



Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies

Faculty of Social Sciences

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. 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.

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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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Needs Analysis to be completed. • Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate 	1	1-3

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel (Confirmation Board)

Milestone	Requirement	Full time term	Part time term
M1.2	Choose research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	2	4
M1.3	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Literature Review (where relevant) 	2	5
M1.4	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). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that academic writing is of standard and ability expected at PhD level, including adequate referencing and language skills. <i>Department to add as appropriate.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student has completed a review of the secondary literature in the field, established a critical position in relation to it, and identified the major primary and secondary sources to be used • student has begun examining primary sources and has demonstrated this in a draft chapter(s) of the thesis • student has adequately formulated the topic and produced a clear outline of the thesis, together with a plan of work for the remainder of the minimum period • in addition to formulating a research question, student has established a hypothesis in relation to the research question • student has clarified the original contribution he/she is making to the field • student must attend the Research Student Week activities in person in order for an upgrade to be approved 	3	6
M1.5	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/timetable for Year 2. • Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style 	3	6
M1.6	Subject-specific milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student has clearly defined relevant psychoanalytic and analytical psychological concepts, and has grasped the pertinent secondary literature surrounding these 	3	6



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student is able to take a critical stance on key psychoanalytic and analytical psychological debates pertinent to their project • student has a strong knowledge of various methodologies that may be used in their project and how these may be situated within, or related to, different psychoanalytic methodologies • where appropriate, the student has audited relevant postgraduate taught modules 		
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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>

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.

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	Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed. • Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate. 	4	7-9

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full time term	Part time term
M2.2	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected at the end of Year 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce the chapters/ papers agreed on with supervisor • Report on research undertaken to date 	5	10-12
M2.3	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 • Write journal articles 	6	11
M2.4	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. <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 year for part-time students). • Produce supervisory board report written in a clear and self-reflective style 	6	12
M2.5	Subject-specific milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student must display a clear understanding of their chosen methodology and where appropriate, the relation of their approach to psychoanalytic methodologies • students who have yet to present at either the Research Students Forum or the Research Students Week must contact the DGS to register their participation 	6	12



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>

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.

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

Ahead of the fifth Supervisory Panel

M3.1	Ability to reflect on skills and knowledge development and its application to the research project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Needs Analysis reviewed 	7	13-15
M3.2	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected when nearing submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research completed (experimental, empirical and theoretical work, where relevant) • Produce chapters/ papers agreed on with supervisor 	7	13-15

Ahead of the sixth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full time term	Part time term
M3.3	Clear evidence of progress towards submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed final draft of thesis for supervisor(s)/Supervisory Board comment 	8-9	16-18

The Supervisory Panel will either confirm to the Research Students' Progress Board that the student is ready to submit their thesis, or recommend that a period of completion is required (see below).

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.

Completion Period

If, at the sixth 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 made by 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	Clear plan to submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline of work needing to take place before submission • Submission date agreed • Student is expected to complete the course 'Surviving the Viva', which is offered by the Learning and Development Unit of the University 	Timeline agreed by Supervisory Panel