University of Essex

School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering

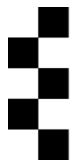# Faculty of Science and Health

MPhil Students

Postgraduate Research milestones are used to ensure students are making sufficient progress during their studies, and to provide a supportive framework to guide students through the various stages of their research. The Milestones should also help to keep students on track to submit within the appropriate period. PGR supervisors should talk through the relevant milestones during supervisory meetings, and they should be referred to on a regular basis.

Supervisory Panels and Research Students' Progress Boards will use the milestones to reflect on the level of progress being made, ahead of making a recommendation. Whilst the milestones are specific for each department and type of course, it is recognised that every research journey is different, and that whilst the milestones provide an overarching framework of expectations, a degree of flexibility should be given, based on the trajectory and scope of research.

Students and supervisors are encouraged to supplement these milestones with individual research plans which take into account the specifics of an individual research project and the individual circumstances of the PGR student.

Contents

Year 1 (Full time), Year 1 and 2 (Part time)

Ahead of the first Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.1	Ability to write and speak coherently about the proposed research and its context. ▪ Brief technical report on the work done so far, including familiarisation and technical tools.	1	1
M1.2	Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis. ▪ Training Needs Analysis	1	2
M1.3	Choose research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research. Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area): ▪ Central research problem/questions to be answered. ▪ Methodological considerations. ▪ Project plan, outlining objectives for each stage.	1	3

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.4	Re-assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis. ▪ Proficio courses attended and plan for further courses to attend.	2	4
M1.5	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field. Critical Literature Review (where relevant)	2	5
M1.6	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete an MPhil within the three year maximum period. ▪ Evidence that academic writing is of standard, and ability expected at MPhil level, including adequate referencing and language skills. Suitable evidence is draft or submitted papers or a report.	3	6
M1.7	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. ▪ Detailed, realistic plan of work/timetable for second year.	3	6
M1.8	Technical ability to be demonstrated by example. ▪ Working prototype, demonstration, or simulation appropriate to the technical area of research, created substantially by the student and showing an appropriate level of technical competence.	3	6

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research will be using human participants, and if so, has sought and received formal university ethics approval.

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research uses security-sensitive material, and if so, has sought and received formal university registration of this material.

The Supervisory Panel will make a recommendation to the Research Students' Progress Board, ahead of the next academic year. Further information regarding Supervisory Panels and Research Students' Progress Boards can be found here: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/pgr-progress

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Year 2 (Full time), Year 3 and 4 (Part time)

Ahead of the third Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.1	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritization of activities. 　1. Detailed, realistic completion plan.	4	7
M2.2	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected for an MPhil at the end of Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students) ▪ Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed. ▪ Proficio courses attended and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.	4	8
M2.3	Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis. ▪ Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed. ▪ Proficio courses attended and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.	4	9

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

M2.4	Clear evidence of progress towards submission ▪ Timeline of work needing to take place before submission. ▪ Draft thesis or chapters.	Timeline agreed by Supervisory panel.

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research will be using human participants, and if so, has sought and received formal university ethics approval.

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research uses security-sensitive material, and if so, has sought and received formal university registration of this material.

The Supervisory Panel will make a recommendation to the Research Student Progress Board, ahead of the next academic year. Further information regarding Supervisory Panels and Research Student Progress Boards can be found here: https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/pgr-progress

Completion Period

If, at the 4th supervisory Panel, a student isn't on track to submit their thesis by the end of year 2 (year 4 for Part time students), a recommendation for a period of completion can be requested from the RSPB, for approval by the Faculty Dean (Postgraduate)

Milestone	Requirement	Term to undertake work. *(To be used as a guide only)*
C1.1	Clear evidence of progress towards submission • Submit a plan of work and corresponding timeline, outlining the work to be undertaken ahead of submission. • supervisor should add a supporting statement confirming the suitability and feasibility of the work plan and timeline for completion.	Timeline agreed by Supervisory panel.