



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHER HANDBOOK

2024-25

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Off-campus provision

This handbook is intended for postgraduate researchers undertaking the degrees of PhD, MD and MPhil, who are primarily based on the Liverpool campus.

Postgraduate researchers undertaking online professional doctorates (such as EdDs and DBAs) and those based off-campus, including those at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University should consult their respective handbooks. If you are unsure which handbook applies to you please contact your Primary Supervisor.



Foreword

Dear Postgraduate Researcher,

Welcome to the University of Liverpool.

This handbook will provide you with important information to help you during your career as a postgraduate researcher at the University of Liverpool. It includes details about the offices and individuals within the University who are ready to help and advise you, as well as information on your research programme, your professional development, Annual Progress Monitoring, writing your thesis and your eventual graduation. In a large university, in order to look after everyone's interests, it is necessary to formulate regulations, policies and procedures and codes of practice.

In this handbook you will find details of these and the appropriate web links to them. This handbook also tells you about the other sources of information likely to be useful to you while you are here. It is updated each year and is available at liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy and successful career as a postgraduate researcher of the University.

With best wishes,
Professor Tim Jones
Vice-Chancellor



Welcome

From the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Research Environment and Postgraduate Research.

We are a world-leading research institution. Our researchers work at the highest international levels and the impact of their work is felt across the globe. As well as the value this adds to the experience of our doctoral students, we make three specific commitments:

Innovative doctoral training – a choice-led approach allowing you the flexibility and freedom to tailor your development programme to meet your needs, circumstances and aspirations.

The support of a thriving global PGR Community – enhancing both the postgraduate research experience and the University's research culture, and supporting the development of future research leaders.

A focus on employability and entrepreneurship – delivering a tailored package of careers inspiration and skills development, to help you meet the expectations of employers, but also to help you thrive as entrepreneurs in your own right.



Welcome to the University of Liverpool and congratulations on becoming a postgraduate researcher with us. Our aim is to help you thrive in your doctoral programme and to enable you to progress to the career of your choice. We will support you with the full resources of our dedicated team of expert supervisors, professional services staff and postgraduate researcher peers. We also have an exciting range of development opportunities offered through The Leadership, Organisational, Professional and Academic Development Academy (The Academy). We hope you make the most of all that the University and our city have to offer and I wish you every success as you embark on your research degree.

Professor Georgina Endfield

Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Research Environment and Postgraduate Research



Introduction

A lot might have changed recently,
but some things have stayed
resolutely the same.

Like the warmth and welcome of our great city, and the strength and resilience of our University community.

The University has brought together internationally renowned researchers from across its Faculties of Health and Life Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science and Engineering to conduct research that has significant impact on global policy, the environment, and the lives of people from across the world.

Sharing knowledge and resources with national and international partners in business, industry and other academic institutions, researchers are able to make a significant impact on the welfare of global communities, as well as improve business and decision making processes worldwide.

Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs) at Liverpool work at the forefront of their subject in well-supported research groups, harnessing the latest in laboratory equipment, archives and fieldwork provision. You are a valuable part of the University's research community and we hope that you find you are able to make a contribution to the community and have a fulfilling stay in Liverpool as a postgraduate researcher.

The University is committed to supporting you with:

- Supervision by a research active team of two supervisors, at least one of whom will be a University of Liverpool staff member
- Outstanding support, in terms of access to essential equipment, desk space, access to the library and electronic resources, computing facilities and facilities related to the research area
- Regular supervision, including a minimum of 12 formal planning meetings per academic year, at which targets are agreed and recorded
- Annual Progress Monitoring
- A wide range of opportunities for professional development as a researcher, including a flexible programme offered through the Academy Postgraduate Hub **PGR Development - Researcher Hub - University of Liverpool**
- Preparing you for your viva voce, normally within three months of submission.

**We are
ranked 12th
in the UK for
research
power.**

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The University aims to create an inclusive learning, working and living environment where all members of the University community are treated with dignity and respect.

The University recognises its responsibility to promote equality and eliminate discrimination against students. This commitment is irrespective of your age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity status, marriage or civil partnership status, race and nationality, religious belief or non-belief, or your sexual orientation.

This commitment applies to all areas of your academic and social life at the University. If you feel that you are being bullied or harassed or being discriminated against

by other students or the University, you should not hesitate to seek advice from your supervisor or from Student Services.

Equally, you have a responsibility not to engage in any bullying or harassment of others, such as homophobia, sexism or racism, or to engage in other discriminatory conduct. Further information about the University's commitment can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/hr/diversity-equality email E: equality@liverpool.ac.uk or alternatively contact Liverpool Guild of Students, details can be found in the Contacts section.



Important dates

Due to the nature of the research process, postgraduate researchers do not have set breaks, so may be in attendance during taught students' breaks.

Postgraduate researchers are entitled to 25 days holiday per year, to be agreed with your supervisory team, in addition to bank holidays.

University Closure Days

December Graduations

9th – 10th December 2024

Christmas Closure

(teaching ceases for 3 weeks)
16th December 2024 – 3rd January 2025 (Taught exams 6th January to 24th January)

Easter Closure

(teaching ceases for 3 weeks)
7th April 2025 – 25th April 2025
(Taught exams 12th May to 30th May)

May Bank Holiday

5th May 2025

Spring Bank Holiday

26th May 2025

July Graduations

14th July to 18th July

Summer Bank Holiday

25th August 2025



Chapter 1

The Postgraduate Research Community

Terms (Abbreviations you may see in this and around the university)

PGR – Postgraduate Research Student

APR – Annual Progress Report

PGT – Taught Postgraduate

UG – Undergraduate

Faculties (There are 3 in the university covering a specific discipline area)

HSS – Humanities and Social Sciences

FSE – Science and Engineering

HLS – Health and Life Sciences

Teams (Central Teams you may need to consult)

RDA – Research Degree Administration

IAG – International Advice Team

DIS – Disability Team

MHA – Mental Health Team

PSMT – Professional Services liverpool.ac.uk/a-z/administrative/

Places

SJL – Sydney Jones Library

HCL – Harold Cohen Library

VGM – Victoria Museum, Gallery and Café

People

FDPGR – Faculty Director for PGR

S/DPGR – School or Department Director

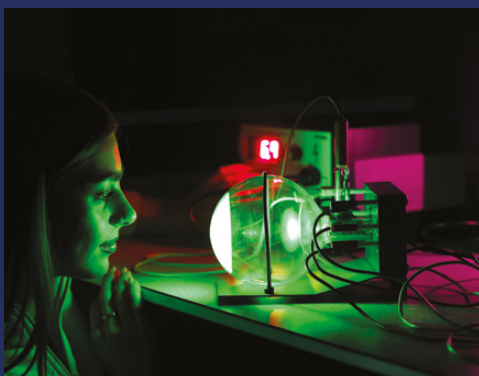
PI – Supervisor

LO – Link Officer for PGR

LTSO – Learning and Teaching Support Officer

As a postgraduate researcher (PGR), you are a researcher in training, but you are registered as a student and have access to all student services at the University. You can make the most of being part of a vibrant researcher and student community at The University of Liverpool.





