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Welcome from Prof. Sarah Hainsworth, Graduate Dean

Welcome to the University of Leicester Graduate School.

You are joining one of the UK's largest and most vibrant postgraduate communities and, along with over 1,200 other postgraduate researchers, you will benefit from being a member of a University that combines a strong and proven track record of successful postgraduate support together with an internationally regarded research reputation. The Graduate School is at the heart of our postgraduate community providing support to postgraduate researchers across the University's four Colleges.

This Handbook will help you make the most of your time here and I hope it will be of value to you both now as you start your degree right through to your final year as you look towards submitting your thesis and sitting the viva examination. The Handbook describes the academic and other support services available to you as well as containing important administrative advice. There is also an introduction to the Graduate School's Researcher Development Training programmes through which you will develop the skills you need to become an effective researcher and successfully complete your degree together with transferable skills that will be of use both during your time at the University and in your career beyond.

You can find an electronic copy of this Handbook, together with much other useful information, on the Graduate School website. Postgraduate researchers are encouraged to visit the website regularly as it is updated weekly with details of relevant University and external events, conferences, training courses, and other news.

I want your experience at the University of Leicester to be productive, successful, and enjoyable. I hope that this Handbook will help you as you explore the range of opportunities available to our postgraduate researchers - but if you have any questions about the information here, or have a suggestion for something we should include in future editions, please do get in touch.

You can email the Graduate School at graduatedean@le.ac.uk

Best wishes,

Professor Sarah Hainsworth
Graduate Dean

We would welcome any comments/suggestions that you may have for improving this Handbook. Please email graduatedean@le.ac.uk

Part One - You, Your Supervisor, and the Supervisory Relationship

Obviously every postgraduate researcher's experience is different, but you are likely to find that undertaking a research degree is quite different from your previous experience of higher education. You may feel this particularly strongly if you are unfamiliar with the British higher education system.

Many postgraduate researchers find it difficult at first to adjust to the different expectations associated with this level of study. In particular, they are likely to be unsure exactly what to expect from their supervisor and the supervisory relationship. Both you and your supervisor have particular responsibilities, and it is important that you understand what these are if your relationship is to be effective.

In this section ►

- 1.1 Your Responsibilities
- 1.2 Your Supervisor's Responsibilities
- 1.3 The Supervisory Relationship
- 1.4 Supervisory Meetings
- 1.5 Other Key Relationships

1.1 Your Responsibilities

As a postgraduate researcher you will take far more responsibility for your learning and progress. You will have ultimate responsibility for planning and developing your research, responding to any difficulties you might encounter, and ensuring that you deliver on time a thesis of an appropriate standard.

You are encouraged to consult the following documents to learn more about your responsibilities as a postgraduate researcher.

Regulations for Research Degrees

All postgraduate researchers are issued at registration with a copy of the University's *Regulations for Research Degrees*.

You should read these carefully and retain them until the end of your degree. They include the award regulations for the University's research degrees together with regulations relating to admissions, registrations, and examinations. They also contain related policy statements including the Student Code of Social Responsibility and the Code of Student Discipline.

Regulations for Research Degrees -

You can find the Regulations for Research Degrees online at:

► www.le.ac.uk/academic/Regs/index.html

Code of Practice for Research Degrees

The University's Code of Practice for Research Degrees is referred to a number of times in this Handbook and is included in full in the Appendix. The Code applies to all students registered for a research degree regardless of mode of study or place of residence. It sets out what the University expects from both you and your supervisor and is a statement of the roles and responsibilities that you and your supervisor have. In particular, you should note the following two key responsibilities of all postgraduate researchers:

- ▶ You are responsible for ensuring that your thesis represents your own work - your research will inevitably build to some degree on the work or ideas of others, but as a postgraduate researcher you are expected to make an original contribution to knowledge in your discipline
- ▶ You are responsible within the supervisory framework for bringing forward and developing your own ideas - your supervisor will provide guidance and support, but the initiative rests with you and you will be expected to show you can plan and manage your work and respond to any difficulties you might encounter

It is important that you understand these roles and responsibilities and that you discuss them with your supervisor at the earliest opportunity to agree how these formal requirements will work for you in practice.

Code of Practice for Research Degrees -

You can find the Code of Practice for Research Degrees online at:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/current/handbook

Code of Conduct for Research

The University's primary functions of teaching and research involve a search for knowledge and the truthful recording of the findings of that research. Any action knowingly taken by a student which involves misrepresentation of the truth is an offence which the University believes should incur very severe penalties. The attention of all students is drawn to the University's statement on academic dishonesty included in the *Regulations for Research Degrees*. If you have any concerns about how your work fits with this, please speak with your supervisor in the first instance.

The University has adopted a Code of Conduct for Research and this provides guidelines for responsible practice in research as well as procedures for dealing with instances in which misconduct in research may have occurred. The Code applies to all members of the University's research community, including postgraduate researchers. You should ensure that you read the Code of Conduct for Research and speak with your supervisor if you have any questions regarding this.

Code of Conduct for Research -

You can find the Code of Conduct for Research online at:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/researchsupport/tools

Code of Practice for Research Ethics

Any research that involves human participants needs to go through a formal process of research ethics review. Clearly this requirement is likely to affect researchers in some Schools/Departments more than in others, but is applicable throughout the University and to all members of the University's research community - including postgraduate researchers.

Ethical approval is needed prior to commencement of all non-clinical research projects concerning human subjects and the Code of Practice for Research Ethics provides the framework within which the ethical review process operates across the University. You should ensure that you read the Code of Practice for Research Ethics and speak with your supervisor if you have any questions regarding this.

Code of Practice for Research Ethics -

You can find the Code of Practice for Research Ethics online at:

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/institution/committees/research-ethics/code-of-practice

Student Development have published a study guide on research ethics for research involving human participants and all postgraduate researchers whose research involves human participants are encouraged to spend some time reading this and discussing any concerns with their supervisor.

Research Ethics Study Guide -

You can find the Research Ethics Study Guide online at:

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd/pgrd/resources/ethics

Equality of Opportunity

Students and staff of the University are members of a single community, working in partnership to provide a research and learning environment in which all members are given the opportunity to realise their full potential. The University is committed to an equal opportunities policy which is designed to enable all its students to derive the maximum benefit from their studies.

A full statement on the University's approach to equality of opportunity is contained in its Student Charter included in the *Regulations for Research Degrees*. The Regulations also contain other relevant policies including the University's Statement Concerning Harassment and Discrimination and its Race Equality Policy.

Health and Safety

Your School/Department will familiarise you with your obligations with respect to health and safety and these will vary according to your discipline. In some disciplines there will be formal training sessions as part of your induction.

The attention of all postgraduate researchers is drawn to the University's Statement on Health and Safety included in the *Regulations for Research Degrees*.

Data Protection

The Data Protection Act 1998 regulates the processing of personal data whether it is held on a computer or on manual files. You are allowed to process personal data only for use in connection with your research and where this is with the express permission of your Head of School/Department and is in accordance with any guidance or Code of Practice issued by the University.

The attention of all postgraduate researchers is drawn to the provisions regarding data protection contained in the *Regulations for Research Degrees*.

Complaints

The University hopes that your experience as a postgraduate researcher will be rewarding. However, if something does go wrong you need to know what steps to take to resolve matters. If you are having problems it is important that you act quickly and discuss the matter with your supervisor as it is usually possible to put matters right without you losing valuable research time.

If you feel that your research programme is not proceeding well and that this has not been resolved through discussion with your supervisor, you should raise the matter with your School/Department's Postgraduate Tutor and - if necessary - your Head of School/Department.

If after that matters are still not resolved, you may seek the advice of the Graduate Dean and, ultimately, you may make a formal complaint under the University's Complaints Procedure. This is explained in the *Regulations for Research Degrees*.

Before making any complaint under this procedure, you should seek advice from the University of Leicester Students' Union Education Unit. You can contact the Education Unit on +44 (0)116 223 1228 or email educationunit@le.ac.uk

1.2 Your Supervisor's Responsibilities

Many postgraduate researchers at the start of their degree are unsure what to expect from their supervisor and often find it hard to describe the type of role they imagine their supervisor playing.

In fact, your supervisor won't just have one role, they will have many:

- ▶ mentor
- ▶ trainer
- ▶ supporter
- ▶ critic
- ▶ fellow researcher

It is important is that you understand your supervisor's responsibilities so that you have clear expectations as to what your supervisor is - and isn't - here for. That understanding will provide you with a foundation for building an effective working relationship with your supervisor.

What responsibilities does my supervisor have?

The responsibilities of staff supervising postgraduate researchers are set out in the *Regulations for Research Degrees* and include:

- ▶ monitoring the progress of the research through regular consultations in accordance with departmental and University policy and in light of discussion of arrangements with the postgraduate researcher
- ▶ giving guidance about
 - the nature of research and the standard expected
 - the planning of the research programme
 - literature and sources
 - requirement to attend taught classes (if needed) and complete agreed research training programme
 - requisite techniques - including arranging for instruction where needed
 - the need to develop oral and written communication skills
 - the problems of plagiarism - including drawing attention to the appropriate regulations
- ▶ being accessible at mutually convenient times when the postgraduate researcher may need advice
- ▶ giving detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work so that the whole may be submitted within the scheduled time
- ▶ emphasising the importance of timely submission both in terms of good academic practice and in relationship to University and Research Council requirements and explaining the consequences of failing to meet the appropriate deadlines
- ▶ requesting written work as appropriate and returning such work with constructive criticism and in reasonable time
- ▶ reading the whole of the final draft of the thesis, giving advice about appropriate length, and ensuring that the thesis complies with regulations on the length of theses
- ▶ arranging as appropriate for postgraduate researchers to talk about their work to staff or at graduate seminars and to have practice in oral presentations - bearing in mind the demands of the oral examination

These are the key responsibilities that are expected of staff supervising research degree candidates, but each supervisor has their own approach and this can vary by discipline and according to their individual assessment of your supervisory needs.

1.3 The Supervisory Relationship

There is no one single type of postgraduate researcher/supervisor relationship - nor any one way to build one. As with all working relationships, to be successful it requires commitment on both sides - and you will need to take the initiative in building and shaping your relationship. As you do so, try to remember the following advice:

- ▶ a professional and enthusiastic approach from you is likely to bring forward a similar response from your supervisor
- ▶ honesty will be respected - particularly if you encounter difficulties
- ▶ start as you mean to go on - like all relationships, impressions are formed early on

Expectations - Minding the Gap

In any working relationship there will be expectations on both sides - things that each side understands the other is responsible for. Where there is a gap in those expectations - either because those expectations are not mutually understood or are unrealistic - problems can occur and the relationship suffers. Understanding the expectations that you and your supervisor will have of each other will help you to avoid situations where one side does not know what is expected of them. Most postgraduate researchers would suggest some or all of the following as things they expect from their supervisor:

- ▶ appropriate knowledge and expertise in their research area
- ▶ reads draft work in advance of supervisory meetings
- ▶ available for guidance and support
- ▶ has an open, friendly, and supportive attitude
- ▶ provides constructive criticism

But you won't be the only one with expectations. Just as you will have expectations of your supervisor, so your supervisor will have expectations of you. In particular, they will expect you to show:

- ▶ commitment and an independent approach
- ▶ an ability to work at an appropriate standard
- ▶ honesty in discussing and managing any difficulties you might encounter
- ▶ a proactive approach to arranging and attending regular supervisory meetings
- ▶ an ability to submit draft work to agreed deadlines
- ▶ an openness to advice and constructive criticism
- ▶ an enthusiastic approach to your work and to working with others as needed
- ▶ an ability to communicate clearly

Looking at the expectations on both sides helps to ensure that each side has realistic expectations of the other which in turn supports a healthy working relationship.

