

Department of Psychology

Faculty of Science and Health

PhD Students

Postgraduate research milestones ensure that students are making sufficient progress during their studies, to submit within the appropriate period, and to provide a supportive framework to guide students through the various stages of their research. 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* use the milestones to guide judgements on progress and to shape a recommendation. It is recognised that every research journey is different and that, whilst the milestones provide an overarching framework of expectations, a degree of flexibility is also required based on the 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.

For students who have switched between FT and PT status, the expected terms for completing milestones may require adjustments, which you should discuss with your supervisors, as well as with the PGR psychology administrator and the PGR Director, as needed, and with your supervisory panels. This is because there is not a one-to-one alignment of milestones between the FT and PT timelines.

Contents

- Year 1 (Full time), Year 1 and 2 (Part time)..... 2**
 - Ahead of the first Supervisory Panel..... 2**
 - Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel 2**
- Year 2 (Full time), Year 3 and 4 (Part time)..... 3**
 - Ahead of the third Supervisory Panel (Confirmation Board; F/T term 4, P/T term 7) 3**
 - For PT students, we strongly recommend an additional supervisory panel in term 10..... 4**
 - Ahead of the fourth* Supervisory Panel (*excluding any deferred confirmation panel)..... 4**
- Year 3 (Full time), Year 5 and 6 (Part time)..... 5**
 - Ahead of the fifth Supervisory Panel..... 5**
 - Ahead of the sixth Supervisory Panel..... 5**
- Completion Period..... 6**



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	<p>Identify the research topic with provisional research question(s) and consideration for significance and viability of research.</p> <p>Develop an appropriate plan for progression of project during the next phase (up to second supervisory panel). For those using secondary data analysis extensively, identify any challenges in accessing and, if necessary, securing the data. Security-sensitive data can require university registration.</p> <p>Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis, subject to current plan development, in discussion with your supervisor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training Needs Analysis to be completed ▪ Consider Proficio courses (if applicable at this stage) ▪ Consider auditing PS953, PS946-7-AU, or PS947-7-SP to improve statistics knowledge, where appropriate ▪ Consider PS912 to develop research skills ▪ Attend department (or other) research seminars <p>Compulsory: Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style, circulate to panel in advance of meeting.</p>	1	1-2

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.2	<p>Develop the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity to complete a PhD.</p> <p>Produce a report (approximately 10,000 words, hence '10k report') including, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central research questions ▪ Methodological considerations ▪ Feasibility report—identifying sources, access and ethical considerations ▪ Project plan, outlining objectives for each stage ▪ Demonstrate familiarity with literature and methodology <p>Compulsory: Submit this (first) 10k report to supervisors in advance of second supervisory panel, to the SP chair prior to the SP meeting and afterwards to PGR Administrator when submitting the SP report.</p>	1-2	1-5
M1.3	<p>Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have a realistic plan of work/timetable for the next stage ▪ Commence data collection, if appropriate ▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate <p>Compulsory: Produce supervisory panel report, circulate to panel in advance of meeting.</p>	1-2	1-4



M1.4	<p>Demonstration of presentation skills.</p> <p>Compulsory: Poster presentation at department PGR conference (annually in May); milestone term (shown as start month) will depend on degree starting term. Presentation at an external conference can be substituted with permission of PGR Director.</p>	<p>Oct: 3 Jan: 2 Apr: 4</p>	<p>Oct: 6 Jan: 5 Apr: 7</p>
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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 (Confirmation Board; F/T term 4, P/T term 7)

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.1	<p>Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a detailed, realistic completion plan 	3-4	5-7
M2.2	<p>Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field. Demonstrate knowledge of statistics for psychologists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collect and analyse data of one or more experiments. For those using secondary data analysis extensively, have accessed data and have started data processing, with identified analysis plan 	2-4	5-7
M2.3	<p>Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete within the standard PhD period.</p> <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 ▪ Revisions to 1st 10k report based on supervisor feedback 	3-4	6-7
M2.4	<p>Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed ▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate <p>Compulsory: Produce supervisory panel report, circulate to panel in advance of meeting.</p>	4	7



For PT students, we strongly recommend a supplementary supervisory panel in term 10

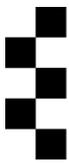
Ahead of fourth* Supervisory Panel (*excluding any deferred confirmation panel)

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.5	<p>Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected for this stage of degree by producing a second 10k report (approximately 10,000 words, not including first 10k), including, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of thesis ▪ Draft format of thesis into chapters/papers ▪ Methods, analysis of research so far ▪ Plan for completion of project <p>Begin to consider opportunities to present at academic conferences, where possible.</p> <p>Compulsory: Submit second 10k report to supervisors in advance of fourth supervisory panel, to the SP chair prior to the SP meeting and afterwards to PGR Administrator when submitting the SP report.</p>	4-5	8-11
M2.6	<p>Review significance and impact of research and articulate output.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider writing journal articles ▪ Take up opportunities to present at academic conferences <p>Compulsory: Oral presentation at department PGR conference (annually in May); milestone term will depend on degree starting term. Oral presentation at an external conference can be substituted with permission of PGR Director.</p>	6 Oct: 6 Jan: 5 Apr: 7	12 Oct: 12 Jan: 11 Apr: 13
M2.7	<p>Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand and be able to articulate a detailed, realistic plan which demonstrates the ability to submit within the standard PhD period ▪ Continue data collection <p>Compulsory: Produce supervisory panel report, circulate to panel in advance of meeting.</p>	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	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 <p>Compulsory: Produce supervisory panel report, circulate to panel in advance of meeting</p>	7	13
M3.2	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected when nearing submission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete data collection and analyse data ▪ Submit substantial portions of thesis to supervisor ▪ Consider writing journal articles ▪ Take up opportunities to present at academic conferences and department PGR conference 	5-7	12-13

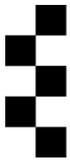
Ahead of the sixth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M3.3	Clear evidence of progress towards submission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit complete near-final draft of thesis to supervisors. ▪ Submission date finalised ▪ Identified examiners ▪ Completed/plan to complete <i>Approval of Thesis Title</i> form (3 months before submission) <p>Compulsory: Produce supervisory panel report, circulate to panel in advance of meeting, outlining timeline of any work needed before submission. Submit current thesis draft version to SP chair also in advance of meeting.</p>	8-9	14-16

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).



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. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Timeline of work needed before submission.▪ Submission date agreed.	Timeline agreed by Supervisory Panel