

Doctoral Research (MPhil/PhD) Pathway

(For students who started their course before 2018/19)

Schedule for first 15-18 months

Milestone		Deliverable*	Target Time
M1	Topic Chosen	A brief (50 word) description of the general research topic.	Term 1 (week 2)
M2	Supervisory Panel <i>Research Proposal Review</i> Student should demonstrate a broad understanding of chosen area, present a plan for deepening that understanding, have identified the class of problem to be investigated and listed their corresponding training needs.	First report: outline research proposal (1000 words) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Outline of area of study and major literature ◦ Outline of problem to be investigated ◦ Work plan for Terms 2 and 3 ◦ Identify resources needed ◦ Identify Proficio courses they need to attend to acquire necessary skills 	End of Term 1 i.e., December for October starters, March for January starters, and June for April starters. (End of Term 2 for PT students)
M3	Supervisory Panel <i>Full Progress Report and Progress to Year 2</i> Students should have a thorough understanding of their chosen area, have formulated a plan, taking account of published work, for a piece of research that is both feasible and worthwhile. The topic should be worthwhile in terms of originality and timeliness. Further training needs should be identified.	Full research proposal (5000 words) including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Broad review of specific relevant work published in peer reviewed journals ◦ Identification of the area of study ◦ Identification of key published work ◦ Refined statement of the work to be undertaken, its aims and significance, especially its novelty and timeliness ◦ Outline plan of work/milestones for following years of study ◦ List Proficio and other courses attended and identify courses required in the future. 	End of Term 3 i.e., June for October starters, August/September for January starters, and December for April starters. (End of Term 5 for PT students)
M4	Quarterly progress review Students should demonstrate an ability to analyse in depth, and critically evaluate, key published work, and should have made some initial progress on the experimental or theoretical work that will lead to the dissertation.	The student should refine their M3 research proposal (7000 words): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Focus on key literature with critical and in-depth analysis ◦ Clearly identify the major research questions which have not been addressed by others ◦ Describe the investigative approach ◦ Identify significant milestones and a plan for achieving them ◦ Identify resources needed ◦ List Proficio and other courses attended 	End of Year 1 i.e., August/September for October starters, December for January starters, and March for April starters.
M5	Supervisory Panel KEY PROGRESS REVIEW PhD Confirmation Point <i>PhD confirmation Progress Review</i> Students must have gained an in depth understanding of their chosen field of study, and have completed a comprehensive and critical review of the research literature appropriate to the topic of study. They must have made significant progress on experimental or theoretical work proposed with some early results that demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity required for a PhD. They will be expected to have drafted, submitted or published a first workshop or conference paper.	Full progress report (10,000 words) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Evidence of appropriate academic writing standard ◦ Full literature review including an in-depth discussion/critique of key published work. ◦ Revised proposal indicating the main aspects that will be addressed in relation to published work. ◦ Full report of experimental/theoretical work to date ◦ Account of any problems encountered ◦ Revised plan of work for remaining period of study ◦ A thesis outline ◦ Draft of first workshop, symposium, or conference paper if applicable. <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">In the progress report, please highlight/mark the sections written or updated since the previous supervisory panel meeting.</p>	End of Term 4 i.e., December for October starters, March for January starters, and June for April starters. (Decision may be deferred to End of Term 5 if necessary if there is limited evidence of originality, experimental work and/or publication plans) (End of Term 8 for PT students)

MPhil: Schedule for mid-point to completion

Milestone		Deliverable	Target Time
M4.5	Revised work plan for MPhil.	Revised plan for remaining period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Identification of key remaining work and timetable for completing this with milestones (to be discussed with the supervisor). ◦ Thesis write-up plan to include outline of thesis, chapter headings and timetable for completion. ◦ Plan for publication of research output ◦ List Proficio and any other courses attended 	Post Key Review: MPhil/PhD students who are not confirmed PhD at Key Review point. End of Term 4: MPhil students who do not wish to upgrade to PhD.
M4.6	Supervisory Panel: Completion plan. By this stage the experimental or theoretical work should be essentially complete. A detailed thesis plan should be produced, and perhaps some chapter drafts	Progress report indicating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Progress against previously stated milestones ◦ Completed literature review thesis chapter ◦ Detailed chapter plans for remainder of thesis. ◦ Publication of research output. ◦ List Proficio and any other courses attended 	End of Term 6: (Carried over to End of Year 2 if necessary at which point all investigative work must be complete.)
Completion	Students must submit their thesis within 3 years. During the completion a supervisory panel meeting should be held every 2 terms.	Prior to supervisory panel meetings students submit the latest version of their thesis and a Research Student Progress Summary Form, which should contain a detailed thesis/completion plan.	Within Year 3

NOTES:

1. **All students must familiarise themselves with the University's Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees available from <http://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/codes-higher.aspx>**
2. Students who are to attend a Supervisory Panel Meeting will provide Panel members and the PGR Administrator with a completed Research Student Progress Summary Form and a Progress Report. Documents are to be submitted (electronically unless otherwise informed) by the published deadline.
3. ***Students in completion*** are also expected to have supervisory panel meetings at regular intervals to review progress in writing up. Prior to each of these meetings the students will submit the latest version of their draft thesis to the Supervisory Panel members in addition to the Research Student Progress Summary Form, which should contain a detailed thesis/completion plan.
4. The target times indicate the typical rate of progress of a full time student who will complete their research within 3 PhD or 2 MPhil research years. Part time students registered for 6 PhD/4MPhil research years may be expected to proceed at half that rate.
5. **Students who have not reached M7 (PhD)/M4.6 (MPhil) will not be eligible for completion status.**
6. Students registered on the MPhil as opposed to the MPhil/PhD track will proceed directly from M4 to M4.5, unless they wish to be considered for upgrade to PhD status in which case they will need to attend a panel meeting at end of Term 4 and reach M5.