So What Can Go Wrong?

Of course, there are occasions when things do not go according to plan. Problems with the postgraduate researcher/supervisor relationship can manifest themselves in a number of ways:

- ▶ avoiding direct communication
- ▶ lack of enthusiasm
- ▶ stress
- ▶ unrealistic expectations
- ▶ misunderstandings

Occasionally such problems can be the result of a genuine clash of personalities; other times they can come about through external pressures that place additional demands on you, your supervisor, or both.

More often though the cause lies in not communicating effectively. Your supervisor is there to provide guidance, but they can only do that in a way that meets your needs if you give them some indication as to the type of guidance you are looking for. A good place to discuss any concerns and agree a way forward is in the formal meetings you will have with your supervisor.

1.4 Supervisory Meetings

Supervisory meetings are an opportunity for discussing your progress, describing your findings, and alerting your supervisor to any problems. These meetings are an important part of your relationship with your supervisor and will play a big role in shaping how effective that relationship is; so it is important that you spend some time thinking about what you can do to make these meetings as constructive as possible.

How often will supervisory meetings take place?

Expectations on the frequency of supervisory meetings and the nature of the feedback and guidance provided do vary between disciplines.

You should discuss with your supervisor at the start of your research degree how often you will meet and what type of feedback and guidance you would find most helpful.

What is my role in supervisory meetings?

If you have ever been involved in a formal meeting - you will know that two key roles are those of the chairperson and the secretary. In your meetings with your supervisor, you will combine both of these roles. You will need to set the agenda beforehand, direct the discussion during the meeting, and keep a written record that can be referred to as needed later on.

How can I make the most of supervisory meetings?

To make the most of your meetings with your supervisor and to ensure that these are as constructive as possible, it may be worth thinking about your role in more detail. There are a number of things that you will need to think about before, during, and after each meeting.

Before the Meeting

You are responsible for taking the initiative in planning and organising meetings with your supervisor. To that end, there are three things that you will need to consider:

- ▶ take the initiative in agreeing a mutually convenient schedule of meetings with your supervisor
- ▶ prepare a short agenda of issues that you would like to discuss and forward a copy of the agenda to your supervisor a few days in advance of the meeting
- ▶ prepare some work for you to discuss at each meeting - as with the agenda, your supervisor may find it helpful to receive before the meeting a copy of the work you intend to discuss

During the Meeting

While preparing for the meeting is important, you also need to take action during the meeting to ensure it is a productive experience. In particular, you need to:

- ▶ arrive promptly and make sure you have with you everything you might need - a copy of the agenda, work to discuss, etc.
- ▶ provide direction to the discussion and make sure that it follows the agenda - do not expect your supervisor to do all the talking, they will want to hear from you

After the Meeting

With the meeting over there are two more tasks you need to complete to maximise the effectiveness of your supervisory meetings:

- ▶ produce a short report (no more than 100 words say) on what was discussed and, importantly, any actions that it was agreed either you or your supervisor should undertake
- ▶ make time after each meeting to reflect on the feedback your supervisor has provided and its implications for what you need to do next

Supervisory Meetings Record template -

Your Research Student Progress File includes a template that you can use to record your supervisory meetings:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/development/progress-file/supervision-record.pdf

1.5 Other Key Relationships

In addition to the relationship you have with your supervisor, there are a number of other key relationships that you can call on for help and advice.

Postgraduate Tutor

Each School/Department has a Postgraduate Tutor who reports to the Head of School/Department and helps to coordinate local postgraduate support. Their specific responsibilities include:

- ▶ establishing and organising departmental progress monitoring procedures
- ▶ working with supervisors to ensure timely completion and thesis submission
- ▶ monitoring participation in researcher development training
- ▶ overall pastoral care of postgraduate researchers

Your Postgraduate Tutor will be introduced as part of your School/Department's induction programme.

Thesis Committee

Schools/Departments are strongly encouraged to operate a thesis committee system for their postgraduate researchers or some equivalent method. A thesis committee is likely to include:

- ▶ your main supervisor - who carries primary responsibility for your supervision
- ▶ a second supervisor or advisor - who can offer further academic advice
- ▶ the departmental Postgraduate Tutor (or their nominee) - who is involved in monitoring your progress but is independent of the supervisory team

The advantage of the thesis committee system is that you have a single point of contact - the main supervisor - but there are also others who are familiar with your work and can support you and monitor your progress. For example, if your main supervisor is temporarily unable to continue supervising your work, the second supervisor or advisor can assume the role of main supervisor.

This committee will usually meet with you twice each year to formally review your progress.

Head of School/Department

In the event of very serious difficulties which have not been resolved through discussion with your supervisor or the departmental Postgraduate Tutor, it may be necessary to contact the Head of School/Department. Generally though this should be for serious concerns only.

Beyond that, the Director of Postgraduate Research in your College and the Graduate Dean are also available to support postgraduate researchers and you can read more about their roles in the next section.

Part Two - The Graduate School and Support Services

One of the Graduate School's main roles is to coordinate the various support services for postgraduate researchers provided right across the University. This includes academic support provision through your supervisor, Postgraduate Tutor, and thesis committee together with careers and pastoral support services available through providers such as the University Library, Welfare Service, Postgraduate Researcher Development Team, and others.

This section of the Handbook will give you an idea of the range of support available to you together with useful links and contact information. There are also sections with advice on dedicated support services for researchers with a disability or long-term medical condition and international researchers.

In this section ►

- 2.1 The Graduate School
- 2.2 Academic Support
- 2.3 Career Development Support
- 2.4 Pastoral Support
- 2.5 Support for Researchers with a Disability or Long-Term Medical Condition
- 2.6 Support for International Researchers

2.1 The Graduate School

The Graduate School provides an umbrella under which the postgraduate activity of the University is organised. The Graduate School has three main components:

- The Graduate Dean
- College Directors of Postgraduate Research
- Graduate Office

The Graduate Dean

The Graduate School is headed by the Graduate Dean, Professor Sarah Hainsworth. The Graduate Dean is a senior academic appointed to the post for three years and is the voice for postgraduate students on all major University committees. The Graduate Dean works with partners across the University to promote and deliver academic and support services for taught and research postgraduates.

Additionally, the Graduate Dean provides the main contact point between the University and relevant external bodies such as the UK Council for Graduate Education, Vitae, etc.

College Directors of Postgraduate Research

Each College has a Director of Postgraduate Research who plays a key role in assisting the Graduate Dean and the Head of College in formulating and implementing policies and procedures relating to postgraduate researchers. The Directors play an important role in promulgating University policy at College level and ensure that there is effective communication between the Graduate School and each College.

You should know who your College's Director of Postgraduate Research is as they play a key role in your College's Researcher Development Training programme:

College	Director	Email
College of Arts, Humanities, and Law	Prof. Kirsten Malmkjaer	km240@le.ac.uk
College of Medicine, Biological Sciences, and Psychology	Dr Peter Meacock	mea@le.ac.uk
College of Science and Engineering	Prof. Mike Warrington	emw@le.ac.uk
College of Social Science	Prof. Jo Brewis	jpb18@le.ac.uk

The Graduate Office

The Graduate Office deals with all administrative matters relating to registered postgraduate researchers. It is located on the ground floor of the Fielding Johnson Building and is open to visitors Mondays to Fridays from 09:30 to 16:00 - so you can call in if you require advice or information during the course of your degree.

You can find detailed advice on various administrative matters for postgraduate researchers in Section 4.0 of this Handbook.

Graduate Office -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/research

Telephone 0116 252 2299/2293

Email pgresearch@le.ac.uk

2.2 Academic Support

As explained in Section One, your supervisor(s) will be your first point of contact for academic help and advice and they will be supported by the Postgraduate Tutor in your School/Department as well as your broader thesis committee. Alongside these contacts there are a number of other sources of general academic support for postgraduate researchers.

University Library

The University Library is a major research library, providing access to over a million printed volumes and a wide range of electronic journals and information resources via the web. Facilities for postgraduate researchers include:

- ▶ information librarians - specialist librarians providing detailed help and advice for your discipline
- ▶ Leicester Research Archive - a digital collection of research outputs from members of the University
- ▶ document supply service - giving you access to materials from other libraries
- ▶ help for part-time/distance learning researchers - dedicated resources and services for students on flexible research degree programmes

Library -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/library

Telephone 0116 252 2043

Email libdesk@le.ac.uk

Postgraduate Researcher Development Team

The Postgraduate Researcher Development Team provides opportunities for the development of higher level learning skills appropriate to postgraduate researchers. Study guidance is readily available as and when you need it, introducing new skills as well as supporting the development of existing abilities.

Services include a varied programme of workshops, enabling you to explore a specific skills area in depth through guided, discussion-based activities. The topics covered are wide-ranging, from designing conference posters to preparing for your viva examination. Written advice is also available in the form of an extensive range of free study guides covering essential topics in the areas of writing, presentation, numeracy, and study skills.

Postgraduate Researcher Development Team -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd

Telephone 0116 252 2004

Email sdzhelpdesk@le.ac.uk

Computing Facilities

We have around 1,400 computers in use at the University. Most of these PCs are available in the designated computer user areas in our teaching buildings and some can be found in departmental computer rooms. A few Schools/Departments also make use of Apple Macintosh computers. In addition you will have access to the computers in a dedicated PC Zone in the David Wilson Library that is reserved for staff and postgraduates. Access is available 24 hours a day and at weekends to some computers via a card-access system.

If you have your own laptop you can connect it to the University's Wi-Fi service from one of the many hotspots available on campus. Your laptop must be suitably configured and you will need your University computer account details. The Wi-Fi network provides you with access to a number of our web-based services, including your University email.

IT Services -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/itservices

Telephone 0116 252 2253

Email ithelp@le.ac.uk

Graduate School Reading Room and Media Zoo

The Nicholas Corah Graduate School Reading Room has proved extremely popular since its opening and has a key role in fostering the University's postgraduate community and providing a central hub for this with regular events and workshops throughout term where postgraduates can meet new friends, form new networks, and develop their skills in an informal and supported environment.

The Reading Room is a valuable addition to the facilities for our postgraduate community, ensuring that postgraduates can take advantage of the highest quality educational environment. It offers both formal and informal study spaces together with group study rooms that can be booked only by postgraduates and which are equipped with a PC, DVD player, plasma screen, and whiteboard.

Located in the Reading Room is the Graduate School Media Zoo - the new home of "technological wildlife" at the University and an interactive space for exploring technologies essential for the 21st century researcher.

Graduate School Reading Room and Media Zoo -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/current/gsrr

Email gsmz@le.ac.uk

2.3 Career Development Support

A postgraduate qualification is an investment in your future. Like you, we are keen that your investment pays off. The University's Careers Service is well positioned to offer guidance and support to postgraduate researchers.

Trained careers advisors are available to discuss ideas and plans; they recognise the different specialised needs of postgraduate researchers and can advise you on how to use your knowledge both within and outside of the academic environment. Additionally a number of events, including careers fairs and a programme of employer presentations, are organised so that you can benefit from the opportunity to meet and hear from employers directly.

The Careers Service is available to you throughout your time at the University and as you take your first steps into your career beyond - following graduation, the Careers Service remains available to provide advice on job applications, current opportunities, and other related areas.

Careers Service -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd/careers

Telephone 0116 252 2004

Email sdzhelpdesk@le.ac.uk

2.4 Pastoral Support

At the University level, the Graduate School works with the Student Support and Development Service, the Students' Union, and others to provide coordinated practical support and guidance services to postgraduate researchers.

