School of Health and Social Care
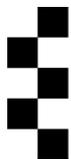
Faculty of Science and Health

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	Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis. ▪ A brief description of general research topic. ▪ Training Needs Analysis to be completed.	1	2
M1.2	Choose research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research. Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area): ▪ Write central research problem/questions to be answered. ▪ Methodological considerations. ▪ Feasibility Report – identifying sources, access and ethical considerations ▪ Create project plan, outlining objectives for each stage. ▪ Planning for research impact - Define intended impact, identify key stakeholders, and outline engagement activities. Set indicators for measuring progress (refer to the Research Impact Toolkit on the Moodle page).	1	2/3

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.3	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field. ▪ Critical Literature Review (where relevant)	3	4
M1.4	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete an MPhil within the standard period. ▪ Evidence that academic writing is of standard, and ability expected at MPhil level, including adequate referencing and language skills. ▪ Refined statement of the work to be undertaken, its aims and significance, especially its novelty and timeliness. ▪ Applications for ethical or other approvals to have been submitted as appropriate. ▪ Planning for research impact - Define intended impact, identify key stakeholders, and outline engagement activities. Set indicators for measuring progress (refer to the Research Impact Toolkit on the Moodle page).	3	5
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 ▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate	3	6
M1.6	Subject-specific milestones ▪ Participate in the HSC Annual Staff- Student Research Conference	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

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 prioritisation of activities. ▪ Create a detailed, realistic completion plan. ▪ Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self- reflective style.	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) ▪ Research completed (empirical and theoretical work, where relevant) ▪ Produce 60% of dissertation in draft form that supervisors have judged to be of acceptable standard. ▪ Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self- reflective style ▪ Present research to students and staff at seminars/conference. ▪ Engage with potential stakeholders and research users to inform them about the research, gather their reflections on its relevance, process, and potential impact.	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. ▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.	4	9

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

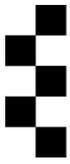| Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.4	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected for an MPhil at the end of Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students) ▪ Completed final draft of dissertation for supervisor(s)/ supervisory panel comment. ▪ Engage stakeholders by presenting findings and gathering feedback on clinical and policy implications, potential impact, and future research.	6	12
M2.5	Subject-specific milestones ▪ Participate in HSC Annual Staff-Student Research Conference	6	12

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 either confirm to the Research Student Progress Board that the student is ready to submit their thesis or recommend that a period of completion is required (see below). 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 • Timeline of work needing to take place before submission • Submission date agreed	Timeline agreed by Supervisory panel.