Structure of the University

The University functions under three Faculties, operating under slightly different structures; the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences has Research Institutes whereas within the other two Faculties, research and teaching are offered through the Schools; Schools are comprised of discipline level departments. For the purposes of this handbook the term School is used to refer to Schools and Institutes. Below are the key academic units for postgraduate research studies:

Faculty of Health & Life Sciences

- Institute of Life Course & Medical Sciences (ILCaMS)
- Institute of Infection, Veterinary & Ecological Sciences (IVES)
- Institute of Population Health (IPH)
- Institute of Systems, Molecular & Integrative Biology (ISMIB).

Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences

- School of the Arts
- School of Histories, Languages & Cultures
- School of Law & Social Justice
- University of Liverpool Management School

Faculty of Science & Engineering

- School of Electrical Engineering, Electronics and Computer Science
- School of Engineering
- School of Environmental Sciences
- School of Physical Sciences.

You can refer to School handbooks for information about local procedures and support. Each School has its own PGR administrative team who you can go to for advice and help, contact details for these are at the end of the handbook or on the RDA website liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/.

In addition to the Faculties and School teams, at the university's centre, the Research Degree Administration Team is located within the Student Administration and Support Division and is responsible for:

- Providing advice and guidance on research ordinances, regulations, policies and procedures
- Administration of PGR records
- Administration of the PGR examination process; from submission to award
- Administration of annual progress reporting for PGRs.

The Research Development Team, within The Academy deliver a flexible programme that supports all postgraduate researchers with their ongoing professional and personal development. You can read more about training and development options in Chapter 4 of this Handbook.

Please refer to the the following link for further information [PGR Development – Researcher Hub – University of Liverpool](#)

PGR Induction

There will be a range of online activities and materials available which will give you all you need to know to get started in Liverpool, both at the University and the city. We'll be in touch directly about these. There will be additional activities throughout the year dedicated to PGRs.

Communications

All communications will be sent to your University email address. This also includes communications about your registration and progress. You should ensure you check your university emails regularly.

PGR Laptop Loan Scheme

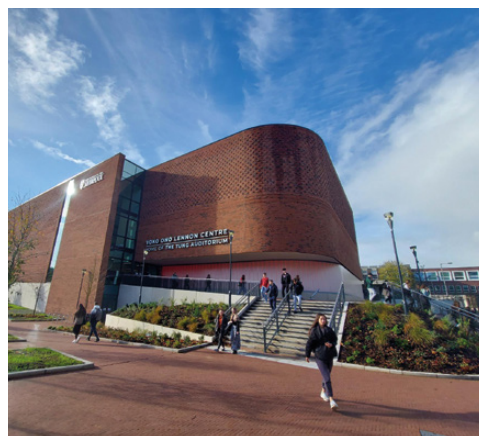
All 1st year PGR students (PhD, MD, MPhil) who are based on the main Liverpool campus, Alder Hey and Leahurst are eligible to apply to the PGR Laptop Loan Scheme to receive a free Managed Windows Service Laptop for the duration of their registration at the University of Liverpool. To apply or for further information email

E: pret@liverpool.ac.uk

Chapter 2

Getting Started

My Liverpool is the online portal that provides access to your University of Liverpool student record.



Registering for your computer account

The first step to undertake is activating your MWS account. To do this please log on to <https://register.liv.ac.uk/> and click on the activate link. You will need your ID number to hand when completing this step. Once activated, you will be able to access systems and your email account.

My Liverpool

My Liverpool is the online portal that provides access to your University of Liverpool student record. This enables you to update important information such as your contact details, view information about your PGR registration and course of study and apply for changes to your registration status.

You can find more information at liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/my-student-record

My Liverpool also includes an additional tab for postgraduate researchers, called the PGR Toolbox.

This is the system used to record your progress through your doctoral programme, such as your supervisory meetings and other training and professional activities that you have undertaken during your research.

This is also where you will complete your Annual Progress Report, which is used to assess whether you can progress to the next academic year (see Chapter 5).

How to access My Liverpool?

You should have now completed step on and have a live Managed Windows Service (MWS) account. Once notification is received of this, you should login to My Liverpool, by entering the URL my.liverpool.ac.uk/Account/Login into your browser.

You should follow the instructions to gain access and create a password.

For problems activating your computing account you can contact E: servicedesk@liverpool.ac.uk

Chapter 2 | Getting Started *(Continued)*

Academic registration

After setting up your MWS, step two is your academic registration, which is done via My Liverpool. You will be able to review and update your personal and academic information in this system prior to your start date. Details about how to complete the academic registration process will be sent to you via email. Further information on how to confirm engagement with for your programme can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/registering-for-my-programme/confirming-your-engagement/

Your registration is made up of the following parts:

1. The initial application and academic offer of a place to study
2. Confirm your engagement with your studies
3. You will need to arrange the payment of your fees (see further information on page 7).

You will not be fully registered until all parts have been fulfilled.

International PGRs

If you are an International postgraduate research student you will need to provide Student Administration with your passport and, where applicable, you will need to produce your visa or BRP that shows you have the right to study in the UK with the University of Liverpool. You will be informed by email how to do this, please ensure you read any emails from the University at this time as they will contain important information related to how to complete your registration. You should also provide the University with original evidence of your successfully completed qualifications, so please make sure you bring these along with you if you did not submit them with your application.

Fees and Funding

Before you commence your programme you must make arrangements to pay your programme fees. This is your financial registration as mentioned in point 3. Information about postgraduate research fees is available at this link liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/fees-and-finance/

Self-Funding PGRs

If you pay your own fees, you can either pay for your whole year's programme fees in full (or part of the year if you start in a month other than October) or you can pay your fees in three equal instalments. Details on tuition fee instalment options are available at liverpool.ac.uk/feespayment/tuition/self-financing/

Details on tuition fee instalment options are available at liverpool.ac.uk/feespayment/tuition/self-financing/. Payments must be made manually by credit/debit card, or via our CIBC International Student Pay portal. Details of these payment methods can be found at liv.ac.uk/feespayment. For further guidance please contact Student Fees at **E: feestat@liverpool.ac.uk**

Students in receipt of Doctoral Loan funding from the Student Loans Company should email **E: feesenq@liverpool.ac.uk** with their disbursement schedule, in order to arrange an instalment plan that aligns with Doctoral Loan payments.

For more information on PGR Studentships and Research grants, please visit: [Fees and Funding – Student Administration – University of Liverpool](#)

If you are sponsored by a government body, private company or a research contract, you must provide the Student Fees and Funding Office with a letter from the sponsor confirming the terms of the sponsorship. This must be emailed to **E: feesenq@liverpool.ac.uk**.

Your sponsor letter should state that the funding covers the full period of registration (including the submission pending period, see page 21), if not, you will either need to provide evidence of continued sponsorship or you will be liable for the payment of your own fees. If your sponsor fails to pay, you will become liable for all fees.

University studentship/ scholarship funded PGRs

Usually, if your fees are paid by University funding, the Student Fees and Funding Office will have been informed in advance. If your studies are supported by funding administered by the University and this studentship provides you with maintenance, these payments will be administered by the Student Fees and Funding Team. Your school is responsible for ensuring the Student Fees and Funding Office are provided with all the relevant details regarding your funding.

If you do not inform the Student Fees and Funding Office about who your fee payer is, you will become liable for your programme fees. We are happy to discuss any difficulties you may have paying programme fees.