Welfare Service

The Welfare Service offers both general and specialist advice on a wide range of issues including finance, accommodation, health and well-being, childcare, and benefits. The Welfare Service can also assist with visa renewal and immigration advice for international postgraduate researchers.

Pastoral care for students and postgraduate researchers in University accommodation is provided through trained Sub-Wardens and a dedicated Accommodation Welfare Officer while a legal advice clinic is held regularly in conjunction with the University's School of Law.

Welfare Service -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/welfare

Telephone 0116 223 1185

Email welfare@le.ac.uk

Healthy Living Service

The Healthy Living Service helps students to enjoy a healthy and balanced life and is able to direct and refer students to appropriate health care services at times of ill health. Working collaboratively both within the University and with organisations outside of the University, the Healthy Living Service ensures that information and healthcare services are easily available to all students.

The service is available to all students at the University of Leicester, including postgraduate researchers, and supports both the physical and psychological aspects of health and wellbeing.

Healthy Living Service -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/healthy-living-for-students

Telephone 0116 223 1268

Email healthyliving@le.ac.uk

Counselling Service

The Counselling Service is a free and confidential service, provided by qualified professionals for all University students. Students come to the Counselling Service for a variety of reasons both academic and personal; some just want to come once to talk over something that is troubling them, others may wish to see a counsellor regularly for a period of time or explore issues together with others in a group.

Counselling Service -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/counselling

Telephone 0116 223 1780

Email counselling@le.ac.uk

Mental Wellbeing Service

University can be an exciting experience - a time when you leave home, make new friends, and study the subject of your choice in an academic environment. For some however, the reality is different. You may feel homesick, anxious about money and academic pressures, or just that you are not "fitting in". These feelings are common and normal, and most people find that they soon diminish as they settle in. Occasionally, these feelings can become overwhelming and you become depressed, or develop other symptoms of mental ill health. If you feel like this, it is sensible to be proactive and seek help as soon as possible.

This specialist service is here to help you manage your difficulties and coordinate the range of support available, to lessen the impact these might have on your studies.

Mental Wellbeing Service -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/student-support-mental-wellbeing

Telephone 0116 252 2283/0116 229 7751

Email mentalwellbeing@le.ac.uk

Chaplaincy

The University Chaplaincy is part of the Student Support and Development Service and is an information resource for world faiths. Our chaplaincy team is based in The Gatehouse opposite the main campus. Students can drop by to meet new friends, talk to a chaplain, and pray and explore their faith.

Chaplaincy -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/chaplaincy

Telephone 0116 285 6493

Email chaplaincy@le.ac.uk

University of Leicester Students' Union

The University of Leicester Students' Union organises social events throughout the year and also operates its own bars and entertainments. There are nearly 200 student groups covering a range of activities and interests, including SPELL the group for postgraduates and mature students.

The Student's Union has its own Education Unit which provides free and impartial advice regarding any academic issues to all University students and postgraduate researchers.

University of Leicester Students' Union -

▶ <http://leicesterunion.com/>

Telephone 0116 223 1148

2.5 Support for Researchers with a Disability or Long-Term Medical Condition

The AccessAbility Centre offers a range of services to all University of Leicester students who have a specific learning difficulty - such as dyslexia - disability, or other long-term condition. Staff offer one-to-one support, assessment of dyslexia, the coordination of alternative examination arrangements, etc.

The Centre acts as a resource base for students and staff and is a relaxed place for students to work. Its computers are equipped with specialised software for speech output (essay planning software and basic speech output software are on the University network). Low-level photocopying, printing, and scanning facilities are also available.

The Centre welcomes self-referrals as well as referrals from academic staff.

AccessAbility Centre -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/accessability

Telephone 0116 252 5002

Email accessable@le.ac.uk

2.6 Support for International Researchers

The QS World University Rankings 2011 placed us among the top 2% of global universities - so it is no surprise that many students from outside the United Kingdom choose to study here. We welcome postgraduate researchers from around the world with significant numbers coming from China, India, Nigeria, Malaysia, Pakistan, Taiwan, the USA, and Saudi Arabia.

The University extends a warm welcome to all international postgraduate researchers and has a range of offices and services available to provide help and assistance.

International Student Support

The International Student Support team is part of the University's Welfare Service. They coordinate the University's Welcome Programme for new international students and postgraduate researchers which provides an introduction to Leicester and to studying in the UK.

They also run regular social and other events for international students and can provide advice on issues such as immigration, visas, finance, and cultural adjustment.

English Language Teaching Unit

The University's English Language Teaching Unit is accredited by the British Council and offers a number of preparatory courses for international applicants who do not meet the University's English language requirements. Additionally, the English Language Teaching Unit presents a four week study skills course each August/September for new international starters as well as in-session support courses for students and postgraduate researchers who want further English language support or want to improve their academic English language skills.

International Student Support -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/welfare/information/international-student-support

Telephone 0116 223 1185
Email welfare@le.ac.uk

English Language Teaching Unit -

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/offices/eltu

Telephone 0116 229 7857
Email language.services@le.ac.uk

Part Three - Researcher Development Training

Undertaking a research degree is clearly about producing an excellent piece of research - but it is also about acquiring new skills. Researcher Development Training will give you the skills you need to become an effective researcher and complete your degree together with transferable skills that will be of use both during your time here and in your career beyond.

The University's structured "needs-based" approach to Researcher Development Training will help you make the most of the opportunities available. To help you do this, your Researcher Development Training will follow a four stage model:

- ▶ thinking about your training needs
- ▶ developing a training plan
- ▶ undertaking relevant training
- ▶ reviewing your progress and updating your training plan

Undertaking a training needs analysis is an important first step and through this you will identify what skills you will need training in.

In this section ▶

- 3.1 Researcher Development Framework
- 3.2 Planning Your Researcher Development Training
- 3.3 Training Programmes and Other Development Opportunities
- 3.4 Reviewing Your Plan and Recording Your Progress
- 3.5 Personal Development Planning (PDP)
- 3.6 Teaching and Demonstrating

3.1 Researcher Development Framework

At the start of your degree you should meet with your supervisor/thesis committee to discuss what skills you will need to complete your degree - in particular the discipline specific research skills you will need to undertake your research and complete your thesis.

In addition to discipline specific research skills you also need to think about the skills you will need to enhance your employability and give you the personal and professional competencies that employers look for.

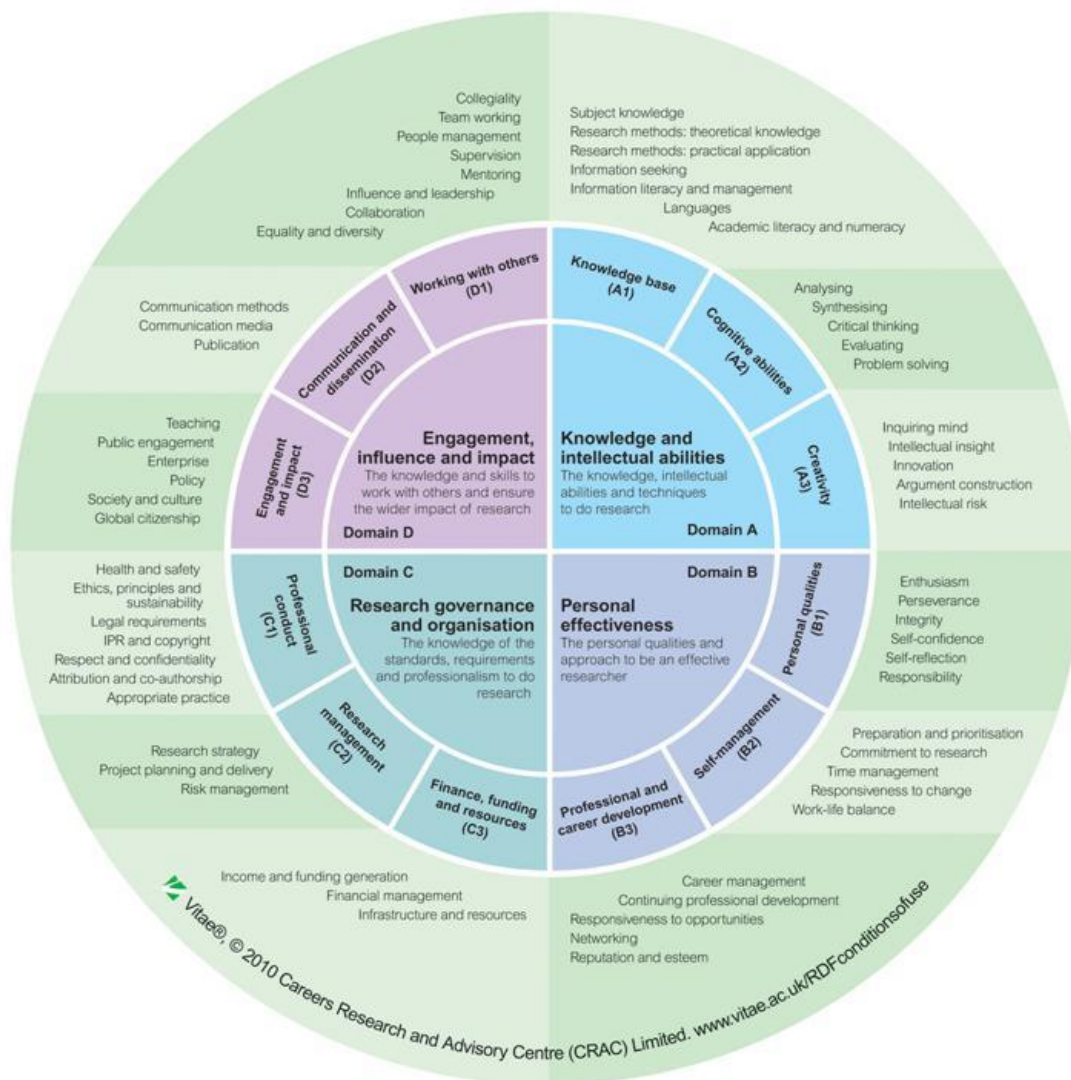
These broader skills will include generic research skills - skills you need to be an effective researcher but which are not specific to your discipline - and transferable skills that you will need both over the course of your degree and in your career beyond - such as leadership, effective communication, and project management.

You can use Vitae's Researcher Development Framework to identify the full range of skills you will need to develop.

What is the Researcher Development Framework?

The Researcher Development Framework sets out the skills and attributes all researchers are expected to have.

The Framework is designed for researchers at all levels and you may find not all parts of it are relevant to you - but it's a good place to start thinking about the full range of research and broader transferable skills you need to develop over the course of your research degree.



Researcher Development Framework -

The full Researcher Development Framework together with advice on how you can use it to develop your own training plan is available at:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/current/rdt-guide/researcher-development-framework

3.2 Planning Your Researcher Development Training

Once you have identified your training needs you can start thinking about the development opportunities that are available and begin matching the two up in a training plan.

In your training plan you will need to set out what training you will need to undertake and when you need to have done this by. Again, this is something you will need to discuss and agree with your supervisor/thesis committee - obviously they will want to ensure that your training plan fits in with your overall work plan and that any immediate training needs are addressed as soon as possible.

How you set out your training plan is up to you. You are though encouraged to refer to the Researcher Development Framework to make sure you don't miss anything important and that you have covered both research and transferable skills.

