



Department of Literature, Film and Theatre Studies

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

PhD 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.

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**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. Complete the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) in order to do this.	1	1
M1.2	Confirm research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research with an Updated Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write central research problem/questions to be answered Develop methodology (if relevant, Practice-as- research (PaR) method to address the research topic) ▪ Feasibility Report – identifying sources, seeking ethical approval by the Confirmation Panel, if required (Note: Ethical approval cannot be granted retrospectively) ▪ Create project plan, outlining objectives for each stage Note - To be submitted for the first Supervisory Panel and/or Confirmation Panel as agreed with the supervisor	1 Or 2	2 Or 3
M1.3	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field with a Critical Literature Review in the form of annotated bibliography; and/or equivalent piece of initial creative/critical work scoping out field accompanied by an initial outline of thesis to be submitted for the first Supervisory Panel. Note - To be submitted for the first Supervisory Panel and/or Confirmation Panel as agreed with the supervisor	1 Or 2	2 Or 3

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel (Confirmation Board)

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.4	Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate	2	4
M1.5	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete within the three-year standard PhD period (six years for part-time students), in the following ways; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that academic/creative writing and/or creative practice is of standard and quality expected at PhD level, including adequate referencing and language skills The expectation is that by the time of their confirmation Panel the student will have produced around 15,000 words in total of quality research writing or equivalent creative practice, or equivalent combination of critical/creative work (so material submitted to the first Panel counts as part of this total, as does other quality output such as an annotated bibliography or literature review, transcribed interview, rewritten project proposal or research paper in the case of PhD by Papers) 	2	5
M1.6	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities in the following ways; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 2 Produce progress report to submit to the Panel written in a clear and self-reflective style 	3	6
M1.7	Attain subject-specific milestones, such as;	3	6



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of initiative, independence and self-reliance in research as well as of a good collaboration with the supervisor • The ability to write clearly and in a style appropriate to purpose (as evidenced in the material submitted to the Panels) • (Where applicable) creative practice at level of artistic and/or methodological sophistication appropriate to PhD • Subject specific goals as identified by the supervisor 		
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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	To review Proficio and identify between 1 - 3 training courses that will assist with the PhD project. Identify how the course(s) will provide knowledge and support to continue with the research project and complete the thesis. Review the Training Needs Analysis to do this.	4	7-9
M2.2	Submit an updated research proposal indicating significant scholarship within the chosen field of study and highlight what your project is doing differently by addressing your unique contribution." Or/and Submit a significant piece of writing – either a chapter/section from a chapter/plan or creative output (agreed between you and your supervisors) that addresses the project/research question?	4	7-9

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.3	Attend at least 1 of the selected Proficio courses and plan for further internal, and external, courses to attend, as appropriate.	5	10
M2.4	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected at the end of Year 2, in the following ways; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce 2/3 of thesis in draft • And/or equivalent creative practice • Produce progress report on work and training undertaken to date written in a clear and self-reflective style 	5	11
M2.5	Review significance and impact of research and articulate output. For example; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver workshop • Present research to students and staff at seminars/conferences 	6	11



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write journal articles 		
M2.6	<p>Demonstrate effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities, in the following ways;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 3, which demonstrates the ability to submit within the three year standard PhD period (six years for part-time students) Produce progress report to submit to Panel on all work and training undertaken, written in a clear and self-reflective style 	6	12
M2.7	<p>Attain Subject specific milestones (Department specific), such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A knowledge of the most recent work within one's field and in related areas as demonstrated in written work The capacity to effectively support the learning of others when involved in teaching The development and maintenance of co- operative networks and working relationships with supervisors, colleagues and peers within the institution and the wider research community The ability to listen, give and receive feedback and respond perceptively to others as evidenced in the discussions at supervisory Panel meetings 	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 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>

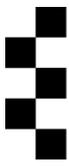
Year 3 (Full time), Year 5 and 6 (Part time)

Ahead of the fifth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M3.1	Demonstrate ability to reflect on skills and knowledge development and its application to the research project by reviewing the Training Needs Analysis. Draw upon experiences of undertaken Proficio courses, conferences and/or relevant teaching to support this.	7	15

Ahead of the sixth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M3.2	<p>Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected when nearing submission, in the following ways;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research completed (experimental, empirical and theoretical work, and, where applicable, the main body of creative work e.g. production of play, filming completed) Produce main body of the thesis in draft 	8	16
M3.3	Demonstrate clear evidence of progress towards submission with the completed draft of the main body of the thesis (including documentation of the creative part of	8	17



	the thesis for Practice-as- research (PaR) PhDs for supervisor(s)/supervisory panel comment.		
M3.4	Attain subject-specific milestones (department specific), for example, demonstrate the ability to present one’s skills, personal attributes, and achievements through an effective CV to be submitted for the end of year Supervisory Panel (where appropriate, or other appropriate evidence of career development).	9	18

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).

Completion Period

If, at the 6th supervisory Panel, a student isn’t on track to submit their thesis by the end of year 3 (year 6 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 <i>(To be used as a guide only)</i>
C1.1	Clear plan to submission, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline of work needed to take place before submission • Submission date agreed • The main body of research completed including where applicable, creative practice as research so performances should have taken place, filming completed • The entire thesis completed in draft 	Timeline agreed by Supervisory Panel and RSPB.