

### **It's 3pm, I need food! Where can I find some?**

- The EngInn, Hudson Beare Building
- King's Buildings House
- KB Café, The Noreen and Kenneth Murray Library
- Upstairs Café in the Swann Building
- The Magnet Café in James Clerk Maxwell Building
- Brück's Street Kitchen, Mary Brück Building
- Shops at KB House and KB Centre
- Vending machines in some buildings

### **I need cash!**

Cash points at KB House and KB Centre.

### **How do I get to the University Central area?**

During semester time, a University shuttle bus runs from KB to Bristo Square. This service is provided for University-related travel (for example, to attend IAD courses, for your research, or if you need to teach classes in the central area). Please note that it is not intended for your travel from work to home.

[www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/shuttlebus](http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/shuttlebus)

## **I've been sitting at my desk too long; I'd like to exercise**

Try the gym and sports facilities at KB House. They also run fitness and relaxation classes. Just pop in to find out more.

Alternatively, the University has further sports facilities at the Centre of Sports and Exercise on the Pleasance, and Peffermill playing fields are not far from KB, located just past Cameron Toll.

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/sport-exercise/](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/sport-exercise/)

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Edinburgh University Students' Association**

[www.eusa.ed.ac.uk](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk)

As a matriculated student of the University of Edinburgh, you are automatically a member.

They run KB House plus a further three Union buildings, organise events and entertainment and provide a range of student services.

### **Accommodation Services**

[www.accom.ed.ac.uk/](http://www.accom.ed.ac.uk/)

If you are still looking for somewhere to live, or want to move, Accommodation Services can help.



### **Chaplaincy**

[www.chaplaincy.ed.ac.uk](http://www.chaplaincy.ed.ac.uk)

The Chaplaincy Centre in Bristo Square is a very popular place for people to meet with drop-in space and facilities for groups. It offers a range of facilities to University staff and students, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Details of Chaplaincy facilities at King's Buildings can be found at:

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/chaplaincy/facilities/locations/kings-buildings](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/chaplaincy/facilities/locations/kings-buildings)



All images courtesy of the School of Engineering and the University of Edinburgh.

All information correct at the time of publication (July 2017), but may become superseded by updates to regulations and procedures. The Graduate School wiki has the latest information, <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/BTrnCQ>.

To report any errors or to request a version of this handbook in another format, please email: [EngGradOffice@ed.ac.uk](mailto:EngGradOffice@ed.ac.uk)

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