Training Plan template -

Your Research Student Progress File includes a template that you can use to put together your training plan:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/development/progress-file/training-plan.pdf

3.3. Training Programmes and Other Development Opportunities

At the heart of your training plan will be the workshops and other sessions presented as part of your College's postgraduate researcher training programme. Normally you will be expected to complete this in full. The College programmes are designed so that you can access relevant training as you need it over the course of your degree.

However, it is important that you explore the full range of training opportunities available, including:

- ▶ Generic workshops hosted by the Postgraduate Researcher Development Team
- ▶ Discipline specific research training provided by your School/Department
- ▶ University events such as the Festival of Postgraduate Research
- ▶ Joint events for postgraduate researchers and research staff such as The Intrepid Researcher programme
- ▶ External events hosted by Vitae, the Research Councils, and others such as Effective Researcher Days and national GRADschools

Your training plan should include all these elements to help ensure it is sufficiently broad and covers the full range of skills described in the Researcher Development Framework.

Guide to Researcher Development Training -

You can find details of University and external researcher training programmes and development opportunities in the Guide to Researcher Development Training:

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/current/rdt-guide

How much time should I spend training?

As a guide, the UK Research Councils suggest that you should spend about one day each month on training.

You may find that at the start of your research degree you need to spend more time on training than you will towards the end and you should think about how you will complete your training plan over the full length of your degree.

3.4 Reviewing Your Plan and Recording Your Progress

As you progress with your research degree your training needs may change so it's important that you review your training plan from time to time.

We would suggest that you do this each year at the same time as you complete your annual report to the Graduate Dean. In particular, as you move into the middle and final stages of your research, you will need to start thinking more about the skills you will need to pursue your career plans. This might include getting more experience in presenting your research through participating in the Festival of Postgraduate Research or attending one of Vitae's GRADschool events.

Do I need to keep a record of my training?

It's important that you keep a record of the training that you complete. You will need this to demonstrate your progress to your supervisor/thesis committee when they come to review your status as an Advanced Postgraduate (APG). Longer term it will also be helpful when you start to apply for jobs.

Training Record template -

Your Research Student Progress File includes a template that you can use to record your training:

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/development/progress-file/training-record.pdf

3.5 Personal Development Planning (PDP)

The Researcher Development Training described above focuses on skills required to complete your thesis as well as other wider employment-related skills. It forms a formal part of your research degree and must be completed to the satisfaction of your thesis committee. In addition to this formal requirement, and in order to ensure that you enjoy the richest possible educational and personal experience, the University encourages you to participate in Personal Development Planning (PDP).

The University of Leicester's PDP scheme offers you a structured and supported process designed to help you reflect on the progress you are making, and to plan for your personal and longer-term career development.

The potential benefits to postgraduate researchers of undertaking PDP - in terms of academic progress, personal growth, and future employability - are many and varied. Taking time to reflect on the progress of your research and to plan practically for how you might improve and develop your skills will help you to become a more independent and autonomous learner - essential attributes for the successful postgraduate.

Thinking about your academic progress in this structured and analytical way should also make you much more aware of the variety of support services and resources the University offers. This process should better equip you to identify potential difficulties or obstacles much earlier. In doing so PDP ought to assist you in formulating strategies for preventing or overcoming these issues, and therefore contribute to the successful completion of your research. In addition, and no less importantly, PDP provides you with the opportunity to look beyond your research and to think about your employability and future career aspirations. The modern graduate employer is looking for employees who can clearly demonstrate and provide evidence for their ability to manage and practically plan for their own personal and professional progress, and to identify for themselves the available opportunities for career development.

Crucially, Personal Development Planning is a process which you are responsible for managing, maintaining, and developing. You are welcome to commence PDP at any time during your studies. However, we strongly recommend that you do so approximately six months into your research. In this way you will have given yourself adequate opportunity to adjust to the demands of research level study, and you will also have acquired a sufficient body of experience on which to critically reflect. Once you have had the chance to reflect and plan, we suggest that you organise a meeting with your supervisor to discuss the issues and objectives you have identified.

Personal Development Planning templates -

Your Research Student Progress File includes templates that you can use to support your Personal Development Planning:

Self-Appraisal Template

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/development/progress-file/self-appraisal.pdf

Self-Development Template

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/development/progress-file/self-development.pdf

3.6 Teaching and Demonstrating

There may be opportunities for you to undertake teaching or demonstrating work depending on your discipline. Postgraduate researchers usually find this a valuable experience - although it is important to ensure that this, like any other work you undertake, does not interfere with your research. Duties associated with teaching or demonstrating should take up no more than six hours a week. If you wish to undertake any other paid work, you should speak with your supervisor and Head of School/Department.

Before you start teaching or demonstrating, you should sign up for one of the University's training courses. The Postgraduate Researcher Development Team can advise you of any relevant workshops that are currently being presented as well as other support available to help you develop your new skills further.

Part Four - Administrative Matters

This section of the Handbook contains important administrative advice regarding your registration and related matters. The University's rules on these are set out in full in the *Regulations for Research Degrees*.

For further advice you can contact the Graduate Office. The Graduate Office deals with all administrative matters relating to registered postgraduate researchers and is located on the ground floor of the Fielding Johnson Building. It is open to visitors Mondays to Fridays from 09:30 to 16:00 so you can call in if you require advice or information during the course of your degree. You can also contact the Graduate Office by email or phone:

- ▶ pgresearch@le.ac.uk
- ▶ +44 (0)116 252 2299 / +44 (0)116 252 2293

Please make sure to include your student identification number/have this to hand whenever you contact the Graduate Office. Key staff you may find helpful to contact are:

Name	Role
Ms. Jackie Lowe Research Student Support Officer	<i>Overall management of processes relating to registration, examination, and graduation of postgraduate researchers</i>
Miss Jenny Martin Principal Clerk	<i>For postgraduate researchers in the College of Social Science with enquiries relating to registration status, including transfer to writing-up status, suspension of registration, and withdrawals</i>
Miss Elizabeth Kramer Principal Clerk	<i>For postgraduate researchers in all other Colleges with enquiries relating to registration status, including transfer to writing-up status, suspension of registration, and withdrawals</i>
Mrs Claire Parker Chief Clerk	<i>For enquiries relating to thesis requirements and submissions, viva voce examinations, and confirmation of awards</i>

In this section ▶

- 4.1 Registration
- 4.2 Fees
- 4.3 Personal Details
- 4.4 Advanced Postgraduate (APG) Status and Review
- 4.5 Monitoring Your Progress
- 4.6 Transfer to Writing-Up Status
- 4.7 Extensions of Registration
- 4.8 Suspensions of Registration and Withdrawals
- 4.9 Obligations for International Postgraduate Researchers and Renewing Your Visa
- 4.10 Council Tax Exemptions/Adjustments
- 4.11 Holidays and Illnesses

4.1 Registration and Re-Registration

All postgraduate researchers are required to register in accordance with the instructions issued to them by the Admissions Office. Having registered at the start of their programme, all postgraduate researchers are then required to re-register each year on the anniversary of their initial registration. Instructions for doing this will be sent at the time to your University email account. Please ensure that you follow these instructions carefully as re-registration is a requirement of your student status and must be completed for each year of your degree. Failure to re-register by the stated deadline will result in you having to pay an additional late registration fee.

Please note that you will not be able to re-register if you:

- ▶ have not made arrangements for the payment of the new academic year's tuition fees

or

- ▶ have any outstanding fees - so you must ensure that your tuition and other fees (accommodation charges, bench fees, etc.) are paid by the deadlines given

Once you have registered for your first year, you will receive a copy of this Handbook and the *Regulations for Research Degrees*. You will also receive:

Student Identification Card

Your student identification card lasts for the duration of your course. You should keep your card safe - it gives you access to the University Library and you may need it to access University buildings or to prove your identity while on campus. There is a fee payable for replacement cards. Your student card also shows your nine-digit student identification number. This is your unique personal identification number and must be quoted in all correspondence with the University.

University IT Account and University Email Account

When you have completed registration you will be asked to create a University IT account and email account. It is important that you do this - your University email address is our primary means of contacting you and you must check it regularly as many important administrative messages are sent only to that address.

If you are having problems setting up or using your University email or if you lose your password, please contact IT services - email ithelp@le.ac.uk or call +44 (0)116 252 2253.

Certificate of Registration

This is issued automatically at the start of your research degree and confirms your registration as a postgraduate researcher. This is an important document which you should keep safe - there is a fee payable for all replacement copies.

4.2 Fees

Details of the sessional fees for the current academic year are published by the University's Finance Office:

- ▶ www.le.ac.uk/finance/studentfees/studentfees.html

If you are responsible for paying your tuition fees you can either pay them in full prior to the start of your academic year or in two instalments with the first instalment payable prior to the start of your academic year and the second instalment due towards the beginning of the next term. Exact dates will be confirmed in your fee statement which will be emailed to your University email account during your first term.

In order to register it is a requirement that at least the first instalment has been paid. If you choose to pay in two instalments and the second instalment is not paid by the due date, this could lead to your registration being cancelled.

Postgraduate researchers may be required to pay for certain services or facilities (including photocopying and printing from computers in the open-access computer laboratories). Details are provided at the point of service or in departmental literature as appropriate.

4.3 Personal Details

It is important that you let the Graduate Office know immediately if any of your personal details, such as your name or address/contact information, should change.

If any of your personal details change, please let us know by email to pgresearch@le.ac.uk making sure to include your full name and student identification number. You can also use the change of address form available at the University main reception in the Fielding Johnson Building.

If you want to let us know that your name has changed - for example, if you get married or divorced - you will need to let us know in writing and provide a copy of your marriage certificate/decreed absolute. Please do not send original documents.

Likewise, you will need to let us know in writing if you notice that the name we hold for you is incorrect. If this is the case, you should provide a copy of your passport or birth certificate. Again, please do not send original documents. The name we hold for you will appear on your degree certificate, so you should let us know immediately if it is incorrect in any way.

4.4 Advanced Postgraduate (APG) Status and Review

At the start of your degree, you will normally be registered as an Advanced Postgraduate (APG) for your first year if you are a full-time researcher or for your first two years if you are a part-time or distance learning researcher. During this period your School/Department will assess your overall suitability as a postgraduate researcher.

Towards the end of your period of registration as an Advanced Postgraduate you will be required to undertake a formal review of your status. The exact format will vary according to your discipline, but it will often involve you producing a written report on your research and presenting this to members of the School/Department academic staff. Taken with the record of your progress in developing your research and other skills, this review forms the basis of a recommendation to the Graduate Dean that you:

- ▶ be transferred to a named research degree programme (PhD, MPhil, etc.), or
- ▶ be given a short extension of your Advanced Postgraduate status to allow you additional time to demonstrate you have made sufficient progress, or
- ▶ have your registration ended on the grounds that you have not demonstrated sufficient progress

Clearly then the Advanced Postgraduate status review is an important milestone in your career as a postgraduate researcher. It is important that you make sure you are properly prepared for the review process and discuss this with your supervisor if you are unsure what to expect.

4.5 Monitoring Your Progress

The Advanced Postgraduate status review is just one component of a wider system for monitoring your progress. Each School/Department has its own procedures to monitor your progress which meet the requirements of the Code of Practice for Research Degrees. Your supervisor or thesis committee should explain these to you when you start your degree.

As noted above, you will have regular meetings with your supervisor and thesis committee and you are expected to keep written records of all such meetings. You are also expected to retain copies of the Training Plan you agree with your supervisor and keep a record of all the researcher development training activities that you undertake.