If you require any support with your fees, please visit the Money Advice and Guidance web pages at liverpool.ac.uk/studentssupport/finance

Fee status

Your fee status defines whether you are classed as a home or international research student and should have been determined as part of the admissions process. Any queries related to this should be sent to the Fee Status Team at **E: feesenq@liverpool.ac.uk**

Research support or bench fees

Please note: fees may be payable to cover some costs of your research. Where this is the case, your formal offer letter will give the details and costs. This fee will also be included in your fee invoice.



Chapter 2 | Getting Started *(Continued)*

Non-payment of tuition fees

Where a student fails to make the necessary programme fee payment(s) in accordance with their relevant published payment plan, the University will seek to restrict their access to a range of services. This will include access to Library services and the removal of their MWS account (and hence access to all University IT facilities, including email). Access will also be restricted to the Graduate Document Portal, and to the facility to request secure, verified and digitally signed documents such as transcripts and official student status confirmations. Students with an outstanding tuition balance will be unable to complete their APR and re-register into the next academic session or graduate until the balance is settled in full. Full details can be found in the Payment Policy 2024-25 at: [Policies - Paying Student Fees - University of Liverpool](#).

Contact the Student Fees Team

If you have any queries regarding programme fees you should contact the Student Fees and Funding Office
E: feesrq@liverpool.ac.uk
T: +44 (0)151 794 6777

University ID card

You will be issued a University ID card once you have completed registration. It is important that your name is correctly shown on the card. If your name is not correct, or to find out how to receive your card if you haven't already had an email about it, you should contact <https://liverpool.service-now.com/sas>

Please bear in mind that for graduation, publication and archive purposes the name used will be as you have provided it during academic registration. Your card serves as proof of your membership of the University and allows you to gain access to and borrow books from the Library, access printing facilities, access the Sports & Fitness Centre (additional charges apply) and access to the reward and loyalty schemes used across all of the University managed cafés, bars and restaurants. Try not to lose your card nor lend it to others. Carry it at all times – you may be asked to produce it to obtain various services or to establish your right to be in certain places. Some departments have local rules that identity cards must be displayed in certain areas.

Your smart card is also used to provide access to certain areas of the University; you should discuss the areas you are likely to need access to with your school PGR team as well as your supervisor.

Replacement ID cards can either be obtained from <https://liverpool.service-now.com/sas> or requested online (in the case of lost cards). Please be aware that replacements for lost cards will incur a charge. Further information can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/my-student-record/my-student-id-card/

IT Services

IT services supports IT provision across teaching, learning and research.

You can access these services once you have activated your computing account online at liverpool.ac.uk/activate

You should have already done this before arriving on campus.

We have a large number of PCs across campus which are available for you to use unless they have been booked for teaching. PC Centres run the latest version of Microsoft Windows on the Managed Windows Service (MWS).

The MWS provides a wide range of pre-installed software for you to use along with a secure area where you should save your work (known as your M: drive). You can also use the PCs on campus to access the Internet, your University email and Canvas – the university's virtual learning environment.

All 1st year PGR students (PhD, MD, MPhil) who are based on the main Liverpool campus, Alder Hey and Leahurst are eligible to apply to the PGR Laptop Loan Scheme to receive a free MWS Laptop for the duration of their registration at the University of Liverpool. See page 5 for details

If you are bringing your own computer, mobile or tablet you can connect to the University's free Wi-Fi service, eduroam, to access the Internet and University IT services. Wi-Fi is available in many areas, including cafés, bars and communal areas in Halls of Residence. Halls of Residence also have wired network points which you can use to connect your own computer, or one of several supported games consoles.

If you are having IT problems or need advice, the IT Services Helpdesk Team operate a customer service desk in both of the libraries where you can get on the spot advice or they will raise a query on your behalf. Telephone support is available 24/7 on T: +44 (0)151 794 4567.

Further information on all the University's IT services can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/it/

Communicating with the University

Your contact details are maintained in the Personal Details portlet of My Liverpool. It is important that you keep all of your contact details up-to-date which include any changes you make to telephone/mobile numbers or your permanent (home) or term time address. This is to ensure that you can be contacted in an emergency and that the University can give you important information when necessary.

The University will normally use your University email address and/or the address shown on My Liverpool to contact you throughout the year.

The University is required by UK law to ensure that those international PGRs who require a visa to study and conduct research in the UK maintain their contact details as part of the UK Home Office immigration system.

A guide to updating your personal details on My Liverpool can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/my-student-record/updates-my-personal-information

If you are new to Liverpool...

Bank accounts

All the main banks have branches a short walk away in the city centre, they all offer facilities for students, but they are not automatic and you should advise of your student status when making your account application. You will need to provide some documentation to open an account which may vary depending on the bank.

You will normally need the following:

- Identification – passport or birth certificate
- Confirmation of address and student status – an official letter confirming your permanent address, term time address and student status is available via My Liverpool.



Medical registration

If you have recently moved to Liverpool, it is important that you register with a local General Practitioner (GP). This ensures you have access to full medical care including 24-hour medical cover. The choice of doctor is entirely your own. You may, if you wish, register with the University Medical Practice based in the Student Health Centre if you live within the practice area (see Chapter 8). If you are living in University residences, you are asked to inform your Hall Warden of the name of the doctor with whom you register in Liverpool. Details of medical practices in the area are available from cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/

TV licence

If you wish to watch or record television as it is being broadcast, in your University bedroom or your off-campus room (including via devices such as a computer, laptop, mobile phone or DVD/digital recorder), it is a legal requirement to obtain a television licence and failure to do so can lead to a fine of up to £1,000.

You will also need a licence to view BBC programmes on-demand or catch-up through BBC iPlayer.

Further information on buying a TV licence can be found at tvlicensing.co.uk/students

Council tax

Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, registered full-time students – including postgraduate researchers – may be exempt from paying the tax or may be eligible for a discount. Students living in Halls of Residence will be exempt. The University will also provide Liverpool City Council with limited data on all full-time students living within the city's boundaries. Some full-time students residing within the private sector may find their landlord asking them for a Council Tax Student Certificate in order for them to apply for exemption from the tax. You can request a certificate online via My Liverpool <https://my.liverpool.ac.uk/Account/Login> which will be emailed to you as quickly as possible.

University accommodation

The University's designated postgraduate accommodation can be found at Vine Court, Dover Court, Philharmonic Court, Crown Place and Tudor Close. Accommodation is offered on a self-catered basis with single occupancy private rooms.

Crown Place offers studios and studio apartments only which are self contained rooms with your own open plan kitchen/study/living/sleeping space with en-suite. Tudor Close is the only hall that offers shared bathrooms. Prices include utility bills, broadband, basic contents insurance and use of communal spaces. The flat sizes differ, residents share a kitchen with between 2-9 postgraduate students.



Chapter 2 | Getting Started (Continued)

The Accommodation Office is located opposite Crown Place Reception on Brownlow Hill and is a short walk from University Square. The staff are there to help you with your accommodation queries and can be contacted before you arrive as well as during your time at Liverpool.

