University of Essex

Department of Economics

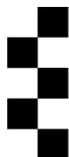# Faculty of Social Sciences

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. Students should determine whether they will produce a monograph- or paper-based dissertation during year 1 and should then read reference to chapters and/or papers below as relevant to their thesis format.

Contents

Year 1 (Full time), (No part-time option in Year 1)

Ahead of the first Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time Term	Part Time Term
M1.1	Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis.	1	N/A

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time Term	Part Time Term
M1.2	Choose research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research. Research project plan (EC990) including (dependent on subject area): • Write research project proposal to include background information questions to be answered. • Methodological considerations. • Objectives for each stage	2-3	N/A
M1.3	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field. • Attend RSS seminars in Spring and Summer Terms and present the research project proposal in Summer Term RSS to research students and staff	2-3	N/A
M1.4	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete within the standard period. • Evidence through the research project plan (EC990) and doctoral modules that academic writing is of standard and ability expected at MPhil level, including adequate referencing and language skills.	2-3	N/A
M1.5	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. • Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 2. • Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style	2-3	N/A

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

Year 2 (Full time), Year 2 and 3 (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 prioritisation of activities. • Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 2. • Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style	4	Check with dept

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time Term	Part Time Term
M2.2	Ability to reflect on skills and knowledge development and its application to the research project ■ Training Needs Analysis reviewed ■ Completed written work of sufficient quality and quantity to provide clear evidence and they are in a position to write up the remainder of the thesis and submit within 12 months.	5-6	Check with dept
M2.3	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected at the end of Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students) ■ Completed written work of sufficient quality and quantity for two complete dissertation chapters or one complete chapter and one draft chapter (including the introduction and the conclusion section of the dissertation) and only minor work remains.	5-6	Check with dept
M2.4	Review significance and impact of research and articulate output. ■ Present research in RSS during Autumn Term ■ Attend RSS during Autumn, Spring, and Summer Terms ■ Examples of other possible activities: 　■ Present in workshops or conferences 　■ Write articles for submission to peer-reviewed academic journals based on doctoral research.	5-6	Check with dept

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

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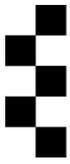
Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research uses security-sensitive material, and if so, has sought and received formal university registration of this material.

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

Completion Period

If, at the 4th supervisory Panel, a student isn't on track to submit their thesis by the end of year 2, 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	Demonstrate ability to complete within the maximum period. ■ Produce a realistic plan for the completion period up to 1 year, in termly instalments. ■ Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style	
C1.2	Clear evidence of progress towards submission ■ Completed work for supervisor / supervisory panel per the approved termly completion period.	Max Term 9 for FT students. Consult dept for PT students

	▪ Provide a clear plan by term for submission within 1 year completion period if extension needed on previously approved plan.	