In addition, you will be asked to complete an annual report form at the time you re-register each year. This form will be sent to you by the Graduate Office with your re-registration pack and is a report from you to the Graduate Dean. A copy is provided in your Research Student Progress File for information. This annual report enables the Graduate Dean to ensure that Schools/Departments are following the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and gives you the opportunity to raise any matters of concern or to pass comment on your experiences as a postgraduate researcher.

We have found that it is best if the report is shared with the members of your thesis committee before it is submitted to the Graduate Dean. However, it is recognised that you might want to discuss issues outside the thesis committee structure. In these circumstances, there is an open invitation to all postgraduate researchers to meet with the Graduate Dean to discuss these issues on an informal basis if you think that would be helpful.

Feel free to email the Graduate Dean at graduatedean@le.ac.uk to arrange a meeting.

4.6 Transfer to Writing-Up Status

The planning of your research degree should anticipate a final draft of your thesis being prepared by the end of three years if you are a full-time researcher or five years if you are a part-time or distance learning researcher.

However, the University recognises that the production of a thesis may take a number of months. If you need to go into a fourth year - or sixth year if you are a part-time or distance learning researcher - you may request to register at writing-up status and pay a reduced fee. You may register as a writing-up researcher for period of up to twelve months - by the end of which you must submit your thesis.

As a writing-up researcher you are entitled to appropriate support from your supervisor as well as continued access to your University email and the Library. The fee to register as a writing-up student is £100 which is payable in two instalments - £50 for the first six months and £50 for the remaining six months or any part thereof.

You are not required to be resident in Leicester while at writing-up status and may well be in employment by this time. However, you must ensure that you comply with any applicable visa requirements - including any attendance requirements.

If you want to register as a writing-up researcher you need to have completed the minimum period of registration for your degree and have finished the active part of your research. You should then complete a transfer to writing-up request form and pass this to your supervisor. Attached to the request form should be a detailed work plan that sets out how you will complete the thesis over the writing-up period. Your supervisor needs to sign the form to indicate that the request has their support. The form can then be returned to the Graduate Office.

Please note that not all research degrees permit a writing-up year and you should contact the Graduate Office for advice if you are unsure.

Form -

Transfers to writing-up status should be requested using the writing-up request form available at:

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/writingup-request.doc

4.7 Extension of Registration

The University takes submission deadlines very seriously. You will need to organise your work plan so that you will meet this deadline - remembering to leave sufficient time at the end of your final year for proofreading and for your supervisor to read and comment on your thesis and for you to make any changes as needed.

The *Regulations for Research Degrees* set out our maximum registration periods and these vary according to the type of research degree you are registered for and your mode of study (full-time, part-time, or distance). All postgraduate researchers are required to submit their thesis by the end of the applicable maximum registration period. For those on PhD programmes the maximum registration periods are four years (full-time) or six years (part-time and distance).

Occasionally circumstances may change. If you will be unable to complete your thesis by your expected submission date, you will need to request an extension of your registration. If you think that you will need an extension of your registration, we would encourage you to discuss your situation with your supervisor. It is important to note though that any request for an extension must be made at least one month before the end of your current period of registration.

If you need an extension of your registration you must complete an extension request form and then pass this to your supervisor. Attached to the request form should be a detailed work plan that sets out how you will complete the thesis over the extension period. Your supervisor needs to sign the form to indicate that the request has their support. The form can then be returned to the Graduate Office.

Each request is considered individually and the University tries to respond flexibly and sympathetically. However, postgraduate researchers who need to request an extension of their registration should note the following:

- ▶ the extension period must be no longer than six months - requests for an extension of more than six months (or for separate extensions that cumulatively total more than six months) will not normally be considered
- ▶ tuition fees are payable for all extension periods - in 2011/2012 fees of £466.50 are payable for extensions of three months or less and £933.00 for extensions of three to six months (postgraduate researchers registered on the EdD, DSocSci, or any distance research degree programme should ask their School/Department for the applicable fees)
- ▶ further restrictions may apply if you are funded by one of the United Kingdom Research Councils

Form -

Extensions should be requested using the extension request form available at:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/extension-request.doc

4.8 Suspension of Registration and Withdrawals

A suspension is a temporary withdrawal from your studies for a period of between three and twelve months. A suspension may be appropriate if you are ill, need a period of maternity/paternity leave, or have some other serious personal or financial difficulties that are affecting your ability to study.

If you are considering suspending your registration, we would encourage you to seek advice from your supervisor. You may also want to speak with the University's Welfare Service or the Students' Union Education Unit. It is important to note though that any request for a suspension must be made at the time it is needed, or in advance if at all possible - retrospective requests will not be considered under any circumstances.

If you need to suspend your registration you must complete a suspension request form and then pass this to the administrator in your School/Department. Your School/Department will initially consider your request and, if it is supported, pass this to the Graduate Office.

Each request is considered individually and the University tries to respond flexibly and sympathetically. However, postgraduate researchers who need to request a suspension of their registration should note the following:

- ▶ the suspension period must be at least three months long - requests for suspensions of less than three months will not be considered
- ▶ the suspension period must be no longer than twelve months - requests for a suspension of more than twelve months (or for separate suspensions that would cumulatively total more than twelve months over the length of your course) will be approved only in exceptional circumstances
- ▶ the suspension can start on any date - but postgraduate researchers may only resume their studies following a suspension of registration at one of four fixed entry points - 01 October, 01 January, 01 April, or 01 July
- ▶ no tuition fees are payable for an agreed period of suspension - however, for the duration of the suspension of registration postgraduate researchers have no access to University facilities such as the Library or their University IT/email account nor are they entitled to any support from their supervisor or School/Department

Form -

Suspensions should be requested using the suspension request form available at:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/suspension-request.doc

I am an international researcher - does a suspension affect my visa?

If you have a Tier 4 student visa obtained using a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement, the University will notify the UK Border Agency if you suspend your registration. Your leave to remain in the UK may be ended and you will need to return home until your suspension has ended. You will need to apply for a new visa to rejoin your course after your suspension has ended - you will not be able to re-register with your existing visa.

What do I do if I want to withdraw from my course?

If you are considering withdrawing from your degree - i.e., permanently ending your registration - we would also encourage you to seek advice from your supervisor. You may also want to speak with the University's Student Welfare Service or the Students' Union Education Unit.

If you decide that you do need to withdraw from your studies, you need to formally notify the Graduate Office. This is important as failure to notify the Graduate Office may mean that you continue to incur fees.

4.9 Obligations for International Postgraduate Researchers and Renewing Your Visa

The attention of all international postgraduate researchers is drawn to the advice below. To comply with UK immigration law you will need to:

- ▶ Hold a valid visa that entitles you to study at the University of Leicester
- ▶ Provide us with a copy of your visa/biometrics card and passport - if these are renewed at any time you will need to bring your new documents into the Graduate Office
- ▶ Provide us with your UK and home addresses and contact telephone numbers and keep us informed if these are updated
- ▶ Pay your fees and register for your course on-time every year
- ▶ Attend the University on a full-time basis and meet any specific attendance requirements that your School/Department ask of you
- ▶ Agree any absences (i.e., holidays) with your School/Department and supervisor before they occur
- ▶ Seek permission in advance if you want to temporarily suspend your course or withdraw from it completely
- ▶ Tell us if you are employed by the University and when this contact ends/changes
- ▶ Leave the UK if you defer, suspend, or withdraw from your course, or if your place on your course is ended, or if your circumstances change such that you are no longer studying full-time (including if you submit your thesis early)

The University also has certain legal responsibilities for international postgraduate researchers:

- ▶ To keep copies of all international postgraduate researchers' passport/visa/biometrics card/ATAS clearance (where appropriate)
- ▶ To inform the UK Border Agency where postgraduate researchers here on Tier 4 student visas obtained using a Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS):
 - Defer the start date of their course after using their CAS
 - Do not start their course with us for any other reason after using their CAS
 - Do not complete registration - both online and face-to-face registration
 - Do not meet attendance and checkpoint requirements
 - Suspend their studies
 - Leave the University without completing their course - i.e., withdraw permanently
 - Change to a shorter course, change to a course that does not meet Tier 4 requirements (for example a part-time course), or submit their thesis early
 - Have their studies terminated/ended

Please note that the UKBA can bring your immigration permission to an end early if it is notified of one of these matters. It is therefore very important to ensure that if any difficulties arise which will affect your ability to attend your course you keep in contact with your School/Department to keep them informed of your situation. You may also wish to take advice from the International Student Welfare Service about your immigration status.

Please note that the University can only sponsor postgraduate researchers who are registered on an eligible course and are required to be in attendance at the University to undertake full-time study.

What if I need to renew my student visa?

If you will need to apply for a visa renewal/extension because your current visa expires before you will submit your thesis, you will first need to request from the Graduate Office a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) statement.

Please note that it can take up to two weeks to issue a CAS statement from the date your request is received. You are strongly advised to submit your CAS request in plenty of time before the expiry of your current visa. You are also asked to wait until you have received your CAS statement before making a visa renewal appointment.

Form -

CAS statements should be requested using the CAS statement request form available at:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/cas-request

What if I am applying for another type of visa?

If you need a letter for the purposes of applying for any other type of visa - for example, a Schengen visa for visits to continental Europe - you can request these at the main reception in the Fielding Johnson Building or by emailing presearch@le.ac.uk making sure to include your student identification number.

4.10 Council Tax Exemptions/Adjustments

You may be entitled to an exemption from/adjustment to your council tax assessment if you are registered on a full-time research degree programme. However, the exact rules do vary between local authorities and you should contact your local authority directly for advice on their eligibility criteria. Those registered as part-time or distance learning researchers are not entitled to an exemption from/adjustment to their council tax assessment.

Local authorities will require proof that you are registered as a full-time researcher before applying any exemption/adjustment. This will be provided automatically by the Graduate Office if you live within Leicestershire (including the Leicester City Council area) or Lincolnshire. The Graduate Office will also automatically provide this for researchers living in the following local authority areas:

- ▶ Nottingham City Council
- ▶ Peterborough City Council
- ▶ Nuneaton Borough Council
- ▶ Rutland County Council

If you live outside of these areas, you should use a photocopy of your Certificate of Registration as proof that you are registered as a full-time researcher.

4.11 Holidays and Illness

As a postgraduate researcher you will be working during vacations as well as term time. You may take holidays, but you should first advise your supervisor of periods when you will be away - particularly if you are a full-time researcher.

If you are funded by one of the Research Councils, you may take up to eight weeks holiday each year including public holidays but excluding University closed days - the University is normally closed for six days each year in addition to the normal public holidays, usually four days between the Christmas and New Year holidays and two days around the Easter holiday.

It is expected that other postgraduate researchers not funded by the Research Councils will take a similar approach with regards to leave.

If you are a full-time postgraduate researcher and are absent because you are ill, you should let your supervisor know as soon as possible. If you are absent for more than one week, you should also submit a medical certificate to the Graduate Office. If you are suffering from an illness which you feel is seriously affecting your studies (whether you are working full-time or part-time), you should discuss this with your supervisor and, if appropriate, speak to the Graduate Office about temporarily suspending your registration.

Part Five - Writing and Submitting Your Thesis

Your thesis is the culmination of your research degree. Here you can find comprehensive advice and guidance to support you through the process of writing and submitting your thesis and taking the viva examination.

It is important that you make sure that you are fully prepared for the process of writing and submitting your thesis and that you are aware of all applicable University regulations. To help you the Colleges and the Postgraduate Researcher Development Team regularly present workshops for final year postgraduate researchers that cover key aspects such as managing your writing and preparing for the viva examination.

Additionally, the Graduate School has produced two comprehensive online guides and students are encouraged to consult these early on as part of their overall Training Plan.