The Accommodation Office can be contacted on **T: +44 (0)151 795 0319** or by email at **E: accommodation@liverpool.ac.uk**

Please also note the Accommodation Office's full address:
Accommodation Office
University of Liverpool
Crown Place
202 Brownlow Hill
Liverpool L3 5UE

Liverpool Student Homes

In the event you would rather rent something privately, you should contact Liverpool Student Homes (LSH). LSH is the University's service for private student accommodation. Working to increase the choice and standard of housing for the city's students, their aim is to help you find the property most suited to your needs as easily and as quickly as possible. LSH register private landlords, agents and accommodation providers and inspect all new properties to ensure that they meet the criteria in the LSH Standards.

It is important to find the right accommodation so that you can relax and enjoy your social and academic life. LSH is owned and managed by your University, not to be mistaken as an estate agent.

The service is student focused to ensure you have a positive experience whilst living in private accommodation in our city.

Through LSH you can:

- Search the largest database of private student accommodation in Liverpool including flats, houses of all sizes, rooms and private halls
- Be reassured that all LSH registered accommodation providers have committed to meeting the quality and safety criteria detailed in the LSH Standards
- Receive free, impartial housing rights advice and support through LSH if you experience problems during your tenancy
- Attend housing-related events such as the Housing Fairs and Find a Housemate meet-ups.

Each year LSH advertises over 20,000 bed spaces in a variety of properties in the city centre and other areas which are popular with students such as Smithdown Road, Kensington and Penny Lane. Expert support is on hand when choosing your accommodation, whether it be a hall room, a shared house, studio or family accommodation for students with dependants.

You can drop in to LSH at 5 Oxford Street, Liverpool, L7 7HL between 9am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Alternatively, you can visit liverpoolstudenthomes.org/Accommodation to discover house hunting tips, your rights and responsibilities, as well as a checklist of things to look out for when viewing a property. Their searchable database of properties allows you to shop around and find a property to suit you.

LSH can also be contacted on **T: +44 (0)151 794 3296**, 9am-4.30pm or **E: Ish@liverpool.ac.uk**

Free contract checking service

Before you sign a tenancy agreement (contract) for a property, you can take it along to LSH who will check it for you and explain anything that you don't understand. Tenancy agreements are legally binding, so it's important that you have been to view the property and you are happy with everything that is detailed in your tenancy agreement before you sign.

Accredited landlords and agents

In addition to all of these great services, the advantage of using LSH is that their registered landlords have to promise to fulfil all of the responsibilities of the LSH Standards. The Standards cover a wide variety of matters, including the provision of adequate space and equipment, as well as repairs and retention of deposits.

If your landlord breaches any aspect of the Standards during the course of your tenancy, then your complaint can be investigated by LSH, and if necessary pursued formally through an agreed complaints procedure. Landlords who breach the Standards risk being removed from the LSH register. In some instances you may need more than general advice regarding a housing related issue. To assist, the service employs a Housing Rights Advice Worker. You can obtain confidential advice and support on housing related issues irrespective of whether the property is registered with Liverpool Student Homes. Advice drop-in sessions are available on campus, please check the website.

Events

LSH Find a Housemate Meet-ups have become increasingly popular and provide you with the opportunity to meet other students looking for accommodation or for you to find someone to take a spare room in an LSH registered property (if you are unsure, contact LSH to check).

There is a Facebook page for people offering and searching for accommodation in Liverpool: www.facebook.com/groups/1799096797077135/

The annual housing fair is held on campus and is a great place to start your accommodation search for the following year. You will get the opportunity to chat with some registered accommodation providers and have a think about where you want to live.

Further details of LSH events can be found on their website and social media pages.

Student message board

The student message board on the LSH website is another way to contact other students who are also looking for accommodation, especially if you have not been able to attend a Find a Housemate Meet-up. If you have a spare room available in an LSH registered property, you can advertise it here too. There is also a forum on the message board for Postgraduate and PhD students.



Chapter 3

Your Research Programme

Pursuing a full-time PhD at Liverpool involves three to four years of conducting and writing up your research, supported by subject-specific and generic skills training and development (see Chapter 4). You are encouraged to submit your thesis between three and four years, and you must ensure that your submission happens within four years (or six years for part-time PhD researchers). If you are pursuing the award of MPhil, you would normally be expected to submit your thesis within one year from the beginning of registration (full time) or two years (part time).

The Doctor of Medicine (MD) is a research qualification for practitioners of medicine. Candidates must hold a medical qualification to be admitted to the degree. You must submit your written thesis within four years (full time) and 6 years (part time) from the beginning of registration.

You will also complete and record relevant personal and professional development during your period of registration. Registration for the MPhil/PhD/MD degree represents a contract between you and the University, within which are a number of requirements and expectations on both sides. These are described in the following sections and chapters. The University recognises that there are times when you may need to stop studying for a short time or that events may overtake you and you may need extra time. However, there are strict regulations regarding this outlined in Appendix 6 of the PGR Code of Practice which should be consulted prior to making a request of this type. Approval is not guaranteed.

It should also be noted International students on a study visa need to be aware that an interruption of studies recorded on the system will result in the University having to withdraw its sponsorship. You will have to return to your home country and then need to get a new CAS and visa to return to your studies in the UK. Further information on page 24.

	Full-time	Part-time
PhD and MD		
Minimum time to submission	2 Years	4 Years
Maximum time to submission	4 Years	6 Years
Maximum time to completion of the award Including any periods of interruption of studies or extension; examinations, corrections and potential re-submission and re-examination	7 Years	9 Years
MPhil		
Minimum time to submission	1 Year	2 Years
Maximum time to submission	2 Years	4 Years
Maximum time to completion of the award Including any periods of interruption of studies or extension; examinations, corrections and potential re-submission and re-examination	5 Years	7 Years

Chapter 3 | Your Research Programme (Continued)

Induction

This handbook will form a significant part of your induction to the University – please refer to it when you need information. It can be consulted at any time on the University website at the following address liv.ac.uk/student-administration/research/pgr-handbook/

Your induction will take many forms. It will consist of an introduction to the research environment by your supervisor, or supervisory team. Schools, Institutes and Faculties will introduce you to their research themes and let you know what opportunities are available within your department (please refer to local handbooks for more details on these). In addition, the University will build on this by creating awareness of PGR provision whilst offering you a chance to network with PGRs from other Faculties and at different stages of their research.

Further information on development opportunities as well as additional resources can be found on the PGR Development Hub [PGR Development – Researcher Hub – University of Liverpool](#) in your PGR Toolbox of via My Liverpool.

Induction activities are designed to foster a supportive environment and give you opportunities to meet a range of contacts, which can include other postgraduate researchers, supervisors and administration staff. These will also provide you with an overview of life as a postgraduate researcher at Liverpool as well as the expectations that we have of you.

PGR Code of Practice

The PGR Code of Practice provides the framework for the University's postgraduate research degrees, including online professional doctorates and joint/dual research degrees. It contains the policies and procedures which relate to research students, to supervisors of research students and to examiners of doctoral awards. It includes policies on admission, supervision, progress, thesis submission and examination, plagiarism and dishonest use of data, interruption of studies, extenuating circumstances, and academic appeals. You can refer to the Code of Practice, which can be found at this page liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/pgr-code-of-practice/

You are strongly advised to consult the Code of Practice before requesting any changes to your registration, if you feel you need further explanation of anything therein, you can contact E: rda@liverpool.ac.uk

Your supervisory team

The first few weeks of your registration with the University are an extremely important time for establishing the pattern of your relationship with your supervisory team and your Primary Supervisor, in particular. Some things you will need to discuss with your Primary Supervisor include your supervisory meetings (the format, scope, location and frequency), how your progress will be reviewed and what form of feedback will be the most productive to help you to submit a successful thesis at the end of the programme.