In this section ►

- 5.1 Getting Started
- 5.2 Managing Your Writing and Yourself
- 5.3 Developing Your Writing
- 5.4 Thesis Word Limits
- 5.5 Restricting Access to Your Thesis
- 5.6 Notice of Intention to Submit
- 5.7 First Submission of Your Thesis
- 5.8 The Viva Examination
- 5.9 After the Viva Examination
- 5.10 Final Submission of Your Thesis
- 5.11 Graduation and Degree Confirmation

Much of the advice in this section is taken from the Graduate School's comprehensive online guides on writing your thesis, preparing for the viva exam, and submitting your thesis.

Graduate School Online Guides -

For advice on planning, writing, and submitting your thesis, sitting the viva examination, electronic thesis submission:

- www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/resources/thesis
- www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/resources/etheses

5.1 Getting Started

Writing your thesis may well be the biggest challenge of your academic career so far. It is important that you are not intimidated. Over the course of your time here, you have shown this is something you are capable of - the key now is to think about what you want to do, how you are going to do it, and how you will make sure that you stay on track.

First Steps - Planning

The first stage of this model is to develop a plan for writing your thesis. As with any big project, your plan is there to tell you what you should be doing and for you to use to give direction to your work and review your progress against.

Planning is not about having lots of lists or timetables - it is about thinking what you want to do and how you are going to do it. In this case, the "what" is your thesis and the "how" is your writing process. You will need to think about both in developing a plan for your final year.

So your first step towards writing your thesis is to think what its content will be and how that will be structured. If you're unsure what it should look like, take a look at other theses that have been published in your discipline.

Once you have your thesis plan, you need to turn to thinking about how you will deliver it. This is information that you should set out in a work plan, something that will tell you:

- ▶ what work you should be doing and when
- ▶ when each section needs to be completed
- ▶ how you will use your final year to ensure your thesis is submitted on time

Once you and your supervisor have agreed a final version of your plan, you are ready to start writing your thesis. You can start anywhere - the important thing is that you do start. Remember that your first step is to write a sentence - not the whole thesis.

5.2 Managing Your Writing and Yourself

You have your plan and have made a start on your writing. The key now is to keep going, but doing that as effectively as possible will depend on you being able to manage your work - taking active control of your writing, your time, and yourself so that you follow the plan you have developed and agreed.

Spend some time thinking about how you will:

- ▶ manage your writing and your work to make sure you keep to the plan you have developed
- ▶ manage any problems that you experience so that they do not affect your progress
- ▶ manage your motivation so that you maintain focus over your final year
- ▶ manage yourself so that you stay healthy and get the right balance between your work and other commitments

Remember that a key part of managing your work is to monitor your progress and review this against the work plan you have developed. This is something that is best done regularly - we would suggest weekly or every other week - as this will allow you to identify and address any problems early on.

5.3 Developing Your Writing

As you get further along in your writing, you will start to think about its quality and whether there is anything you can do to improve this. Firstly, think about your readers' needs and aim to make your writing as clear as possible:

- ▶ avoid excessively long sentences
- ▶ do not use a difficult word where a simple one will do
- ▶ use punctuation correctly to aid the sense of your writing
- ▶ use paragraphs to break your text into logically self-contained units

To guide your readers, you also need to have a system of "signposts" - things that explicitly or implicitly tell the reader what to expect. Signposts that you can use in your thesis are:

- ▶ a detailed List of Contents
- ▶ a well written abstract
- ▶ an introductory chapter/section for the thesis as a whole and an introductory paragraph for each individual chapter/section
- ▶ a consistent system of headings and sub-headings

Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism

You will need to reference your thesis fully and accurately both to acknowledge your debts to others and allow your readers to distinguish your ideas from those of others that you have drawn on.

Drafting and Re-Drafting

In re-drafting your work you need to make sure that each new draft represents a step forward rather than simply revising something that was fine anyway or revising something to no good effect.

Instead of re-drafting as you go, why not look to make drafting a process with formal stages with different aspects to be addressed at each stage:

- ▶ first re-draft - check you have covered everything in your plan
- ▶ second re-draft - see if there's anything you can make clearer
- ▶ third re-draft - check the details and accuracy

Getting Feedback

Getting feedback from your supervisor as your writing progresses should already be a part of your work plan and your strategy for managing your writing. Your supervisor will comment on the content of your work, but if you would find it helpful to also be given feedback on your writing style and what you could do to develop your writing, let your supervisor know that this is something you would appreciate their comments on.

How should I format my thesis?

The University has specific format requirements that you must follow in presenting your thesis. The formatting advice below is applicable to both the first and final submissions of your thesis:

Paper Size and Printing

Theses must be presented on A4 paper. Good quality printing should be used throughout. Pages should be printed single-sided.

Type Font

Text should normally use a 12 point font with double-spaced lines. There is no regulation as to what font should be used, but an easy to read font such as Times New Roman or Ariel is recommended.

Margins

There should be a margin of at least 3.5cm on the left side of each page (both typescript and diagrams) to allow for binding. Other margins should be at least 2.5cm.

Notes

Explanatory notes should stand at the foot of the relevant pages.

5.4 Thesis Word Limits

It is very important that your thesis does not exceed the maximum word limit appropriate to your College and degree type. Your thesis may not be sent for examination if it is longer than the prescribed limits:

College of Arts, Humanities, and Law *and* College of Social Science

- ▶ PhD Thesis Max. 80,000 words
- ▶ EdD Thesis Max. 55,000 words
- ▶ DSocSci Thesis Max. 50,000 words
- ▶ MPhil Thesis Max. 50,000 words

These word limits include all appendices and footnotes, but exclude the bibliography

College of Medicine, Biological Sciences, and Psychology

- ▶ PhD Thesis Max. 50,000 words (80,000 if qualitative/case study based)
- ▶ DClinPsy Thesis Max. 30,000 words
- ▶ MPhil Thesis Max. 30,000 words (50,000 if qualitative/case study based)

These word limits exclude contents lists, tabulated data, diagrams, and references

College of Science and Engineering

- ▶ PhD Thesis Max. 50,000 words
- ▶ EngD Thesis Max. 25,000 words
- ▶ MPhil Thesis Max. 30,000 words

These word limits exclude tabulated data and diagrams

If your thesis looks like it will exceed the maximum limit, you should look to see how it can be edited. If this proves impossible, you can request permission to exceed the permitted limit - but, requests are considered in exceptional cases only and you need to have been granted approval before you are allowed to submit your thesis.

5.5 Restricting Access to Your Thesis

In most cases there is no need to request any form of restriction on access to your thesis.

A restriction on access may be needed though if your thesis contains sensitive material, such as sensitive personal information or information of commercial value. If you are unsure, speak with your supervisor in the first instance. You should also consult any sponsors, etc. involved in your research on whether or not access to your thesis should be restricted.

Where it is necessary to restrict access to a thesis, this can be done by requesting that it be placed under a partial restriction (known as a moratorium) or a full restriction (known as an embargo). As there is a general presumption that research outputs will be made available publically, these are something you must formally request and you may have to provide an explanation as to why you think a restriction on access is needed.

Requesting a Moratorium

If you need to request a moratorium, you can do so when you come to submit the final copies of your thesis to the Graduate Office - at that time, you should indicate that a moratorium is requested in your author consent form.

Requesting an Embargo

If you need to request a full embargo, then you must do this at least three months before you make your first thesis submission. Your request will need to be in writing to the Graduate Dean and can be sent by email to graduatedean@le.ac.uk Your request should set out in full your reasons for seeking an embargo together with an explanation as to why a moratorium would not be sufficient.

5.6 Notice of Intention to Submit

You are required to give the University at least three months' notice before you submit your thesis. This notice period is to allow enough time for examiners to be nominated by your School/Department and considered and approved by the Graduate Dean. You can do this by completing the Notice of Intention to Submit form and returning this to the Graduate Office.

Once your Notice of Intention to Submit has been received, you will be sent a copy of the Graduate Office's Guidance for Submission and Examination of Your Thesis.

Form -

Notice of intention to submit your thesis should be made using the notice form available at:

▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/intention-submit.doc

5.7 First Submission of Your Thesis

It could be that at the start of your final year you found it hard to get going on your thesis. As your final year draws to a close, you may well face the opposite problem - bringing yourself to let it go.

Getting Finished: When is Enough Enough?

Ultimately, you are responsible for deciding whether your thesis is ready for submission. Remember though that you must submit your thesis by the end of your final year. In your work plan you should have taken your expected submission date into account, allowing some weeks before this date to give your supervisor a chance to read and comment on your thesis. The first thing you need to do is go back to your thesis plan:

- ▶ have you covered everything you wanted to cover?
- ▶ does your thesis clearly set out what your original contribution to knowledge in your discipline is and what implications stem from that?
- ▶ have you followed the advice for developing your writing?
- ▶ have you completed a process of successive re-drafts?

If you can answer "yes" to all of these questions, then it is likely that the work you have done is sufficient for your first submission.

Even if you are not entirely happy with your thesis, your supervisor is there to provide advice. Make sure your supervisor has several weeks in which to read and comment on your thesis before the final submission deadline.

Seeking feedback from your supervisor is very important and it is strongly recommended that you do not submit your thesis without your supervisor having first had a chance to comment on your final draft. Your supervisor may structure their feedback on your thesis in a way that brings out the positives before going on to talk about any weaknesses. You will need to take a balanced approach - be pleased with the positives, but take any weaknesses seriously and listen to and act on any comments your supervisor might have for addressing these.

Binding Your Thesis

For your first submission, you are required to submit two copies of your thesis to the Graduate Office. Both copies must be soft bound or "perfect bound" - also known as thermal or hot glue binding. Comb or spiral binding is not acceptable, nor is insertion into a ring binder or slide binder. Theses which are not bound correctly will be delayed while arrangements are made for them to be re-bound at your expense. There is no regulation for the colour of the cover at this stage - though it is useful to re-print the title page on the cover. The spine of the thesis can be left blank.

The University's Print Services team can arrange the appropriate binding and may be able to accept an electronic version for printing and binding. You can contact Print Services on:

- ▶ printservices@le.ac.uk
- ▶ +44 (0)116 252 2442

Submitting Your Thesis

You must submit two soft-bound copies of your thesis to the Graduate Office together with a completed first thesis submission form:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/first-submission.doc

You can find the Graduate Office on the ground floor of the Fielding Johnson Building. Theses do not need to be submitted in person, but if you are sending them by post you should consider using a secure means such as recorded delivery.

You must ensure that all fees due to the University (tuition fees, bench fees, accommodation fees, etc.) have been paid in full before you submit your thesis - it will not be sent for examination if you have any outstanding debts.

5.8 The Viva Examination¹

The viva examination is where you will give a verbal defence of your thesis; its purpose is to:

- ▶ demonstrate that the thesis is your own work
- ▶ confirm that you understand what you have written
- ▶ investigate your awareness of where your original work sits in relation to the wider research field
- ▶ establish whether the thesis is of sufficiently high standard to merit the award of the degree for which it is submitted

What will my examiners look for?

The purpose of the viva is to establish that your work is of a sufficiently high standard to merit the award of the degree for which it is submitted.

In order to do this, examiners may:

- ▶ ask you to justify your arguments
- ▶ ask you to justify not only things which you have included in your thesis but also things which you may have left out
- ▶ argue certain points with you
- ▶ expect you to discuss any developments which may flow from your work in the future

Your thesis will have strengths and weaknesses and the examiners will want to discuss these. It is considered a positive thing, indeed an essential thing, that you can discuss both the strengths and the weaknesses. You can think of the weaknesses as an opportunity to demonstrate your skill at critical appraisal. Remember that examiners seek to find and discuss weaknesses in all theses - you should not interpret criticism as an indication that the examination will not end successfully.