This supervisory relationship will hopefully become the basis for a long and productive partnership that will last long after you graduate. If you encounter issues in the supervisory relationship you should aim to resolve them by contacting your local PGR Administration and Director of PGR as soon as possible. Supervisory issues should be reported as they arise, as these are significantly more difficult to deal with or resolve after the fact or at a later stage.

Please note: the University expects that a minimum amount of supervisory meetings per year take place which should be recorded in the PGR Toolbox. See page 06 for more details. The meetings should normally take place in person but occasional occurrences of online meetings are acceptable where there is need. Students registered as main campus students should be on campus. If you do not record the required number of meetings in your Toolbox, you may not be able to progress to the next year. Please see page 17 for further information.

The Policy on PGR Supervision can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-2-PGR-CoP.pdf

Making the most of your meetings Establishing mutual expectations

You will have at least two people in your supervisory team: a Primary Supervisor and a Second Supervisor. Some postgraduate researchers may have more than one Second Supervisor. A key part of establishing a good working relationship with your supervisory team is to agree mutual expectations at the start of your research programme.

You may wish to discuss the following at an initial meeting:

- The respective roles of your primary and second supervisor
- How often you wish to meet and for how long
- A plan and timescales for your research project, and a process to agree deadlines
- How your supervisor(s) wish to review your work: would they prefer regular updates, or finished drafts? You might find it helpful to talk to other postgraduate researchers who are supervised by your Primary Supervisor to find out more about their style, as every supervisor is different
- Your development and training needs (this will be discussed through the Development Needs Analysis, which is described in more detail in Chapter 5)
- Your involvement with the School/ Department/Institute, eg departmental research activity, seminars and conferences
- What to do if your Primary Supervisor is away, eg at a conference or on research leave
- Any ethical or intellectual property issues if you are working as part of a research team, or researching humans or animals.

Remember that you are responsible for your research project. If you are having difficulties with your work, don't wait for your supervisors to contact you: be proactive and get in touch. If your supervisors don't hear from you, they are likely to assume you're doing fine.

Chapter 3 | Your Research Programme *(Continued)*

Before supervisory meetings

Supervisory meetings are a key part of a postgraduate researcher's life, and the University's policy is that they should occur at least once a month. They are an opportunity to discuss your research and its progress, and gain expert insight from your supervisor(s). You can make the most of these meetings by being prepared and focusing on what you want to get out of the meeting.

- Agree dates and times in advance. It is your responsibility to organise meetings with your supervisor(s) on a regular basis and record the discussion afterwards
- Prepare some work for discussion at the meeting. This will look different depending on your specific discipline, but generally supervisors will expect to see work towards a paper or presentation for a conference; results of an experiment; data analysis or a draft section/chapter of your thesis
- Summarise your progress and achievements since your last meetings, any problems you are having or areas where you need advice, and your plans for what's next.

During supervisory meetings

- Take notes of the discussion, particularly of anything you need to do or follow up after the meeting
- Don't expect your supervisor(s) to do all the talking: be prepared to lead the discussion, and ensure that your prepared topics are covered. Ask questions as you go along to make the most of your time with your supervisor(s)
- Be prepared to explain and defend your ideas or findings: this will help you to clarify your opinions and arguments, as well as providing good training for your viva examination.

After supervisory meetings

- Ensure there is a formal record of the meeting, including outcomes and targets reached. This should be done through the University's PGR Toolbox after each meeting. It is very important that this is recorded, as it feeds into your Annual Progress Report (see page 20)
- Take some time to reflect on the meeting, any feedback you received and any new ideas you've had as a result, and think about what you are going to do next
- Consider your supervisor's advice carefully, including any constructive criticism. You're not expected to do everything your supervisor suggests, but you should give appropriate consideration to their recommendations.

Your journey as a postgraduate researcher

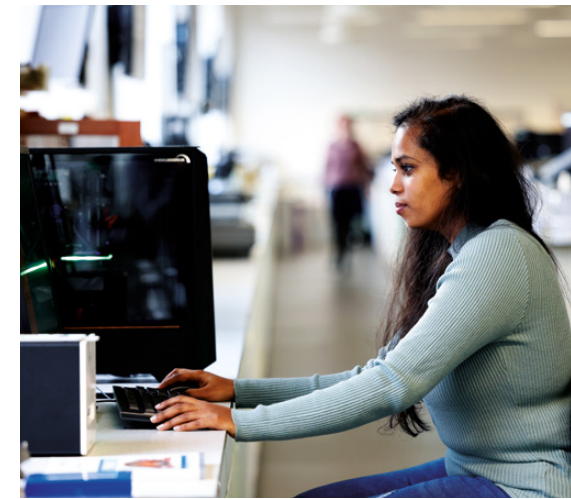
Your relationship with your supervisor(s) will change over the course of your research project as you develop into a proficient researcher. You are likely to ask for more guidance nearer the start of your project, whereas towards the end you will have more knowledge about your research area than your supervisor(s). You can expect that as you progress, your supervisor(s) may offer less advice and encourage you to be more independent and exercise your own judgment on aspects of your research.

If the relationship breaks down

Communication is crucial to maintaining a good working relationship with your supervisor(s): it is very important to try and maintain regular communication, and not let the relationship deteriorate to the point where you don't talk. If you are having problems with your supervisor(s), first of all think about what the issue actually is.

Focus on specific professional difficulties rather than the personality or character of your supervisor(s). You may wish to discuss your issues with a trusted friend or family member. If possible, you should raise any concerns you have with the supervisor themselves.

If you are not comfortable or it would not be appropriate to talk directly to your supervisor, you could talk to other members of your supervisory team or your Department, School or Institute Director of PGR. You will also be allocated an academic adviser in your Faculty who may be able to offer advice or support. You could also visit your School's dedicated PGR office. Each School and Faculty has staff called LTSO (see glossary page 5) who are impartial and are excellent at giving advice and support. Another option is to raise any problems at your Independent Progress Assessment Panel. You are also encouraged to raise your issue with your Faculty Director of PGR, the various Advice and Guidance teams in Student Services, or advisers at Liverpool Guild of Students if problems continue: all staff will listen to your concerns sensitively and in confidence.



Maintaining mental wellbeing during your PhD



Evidence suggests that one of the greatest challenges of research can be maintaining good mental wellbeing. The University of Liverpool takes your mental wellbeing very seriously. Hopefully you will not be affected by poor mental wellbeing during your research. But you might be and it is very likely that some of your colleagues and friends will be. It is important to be aware of the issues, and to know where to turn to for help, whether for yourself or a friend.

Key statistics: Mental health problems are extremely common. Each year, 25% of people in the UK suffer a serious mental health problem, while 95% of people suffer clinical anxiety at some point in their life. Some surveys suggest that rates are even higher in postgraduate researchers.

Be aware

Research can be challenging. Novel research is hard, research often lacks structure, and many researchers can feel quite isolated.