¹ Some of the content of in section 5.7 was taken from Student Development's "Preparing for Your Viva" which is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 2.0 UK: England and Wales License. You can read the full text at <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd/pgr/resources/viva>

How can I prepare for the viva examination?

Preparing for your viva examination is an active process - it is something you have to plan, manage, and review. In particular, some form of practice viva examination should be an essential part of your preparations.

It is also important to make sure that you think positively. Positive thinking will help you feel in control of the situation which will increase your confidence. Try to be:

- ▶ anticipating a potentially interesting discussion
- ▶ ready to engage in debate
- ▶ confident in your preparation
- ▶ eager to get on with it
- ▶ relieved at being there at last
- ▶ excited at the challenge ahead
- ▶ looking forward to completing your degree

You can find lots more advice on how to prepare for your viva examination at:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/resources/thesis/viva

You may also want to download The Good Viva Video which has more details about what examiners look for and what to expect in the exam itself:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/resources/thesis/viva/video

And don't forget that the Postgraduate Researcher Development Team also offers a workshop on preparing for the viva examination and this is repeated over the year.

5.9 After the Viva Examination

The University's *Regulations for Research Degrees* set out what recommendations examiners may make following a viva examination.

Depending on what type of degree you are registered for, your examiners will make one of the following recommendations:

- ▶ Award of the Degree
- ▶ Award of the Degree Subject to Amendments
- ▶ Referral for Re-Submission for the Same Degree
- ▶ Award of a Lower Degree
- ▶ Referral for Re-Submission for a Lower Degree
- ▶ Fail

It is only very rarely that examiners recommend the award of the degree without requiring some changing changes to the thesis - in the majority of cases, examiners will recommend the award of the degree subject to amendments or, in a smaller number of cases, will recommend a referral for re-submission.

If you are asked to make amendments to your thesis or are referred for re-submission, it is important that you do not feel disappointed:

- ▶ neither result is uncommon
- ▶ most students go on to successfully complete their thesis

Your priority is to make the changes that have been asked for and to ensure that you are able to make your amendments/re-submit your thesis by the date your internal examiner advises:

- ▶ minor amendments are expected to be submitted within one month
- ▶ major amendments are expected to be submitted within six months
- ▶ re-submission periods are a minimum of six months and a maximum of twelve months

If you have any questions about the amendments you have been asked to make, you should speak with your supervisor as early as possible. They can offer advice if you are unsure exactly what changes you need to make or when you are due to submit these.

5.10 Final Submission of Your Thesis

If you have been awarded your degree without amendments being needed, or you have made any amendments needed and your internal examiner has confirmed these have been done satisfactorily, you need to prepare and submit the final version of your thesis. This should be done promptly - the conferral of your degree may be delayed until the final hard bound copy of your thesis has been received.

For your final submission, you are required to submit one hard bound copy of your thesis to the Graduate Office together with a completed author consent form:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/forms/author-consent.doc

Additionally, you are required to submit an electronic copy of your thesis to the Leicester Research Archive.

Binding Your Thesis

For the hard bound copy, the cover should be Standard Green - Arbelave Library Buckram No. 563. The front and back covers should be blank while the spine should have your name, thesis title (abbreviated to fit if necessary), degree, and year of first submission in gold lettering.

You can download an illustration of how this should look:

- ▶ www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/resources/thesis/what-next/final-submission/spine.pdf

Submitting Your eThesis

Since 2008 all University of Leicester postgraduate researchers have been required to submit an electronic copy of their thesis in addition to the hard bound printed copy. The electronic copy of the thesis is often referred to as an ethesis.

Benefits of Electronic Thesis Submission

Your ethesis is added to two digital research archives - the University's own Leicester Research Archive and the national Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS).

Etheses are much more accessible than printed theses - adding your thesis to the Leicester Research Archive means that it will be accessible to the worldwide research community and significantly improve the chances that your work will be viewed, consulted, and cited. So having your thesis available electronically massively increases its visibility and increasing the visibility of your work also increases your visibility as a researcher - something that is particularly important as you look to take your first steps into your career beyond your degree.

Pre-Publication Concerns

Making your thesis available electronically through the Leicester Research Archive constitutes a form of publication. As such it can be a cause for concern for those students who are considering how to publish their work elsewhere - either as a book or journal article(s) - as some editors/publishers will not accept work that has already been published.

First of all it needs to be remembered that electronic submission is a requirement of all postgraduate researchers - there are no exceptions from that requirement. Moreover, it is by no means certain that adding your thesis to the Leicester Research Archive will harm your chances of publishing the work by another route. Indeed, research has found that submitting a thesis to an online repository such as the Leicester Research Archive rarely precludes subsequent use of the material in another form.

Where there adding your thesis to the Leicester Research Archive/EThOS would cause problems, a moratorium or embargo can be requested.

5.11 Graduation and Degree Confirmation

After the conferral of your degree has been officially confirmed by the University, the Graduate Office will send you written confirmation of this and, in due course, advice on attending the next degree congregation ceremony.

When will I graduate?

Students will be invited to attend the next available ceremony after the award of their degree. There are ceremonies in the Winter (normally January) and in the Summer (normally July). However, if you have any questions about whether you will be awarded your degree in time for the next ceremony, you should contact the Graduate Office.

When will I receive my degree certificate?

Certificates are handed out to graduands at the ceremony or posted afterwards to those graduating in absentia. Graduands who are unable to attend the degree congregation and want their certificate to be posted to them must ensure that they provide a full postal address when registering for their ceremony.

Appendix - Code of Practice for Research Degrees

This Code applies to candidates applying for admission to a research degree at the University and to all students registered for a research degree regardless of mode of study or place of residence and to staff responsible for the supervision of such students. It should be read in conjunction with the *Regulations for Research Degrees*.

The Code also applies to students registered for University of Leicester research degrees at associated colleges, although these may, in addition, have their own codes of practice.

Admission and Selection

1. All applications will be considered in line with the University's Code of Practice for Admissions.
2. The University's minimum entry requirement for a research degree is normally a first degree with at least upper second class honours or an equivalent qualification.

For a candidate who does not meet this requirement the department should make a special case to the Admissions Office for referral to the Graduate Dean based on one or more of the following:

- a) previous training and experience
- b) published work
- c) upper second class strengths shown in relevant courses in their first degree
- d) the student having passed a qualifying examination of final honours standard

3. For candidates undertaking a research degree on a part-time basis, the department in which he or she wishes to register must be satisfied that the student will have access to the necessary resources and training, and that it is able to provide supervision at a distance.

4. Where a candidate is resident in the UK or undertaking study in the UK at the time of application an interview may form part of the selection process. If an interview is held at least two members of the academic staff of the relevant department(s) must be in attendance. In cases where an interview is not held departments should have fair and rigorous procedures in place to take account of academic requirements and supervisory capacity. Departments should also ensure that students have access to appropriate research training materials and the facilities necessary to undertake their research.

5. A recommendation to admit a candidate should be endorsed by two members of the academic staff of the department(s) concerned, one of whom shall normally be the Postgraduate Tutor and the other the proposed supervisor. The Postgraduate Tutor works with the Head of Department to proactively seek supervisors for prospective research students to ensure that the best possible research students are recruited.

The recommendation for admission will normally be as an Advanced Postgraduate Student, except where students are to be registered for a research degree with a taught element (Doctor of Education, Doctor of Social Sciences, Doctor of Engineering, or Doctor of Clinical Psychology).

6. The detailed requirements for the proposed programme of research frequently cannot be specified in advance, but in making the recommendation for an offer of a place the Head of Department should confirm the following points in the light of the proposed field of study and discussions with the student:

a) that the candidate is appropriately qualified for the proposed programme of research

b) that, on the information available, the proposed programme of research should be capable of being studied to the depth required to obtain the degree for which the candidate will be registered

c) that it might reasonably be expected that the proposed programme of research be completed and a thesis submitted within the maximum period of registration for the degree for which the student will be registered

d) that, in so far as can be predicted, appropriate resources (e.g., library, computing, laboratory facilities, equipment, technical assistance, and supervision (including alternative supervision to cover temporary absences of staff) will be available

7. The formal offer of admission can only be made by the Admissions Office based on the recommendation of the department. The recommendation of the department must include a brief outline of the proposed research study programme which will be incorporated into the University's offer letter. Departments may informally notify the student of their recommendation provided that this clearly indicates that the recommendation is subject to final approval by the University.

Designation of Supervisor

8. Departments must specify the supervisory arrangements including the name of the main supervisor at the time it recommends an offer is to be made. Departments are strongly encouraged to operate a thesis committee system for their students or an equivalent method. A thesis committee is likely to include:

I. a main supervisor, who carries primary responsibility for supervision

II. a second supervisor or advisor who can offer further academic advice

III. the Department's Postgraduate Tutor (or her/his nominee) who is involved in monitoring progress but is independent of the supervisory team

Departments must be able to supervise the number of students they accept in relation to the resources available and all other demands on staff. The main supervisor must be a member of the academic staff of the University or be a Recognised Teacher from an Associated Institution under the provision of Ordinance 29.

9. The advantage of the thesis committee system is that there is a single point of contact (the main supervisor), but there are also others who are familiar with the student's work and can support and monitor progress. For example, if a main supervisor is temporarily unable to continue supervising a student, the second supervisor or advisor can assume the role of the main supervisor.

10. A member of staff under probation should not usually be appointed as the sole supervisor. However, in order to promote research in new areas and to assist in building up research teams, it may be appropriate to appoint a suitably qualified probationer as the main supervisor. In such cases, the supervision should be monitored and assisted by a senior member of staff. More generally, the appointment of a member of staff on probation as a joint supervisor is to be encouraged in the interests of staff training and development.

11. There may be occasions where it is appropriate to appoint an additional supervisor who is not a member of staff of the University. The appointment of associate supervisors requires the approval of the Graduate Dean. In cases where an associate supervisor is appointed it should be clear that full control over the supervision rests with the University and there must always be a named supervisor who is a member of the academic staff of the University.

Supervision of Students on Industrial-based Projects

12. Where a student is undertaking a research degree based in industry or another organisation an associate supervisor should be appointed to provide advice to the student on a day-to-day basis. The Head of Department should ensure that such a supervisor is appropriately qualified and experienced to undertake the supervision. Before the project has commenced the University should ensure that there is a clear agreement in writing on the following issues:

- ▶ the roles of the respective supervisors, noting that ultimate responsibility for supervision and monitoring of progress rests with the University
- ▶ the academic and industrial objectives of the project
- ▶ the resources, facilities and equipment which will be made available to the student
- ▶ the schedule of industrial and research training, including an agreement on the periods the student will be required to attend the University
- ▶ a schedule for regular tripartite meetings between the student and supervisors
- ▶ the use which will be made of the research and its results, including publications and any issues of confidentiality, intellectual property rights or other areas of sensitivity

Choice of Research Topic

13. The translation of field of study to a more specific research topic should be undertaken following consultation between the student, the designated supervisor(s) and the student's thesis committee as soon as possible in light of what is appropriate for the discipline and not later than the time of transfer to a specific research degree. The discussions of this may precede registration. The supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that delay in determining the topic is kept to a minimum and that the Head of Department is kept informed. In many disciplines the choice of research topic may be determined by the research in progress within the department or by an external funding body. Industrial needs may in appropriate circumstances influence the choice of research fields and topics.