Health, money, and family problems can also impact on your mental wellbeing. There are many forms of poor mental health. A good rule is that if poor mental wellbeing is making it difficult for you to do the routine tasks of life like sleeping well or cooking, then you may be suffering a mental health issue, and should consider getting help. It is important to think about the mental wellbeing of you and those around you, as early detection and treatment really helps.

Be prepared

It is important to have a plan for how to deal with poor mental health if a bout does occur. There are also many steps you can take to proactively reduce your likelihood of poor mental wellbeing. Building a supportive network of friends and colleagues is really important. Eating well and getting exercise, taking time for outside interests, and maintaining a reasonable perspective about your research are also important. The Wellbeing Hub liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/wellbeing has many other ideas for building your resilience.

If you are concerned about your mental health – get help

All mental health issues can be improved by appropriate support. Key sources of support include:

University counselling service – the University has counsellors who can meet with you individually, and they are also part of the daily wellbeing drop-in team at the Student Services Centre.

Disability Advice and Guidance – mental health problems that cause significant difficulties and last more than a year are classed as a disability, so additional long term support is available. See page 29 for further information.

Friends and family – looking after your mental wellbeing is a key priority and there is lots of supportive help in the UK. Friends and family can also help to keep your research in perspective. There are also Wellbeing Ambassadors across the university to talk to. See page 29.

Colleagues – many academics and other postgraduate researchers have struggled with mental wellbeing, or have supported colleagues through issues. There is a lot of understanding of these issues in academia.

A range of other support is available, including helplines you can phone anonymously to discuss any issues (Samaritans; Nightline), major mental health charities (MIND, CALM, Mental Health Foundation), and student focused mental health organisations (Student Minds; Students Against Depression).

Please see the Wellbeing Hub liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/wellbeing/phdresearchers for much more information.

Chapter 4

Developing as a Researcher

One of the most significant outcomes of pursuing a research degree is becoming a confident and capable professional researcher. A commitment to planning and completing your own professional and personal development goals ensures that you will gain skills, experiences and competencies throughout your degree, which will allow your career to flourish.

All postgraduate researchers are expected to engage in a programme of training and professional development during their degree. The University provides all postgraduate researchers, regardless of how they are funded, with a relevant and flexible programme. This section of the Handbook outlines the processes for assessing and planning your training and development and provides information about the University-wide support available. Please also refer to the PGR Development Hub here for a full list of opportunities available.

[PGR Development – Researcher Hub – University of Liverpool](#)

Your professional development plan: an overview

Each year you are expected to undertake a professional and personal development plan to advance your research progress and to meet your longer-term personal and professional ambitions. The development plan is completed in consultation with your supervisors through the following process:

1. Within the first three months of your degree you will need to complete a Development Needs Analysis. Completion of this document will encourage you to critically review your current skills and abilities and plan the development of new skills and professional competences.

2. You will use the DNA document, in discussion with your supervisors, to decide your priorities for development and identify appropriate training. To inform this discussion, you will need to consult:

The training and development recommendations in your School, Institute or Departmental Handbook. Some subject areas have particular training requirements relating to your research subject, your programme type or the specifications of your research funding body. Furthermore, some researchers will also have access to opportunities outside the University, made available through the Research Councils (now part of UKRI – UK Research and Innovation) or other funded Training Programmes

3. You and your supervisors will then agree on a programme of professional development for the coming year. Your plan and your progress with completing your development and training will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of your Independent Progress Assessment Panel.
4. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for the agreed development at dates that suit the needs of your research project. You will also need to complete a record of this attendance, for example, using the PGR Portfolio of Activity.

The PGR Portfolio of Activity, within the PGR Toolbox, is an online tool where you can formally record and reflect on your development as a researcher. It is aligned to Vitae's Researcher Development Framework, which is a nationally recognised approach to researcher development acknowledged by employers and endorsed by the Research Councils (see here [About the Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#) – Vitae Website).

The portfolio is designed to provide a flexible means to record and evaluate the wide range of activities and experiences you will gain during your research degree, and it is beneficial in helping you prepare your CV and provide evidence of your professional development progress. A summary of activities that you record in the Portfolio each year will appear in your Annual Progress Report.

Professional development is an ongoing self-directed activity, and you are encouraged to regularly reflect on your goals and achievements throughout your research degree. You will also be expected to present your professional development progress as part of the annual review process (see 3 above).



Chapter 4 | Developing as a Researcher (Continued)



The Academy's PGR Development Offer

The Leadership, Organisational, Professional and Academic Development Academy (The Academy) is responsible for PGR development at the University of Liverpool, offering a wide range of development opportunities including in-person workshops, online webinars, self-paced courses and digital resources. Our PGR development offering has been conceived with PGRs at its heart, following consultations with current PGRs, supervisors and numerous internal and external stakeholders.

The Academy's PGR Development Offer is available at no cost to all PGRs who are registered at the University of Liverpool and has multiple strands that will enable you to elevate your skills, expand your horizons, and unlock your fullest potential. The offer includes:

- **Central PGR Development Programme:** This consists of 100+ sessions delivered via a range of formats including online modules and resources, workshops, masterclasses, bootcamps, webinars, Faculty Forums and practical applications. liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/pgr-development/
- **Making an Impact:** Making an Impact is the Academy's award-winning annual programme of events for researchers at all career stages, to enable you to boost your research impact and knowledge exchange potential.

- **Pop Up PGR Development Sessions:** The Academy will host pop up development activities in response to your suggestions, needs and evolving PGR priorities across the sector.
- **Postgraduate Researchers' Development Network (PGRDevNet):** The network provides all PGRs across the University a platform for communication, networking and professional development. It publishes a weekly e-bulletin with all the latest PGR development opportunities delivered straight to your inbox, including Lunch and Learns and Virtual Coffees.
- **The PGR-Postdoc Buddy Scheme:** This scheme is a joint initiative between the PGRDevNet and the University's Research Staff Association (RSA). It offers you the chance to meet new colleagues, expand your networks and enrich your experience of the University's research culture in an informal setting.
- **LEAP – The PGR Leadership Programme:** This externally-facilitated programme is designed for PGRs with high aspirations who wish to develop tools, ideas and practical strategies to help you lead authentically across the areas of purpose, projects and people. There will be an application process for places on this programme, which are strictly limited.
- **Three Minute Thesis (3MT®):** This is prestigious international competition – open to all Liverpool-registered PGRs – challenges you to give a compelling spoken presentation of your research to a non-specialist audience in just three minutes.

Thesis writing for international research students

The University's English Language Centre (ELC) provides thesis writing support for international PhD researchers. Classes run throughout Semesters 1 and 2 and are designed to help develop the academic writing skills needed to write up research effectively.

The sessions are taught by tutors with their own research experience. They have PhDs themselves and have many years of experience in analysing writing in different disciplines. The course also provides an opportunity for postgraduate researchers to receive individual feedback on samples of their own writing.

The following classes are available:

- Thesis Writing for Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine
- Thesis Writing for Humanities and Social Sciences.

In addition to these Thesis Writing classes, the ELC also provides a 1:1 Academic Writing Consultation service. Details can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/english-language-centre/in-sessional-support/writing-consultations/

The ELC also runs 'Know How Academic English Classes' which cover a range of skills and are open to all international students and staff members. Details can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/english-language-centre/in-sessional-support/know-how-academic-english/

Researcher KnowHow also offer resources and information to support researchers at all stages of their careers, whether you are a PhD student or an established researcher. libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/researcherknowhow

Preparing for your career

The University is strongly committed to providing a programme with a strong focus on employability and entrepreneurship for all PGRs at Liverpool. There are many opportunities for you to find advice and expand your experience to help prepare for your career at the end of your PhD, including:

- Career focused workshops, webinars and resources provided specifically for PGRs as part of the PGR Development programme (see above)
- Online career resources dedicated to career management for postgraduate researchers (see PGR Development Team website)
- Provision from Careers and Employability (see opposite).



Chapter 4 | Developing as a Researcher (Continued)

Careers and Employability

Our award-winning Careers and Employability team are here to help you make the most of your time at the University of Liverpool. As a postgraduate researcher you have full access to up-to-date resources and support from our Careers Studio based in the centre of campus. We offer comprehensive drop-in support from our team of Career Coaches, as well as a programme of careers related seminars, employer workshops, fairs and recruitment events.

We also offer digital support, webinars, resources and job opportunities via Handshake, our online careers portal.

We can help you with:

- Career planning
- Understanding the job market
- Creating or updating your CV
- Making effective applications
- Preparing for and attending job interviews
- Performing effectively at assessment centres
- Strengthening your networking skills
- Industry networking opportunities.

We have won several prestigious awards, including Best Collaboration between Universities and Employers at the NUE Awards 2022, AGCAS Sustainability Impact Award 2021, and University Career Service Best Practice award at the Global University Careers Development Conference 2019.

You can contact the Careers and Employability by email to **E: careers@liverpool.ac.uk** or drop-in to the Career Studio on campus.

Further information can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/careers or follow [@livunicareers](https://twitter.com/livunicareers) on Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and TikTok.

Developing teaching skills

As a postgraduate researcher you may be encouraged to undertake a limited amount of teaching and continuous assessment work when appropriate (maximum of 15 hours per week). This is subject to approval by your Supervisor and Head of Department. Any paid teaching or assessment work should normally be undertaken on a voluntary basis, however, there are some studentships which have an element of teaching attached to the terms of the award. Care should be taken to comply with the terms of any external sponsorship or research grant funding relating to teaching activity. Teaching activity is subject to a letter of agreement, setting out your duties and the amount of contact and preparation time to be spent on the activity and, if appropriate, the payment to be made. Work undertaken should be added to your Portfolio of Activity and you should receive from your Head of Department a formal statement of the work you have performed.

Your School or Institute will provide a member of academic staff to act as your Teaching Mentor. They will take responsibility for any quality assurance issues regarding your teaching and deal with any problems. In addition, you may receive advice from a designated staff member for each module or activity you support and this staff member will normally be the lecturer involved.

No postgraduate research student shall undertake any teaching without appropriate training and initial supervision. Each Department will arrange for your attendance at a training session at the start of each academic year when you are a teaching assistant for the first time. Such training may be provided by individual departments, by groups of departments or by the Academy.

Teaching development for PGRs

The Academic Development team within the Leadership, Organisational and Academic Development Academy (the Academy) has developed a suite of training and development opportunities for those new to teaching. This programme of events is designed in particular to support postgraduate researchers, post-docs and other early career academics with limited teaching experience as they take their first step into university teaching at Liverpool.

We offer two options as a first introduction to teaching, which may serve as the prerequisite for taking up teaching duties at the University. For those who will be primarily supporting undergraduate practical classes as demonstrators, we offer two half day workshops – an Introduction to Demonstrating, and a follow-up Advanced Demonstrator session. Open to anyone new to teaching, we also offer a full day Introduction to Supporting Student Learning workshop. This one-day introduction to teaching will provide a great starting point for anyone new to teaching, in particular those who will be leading tutorials or seminar groups, giving occasional lectures or assisting with marking of assessments.

Finally, for those who wish to continue their development in university teaching and gain some formal recognition of this development, we offer the Foundations of Learning & Teaching in Higher Education. This is a four month long programme leading to recognition as an Associate Fellow of the HEA. More information about this programme is available here liverpool.ac.uk/eddev/supporting-teaching/fithe



Chapter 4 | Developing as a Researcher (Continued)



The University Library

The University Library provides support for postgraduate research through a wide range of collections and services. There are over two million books and periodicals and significant collections of rare books and archives. The huge range of online resources available includes most major databases, many thousands of journal titles (current and historic), and productivity tools such as support for bibliographic software such as Endnote. The Library organises the Researcher KnowHow programme of events for postgraduate researchers and staff. Events take place online throughout the year and cover topics such as developing your researcher identity, tracking the impact of your research, managing your research data and understanding your rights, responsibilities and the academic publishing process. You can book onto future sessions, and access materials from previous sessions, at libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/researcherknowhow

The Library is located on two main sites, the Sydney Jones Library and the Harold Cohen Library (there is also a Library site at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital on the Wirral).

The libraries provide computer and study spaces, zoned areas for group and quiet study, and staffed helpdesks. Both libraries offer designated study space for postgraduate research students, self-service loanable laptops and a refreshment area. In particular, the Sydney Jones Library features a card-entry only Researcher Reading Room, including lockers, for postgraduate researchers and staff – full details on how to gain access are available at libanswers.liverpool.ac.uk/faq/49513

The two main libraries are normally open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the academic session – see libcal.liverpool.ac.uk/hours/ for all opening hours. Most items can be borrowed for a full calendar year and can be renewed online or in person, for more information about borrowing see libanswers.liverpool.ac.uk/faq/49292

The Sydney Jones Library is the main library for Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Special Collections and Archives is located in the Sydney Jones Library and includes rare books, manuscripts and the library of the Science Fiction Foundation.

Further information on the range of special collections, along with access details, are available at libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/library/sca The Harold Cohen Library is the main library for Health, Life Sciences, Science and Engineering. Bookable study rooms are available in both libraries. Your University ID card will give you access to the libraries and enable you to self-issue and return books.

A team of Liaison Librarians, see libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/liaison, are available to support you in your specific subject area, and offer workshops and sessions across the year. You can also book an online one-to-one appointment with your Liaison Librarian here: libcal.liverpool.ac.uk/appointments/library General guidance and support to using the Library can be found in person at the Library Helpdesks, or by contacting the Library Help online enquiry service. Further information can be found at: libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/library/

Social media

Social media is an important communication tool used by researchers to socialise, network and interact online. It can also prove useful for research dissemination. The University of Liverpool has a Social Media Compliance Policy liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/computingservices/regulations/social-media-policy.pdf. This Policy is in place to protect University security as well as the reputation and personal security of members of the University while using social media.

For help, hints and tips about how to make social media work for you while you are a postgraduate researcher at the University of Liverpool, you can refer to the Vitae Social Media Handbook [Vitae Innovate Handbook of social media for researchers and supervisors, Open University 2012 – Vitae Website](https://www.vitae.ac.uk/social-media-handbook). Relevant workshops and webinars may also be offered with University Researcher week or the University Development programme.