Induction

14. Departments should provide a formal induction programme for all newly registered research students. Students should be introduced to the necessary resources for their work (e.g. library facilities, computing etc.) and there should be a thorough discussion of both the demands of the research programme and the mutual obligations of student and supervisor in line with the regulations and this code of practice. Students should also be provided with information on the research interests of members of staff and how research is organised in the department, including, for example, details of any research seminars.

15. Supervisors of part-time students, registered either in the UK or overseas, should discuss the local facilities required to undertake the research and should advise how students may gain access to these facilities, providing appropriate documentation where required.

Research Training

16. Departments are required to provide formal research training for all research students to ensure that they acquire and enhance the skills they require to undertake their research successfully. Research training may be provided by a variety of means, but will usually include attendance at Graduate School and College training programmes in addition to research training programmes offered at departmental level or equivalent provision for those undertaking their studies at a distance. Each student and supervisor should formally agree the requirements at the commencement of the student's studies in consultation with the student's thesis committee, and this should be documented in a Training Plan completed and agreed at the first thesis committee meeting. Part-time students should be encouraged to attend the training courses provided but departments should also provide alternative ways for students to acquire the necessary skills, for example through the use of distance learning materials.

17. Departments will be required to provide details of their research training programme to the Graduate Dean each year as part of their annual reports on research students. Research training programmes should include:

- ▶ research skills and techniques
- ▶ research environment
- ▶ research management
- ▶ personal effectiveness
- ▶ communication skills
- ▶ networking and team-working
- ▶ career management

Supervision

19. Research students should be left in no doubt as to what is required of them. In particular, it must be emphasised that a thesis should be the student's own work and that, within the framework of supervision, students have the responsibility for bringing forward and developing their own ideas. A clear understanding between student and supervisor needs to be established at an early stage about the supervisor's responsibilities in relation to the student's written submissions. The understanding must cover the nature of guidance or comment a supervisor will offer within the general principle that a thesis must be the student's own work.

20. Supervisors should ensure that all students understand the requirements of the degree for which they will be registered. Particular care should be taken to ensure that international students, whether registered full-time or part-time resident overseas, fully understand the concept of a British research degree, particularly requirements relating to originality and the viva voce examination associated with research degrees.

21. In the case of part-time students resident outside of the local region supervisors should ensure that there are adequate means available whereby formal consultation can take place on a regular basis. Use should be made of all forms of technology, such as e-mail to facilitate this process. Supervision should take place on a regular basis and may include visits by the student to the University or by the supervisor to the student as appropriate. Individual programmes may also have requirements for attendance at residential schools.

22. Where students are undertaking research as part of a team the supervisor should ensure that students are fully aware of how their own research fits into the group as a whole. It may be particularly useful to arrange regular meetings to review the relationship between individual and group research.

23. The responsibilities of the supervisor include:

a) emphasising to the student the need for familiarity with the code of practice and postgraduate regulations

b) giving guidance about:

- ▶ the nature of research and standard expected
- ▶ the planning of the research programme
- ▶ literature and sources
- ▶ attendance at taught classes, including the research training programme
- ▶ requisite techniques (including arranging for instruction where necessary)
- ▶ the need to develop oral and written communication skills
- ▶ the problems of plagiarism (including drawing attention to the appropriate regulations)

c) monitoring the progress of the research through regular consultations in accordance with departmental and University policy, and in light of discussion of arrangements with the student

d) being accessible at mutually convenient times when the student may need advice

e) giving detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work so that the whole may be submitted within the scheduled time. The planning of the research programme should anticipate a final draft of the thesis being prepared by the end of a three-year period of full time research or an equivalent period for part-time study

f) emphasising the importance of timely submission both in terms of good academic practice and in relationship to University and research council requirements and explaining the consequences of failing to meet the appropriate deadlines

g) requesting written work as appropriate, and returning such work with constructive criticism and in reasonable time

h) reading the whole of the final draft of the thesis, giving advice about appropriate length and ensuring that the thesis complies with regulations on the length of theses

i) arranging as appropriate for students to talk about their work to staff or at graduate seminars, and to have practice in oral presentations, bearing in mind the demands of the oral examination

j) ensuring that the student is made aware of inadequacy of progress or of standards of work below that generally expected. If at any time the supervisor is of the opinion that the student is unlikely to achieve the degree for which the student is registered, the supervisor must notify the Head of Department in writing without delay

24. The responsibilities of the student include:

a) familiarising themselves with this code of practice and postgraduate regulations

b) taking the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they may seem

c) discussing with the supervisor the type of guidance and comment found most helpful

d) agreeing a mutually convenient schedule of meetings

e) attending the research training programme and any other taught classes as required by the department

f) maintaining and sustaining the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor, including in particular the prompt presentation of material, written in good, clear English, as required in sufficient time for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage (in this context written material includes interim reports, drafts of theses, running commentaries on the evolution of the argument, appraisal of written sources, laboratory results)

g) complying with departmental reporting procedures and providing an annual progress report to the Graduate School

h) taking the initiative to contact other students in the research area and arrange and take part in informal discussions alongside more formal research activities

i) deciding when to submit the completed thesis, taking due account of the supervisor's opinion which is, however, advisory only. The supervisor's support of the decision to submit must not be taken as any guarantee that the degree sought will in fact be awarded. The recommendation to award rests entirely with the examiners

j) ensuring that the thesis complies with all regulations including those relating to format and maximum lengths

k) ensuring timely submission of the thesis to comply with University and Research Council requirements

25. Each Head of Department must appoint a Postgraduate Tutor. In order to avoid conflict of interests where students are supervised by the department's Postgraduate Tutor, the Head of Department should appoint another member of staff as postgraduate tutor for these students. The Postgraduate Tutor works with the Head of Department to negotiate and meet the University's admissions targets for research students and is responsible for assisting with the building and maintenance of the critical mass of research students within the Department. The Postgraduate Tutor will be responsible for:

- ▶ research student recruitment, including seeking supervisors and thesis committee members
- ▶ establishing and organising departmental progress monitoring procedures
- ▶ coordinating annual assessments and reports to the Graduate Office, particularly the transfer of registration at the end of the APG period
- ▶ working with supervisors to ensure timely completion and thesis submission
- ▶ ensuring that research students follow University regulations and any requirements specified by funding bodies, such as the Research Councils
- ▶ monitoring student participation in research training during the APG period
- ▶ implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this Code of Practice within the department
- ▶ overall pastoral care of research students
- ▶ mediating on any disputes between supervisors and student
- ▶ acting on the student's behalf before appropriate University authorities
- ▶ informing all postgraduate students of his/her functions and availability for consultation
- ▶ ensuring regularity of contact between supervisors and students

Reporting Procedures

26. Departments are required to operate a formal procedure for the assessment of progress for each research student which includes the following components:

a) twelve months (twenty-four months for part-time students) after initial registration full time students will be required to submit a progress report with components, such as literature surveys and conclusions to preliminary research questions, which reflect their work to date. The report should also contain a research plan for the remaining period of registration, including research objectives, methods and an approximate time plan for reaching these objectives by the end of the maximum registration period

b) the report will be read and assessed by the supervisors and at least one other member of the academic staff. The student will then attend an oral examination or present a seminar in the department and answer questions. The assessment of the examination or seminar will form the basis of the recommendation from the department to the Graduate Dean for transfer of registration from Advanced Postgraduate status to a named research degree, an extension of APG status or termination of registration

c) twenty-four months after registration full-time students' progress will be assessed by the supervisors and co-examiner of the first year report. This assessment will include a careful study of the further work needed for completion of the thesis and an agreement of a time scale for completion

d) each student, supervisor and Head of Department is required to make an annual report to the Graduate School on request which will include details of individual students' progress, research training and departmental procedures

If, at any stage, the supervisor has serious doubts about the ability of students to achieve the degree for which they are registered the Head of Department should be notified immediately. Following consideration of the circumstances the Head of Department may then decide to report the student under the regulation concerned with "Neglect of Academic Obligations". In some cases, more supportive procedures (e.g., suspension of registration, reformulation of topic, transfer to a lower degree, or mutually agreed withdrawal with open testimonial) may be more appropriate.

Complaints Procedures

27. If a student feels that the research programme is not proceeding satisfactorily or legitimate expectations are not being met the student may utilise the University's Complaints Procedures as detailed in the Postgraduate Regulations.

Final Examination

28. When a student submits notification of intention to submit a thesis the Graduate Office notifies the relevant Head of Department and requests that an examiners' nomination form be completed. The Head of Department, after consultation with the supervisor, will make a recommendation to the Graduate Dean which, if satisfactory is submitted to Senate for approval.

29. There should always be at least two examiners, one of whom must be an external examiner. Internal examiners must be members of the academic staff of the University or hold Recognised Teacher Status. The candidate's supervisor may not act as the internal examiner. If, in exceptional circumstances, it is not possible to appoint an internal examiner a second external examiner must be appointed.

30. In cases where the candidate is a member of the staff of the University and there is a possibility that the integrity of the examination may be considered to be compromised by the appointment of an internal examiner, the examination team will comprise two external examiners. An independent Chair will oversee the conduct of the viva voce examination but will not examine the thesis. Examination teams will be approved by the Graduate Dean in the first instance, who will determine whether the appointment of two external examiners is required.

31. In addition to the two examiners a Chair may be appointed for a viva voce examination if the Graduate Dean or either of the examiners considers this appropriate or desirable. For example, the appointment of a Chair may be requested where the examining team has relatively little experience of examining UK research degrees or where there are two external examiners. The Chair will usually be a senior member of the academic staff of the department in which the candidate is registered. He or she will not be required to examine the thesis but will be present to ensure that the viva is conducted in accordance with University procedures and standard practice for the discipline. The Chair will be required to submit a brief written report on the conduct of the viva.

32. The viva voce examination will be held at the University. In exceptional circumstances the viva voce examination may be conducted at another appropriate location, with the permission of the Graduate Dean. The supervisor should be available at the time of the viva voce examination to assist the examiners if required. The supervisor may be invited to be present during part or all of the viva voce examination, at the discretion of the examiners.

33. The internal and external examiners should prepare independent written comments on the thesis prior to the oral examination. After the oral examination, a joint report should be prepared including, where appropriate, an agreed recommendation. Where the original examiners are unable to reach agreement then a further external examiner will be appointed. The joint report accompanied by the examiners' individual reports should be submitted to the Graduate Office.

34. The examiners' recommendations will take one of the following forms:

- a) immediate award of the degree
- b) award of the degree subject to minor amendments to be approved by the internal examiner within one month of the viva
- c) award of the degree subject to major amendments to be approved by the internal examiners within six months of the viva
- d) for revision (with detailed advice about requirements) and resubmission for the original or lower degree (re-submission to take place within six months to twelve months as recommended by the examiners)
- e) award of a lower degree
- f) fail with no right of re-submission

35. In recommending either resubmission (for the original or lower degree) or the award of a lower degree the examiners may take the wishes of the candidate into account. Although this can be discussed at the time of the oral examination, the student should not be required to give an immediate decision but should be given a reasonable time for reflection. The student's preference should be made known to the examiners prior to their recommendation being submitted to the Graduate Office. It should be made clear to the student that the examiners are not bound to follow the student's preference.

Appeals

36. Any student whose registration is terminated or who is recommended for the award of a lower degree or who is recommended for resubmission for a lower degree will be notified of the University's appeal procedures by the Graduate Office. These procedures are set out in the Postgraduate Regulations.

Conferral

37. All degrees will be conferred at the degree congregation immediately following the formal award of the degree by the Senate of the University.