Chapter 5

What we expect from you

Research project plan and the Development Needs Analysis

Normally within 3 months of your start date, and in consultation with your supervisor(s), you will be expected to prepare a project plan that defines the scope of the research project and outlines the objectives to be achieved in the first year. A Development Needs Analysis (DNA) will also be conducted (see page 15). The plan, including the results of the DNA, should be signed and dated by you and your supervisor(s) to confirm that the project aims are clear to all parties. The document should provide a brief description of how the supervision will be conducted including the frequency of meetings, timing of feedback on drafts and the expectations of both you and your supervisor(s).

The DNA should be kept by either you or your supervisor as a reference document to ensure that the plan objectives are met or adapted throughout your research.

Supervisory meetings – your formal record

The Record of Supervisory Meetings (accessed via the PGR Toolbox in My Liverpool) enables you to keep a record of the formal meetings with your supervisor. By maintaining a summary of your progress and targets for the next period, you can use the tool to record your own progress for future reference and use it to help plan your research. You can also record key decisions made within your supervisory meetings and demonstrate that you and your supervisor are satisfied with your progress.

During the period of your registration, there are a few essential tasks that you need to complete throughout the year and on an annual basis. These are described below. In addition to these general requirements, Schools and Institutes may also have specific requirements.

The University expects that a full-time PGR should have at least one formal meeting per month (12 per year) with their Primary Supervisor and a part-time PGR a minimum of 6 formal meetings per year. This is a compulsory requirement for all PGRs. For those on a study visa, this requirement is statutory and is one of the conditions of your sponsorship by the University. All formal meetings must be recorded in the Record of Supervisory Meetings in the PGR Toolbox.

The PGR Code of Practice Appendix 3 allows that anyone not meeting all the annual requirements for progression by the deadline will be withdrawn from their studies.

The actual amount of detail stored within the record is a choice for you and your supervisory team. The exact details of this record are not visible to anyone outside of this team. To ensure that your Annual Progress Report (APR – see page 20) contains all relevant information please ensure that your supervisory meetings are recorded immediately after each meeting; the University undertakes regular checks to ensure that meeting records are being completed throughout the year.

Further information about the record of supervisory meetings is available at liverpool.ac.uk/pgr-development/toolbox/supervisory-meetings



Chapter 5 | What we expect from you *(Continued)*

Annual Progress Reporting

Each year you are required to complete an Annual Progress Report (APR). This is accessed via My Liverpool. The purpose of the APR is to ensure that you are making progress as expected but also to ensure that you feel your supervisory arrangements and facilities are satisfactory and give you an opportunity to highlight any difficulties you may be experiencing. It is important that you raise any matters of academic concern in the APR to give the University an opportunity to resolve them. The online APR form is populated with the supervisory meetings and activities you will have recorded in the PGR Toolbox. To ensure that your APR contains as much information as possible please remember to log your supervisory meetings and your PGR Portfolio of Activity on a continuous basis throughout the year.

Together with the Independent Progress Assessment Panel (see below), the APR is part of your annual progress monitoring and represents an opportunity for your supervisory team to comment on your progress, and is also used to identify and record unsatisfactory performance where required.

This report should be completed alongside doing the IPAP meeting in your school, described below. The APR is a central function fed into by the IPAP meeting in your school. The APR shouldn't really take more than about 15 minutes to complete (unless you have a lot to say!) Please note: non-completion of the student section of the APR by the start of the next academic session will result in you not being registered in the following academic session.

This could impact on funding payments and ultimately result in withdrawal from the programme.

Independent Progress Assessment (IPAP)

The Independent Progress Assessment Panel (IPAP) is a meeting between you and two members of academic staff who are nominated to act as independent assessors. The purpose of the IPAP is to independently assess your progress. Prior to the IPAP you will be asked to produce a written report (in a format defined by your School or Institute). You will usually have to provide your School with some evidence of progress: this can take many forms, for example, a presentation, a chapter of the thesis or a 'mini viva'. Your supervisor is not directly involved in the IPAP but may be invited to attend for part of the meeting to submit relevant and appropriate information to the Panel.

An IPAP may be held independently of the APR process throughout the year when concerns about progress are raised.

Ethical Concerns to Responsible Research and Data Management

Plagiarism and fabrication of data in research degree programmes

The University does not tolerate academic misconduct and takes instances of plagiarism and fabrication of data very seriously. Suspected cases of plagiarism and fabrication of data in research degree programmes are dealt with under the Policy on Plagiarism and Dishonest Use of Data for PGR Programmes.

Policy on Plagiarism and Dishonest Use of Data for PGR Programmes liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-4-PGR-CoP.pdf

Intellectual property and confidentiality

By completing and submitting your registration form, you are confirming that you have read and will comply in full with the University Intellectual Property Policy which can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/research-integrity/ip

You are acknowledging that during the course of your studies or research you may have access to confidential information belonging to the University or a third party. You agree that you will not use such confidential information other than in connection with your studies or research (and then only upon such terms and conditions as may have been agreed) and will not without the prior consent of the University or the third party to whom it belongs disclose such confidential information.

Research ethics

The University of Liverpool is fully committed to the advancement of high quality academic research, and to ensuring that all research activities undertaken by University employees, or on University premises, involving human participation are undertaken in a way that safeguards the dignity, rights, health, safety, and privacy of those involved. Studies requiring ethical review must not commence without ethical approval from a University research ethics committee. The ethical review process involves the scrutiny of ethical considerations that arise during research and can take some time. Please allow for this when planning research projects.

Guidance, policy and legislation on Research Ethics liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/research-support-office/research-ethics

Online courses in research integrity for postgraduate researchers liverpool.ac.uk/research-integrity/training-in-research



Chapter 6

Submission and Viva Examination

All the forms mentioned in this Chapter can be accessed via liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/a-z-forms-procedures/

Submission pending

When you have completed your experimental work/laboratory work/fieldwork/data collection/archival work and are ready to begin writing up your thesis you may, at the discretion of your supervisor and School/Institute Director of PGR, be eligible to transfer registration to 'submission pending'. This means you have completed the active research element of your project and are focusing on preparation of your thesis for submission, and you are therefore eligible for a reduced rate of tuition fee.

This will normally be at the end of your third (or 5th for part-time) year of study, it can be done earlier but normally will need exceptional permission. Please also be aware that you can't backdate submission pending status to a previous academic session without good reason.

If you are funded you should consult with your funding body or sponsor before transferring to submission pending, and you might not be eligible to transfer before the end of your funded period.

You should also bear in mind that if you don't transfer you will become liable for any fees accrued. Your supervisor and School/Institute Director of PGR will need to complete and sign the Transfer to Submission Pending form before your record can be amended.

It is important that you submit your thesis within your registration deadline. To ensure that you do not exceed your maximum periods of study set out by the University or the terms of any funding you may have been awarded, your research should be planned with these timescales in mind. It is a key responsibility for all research students, with the support of the supervisory team, to manage the timing of the research and submission.

Details of minimum and maximum timescales for submission of theses for all research degrees may be obtained from the relevant University Ordinance (you can find a summary on page 11 of this Handbook).

University Ordinances for all programmes are available at liverpool.ac.uk/governance/programme-ordinances

Intention to submit

The process – of submission and examination – begins approximately two months before you think you will submit your thesis, at which point you need to complete a Notice of Intention to Submit (ITS) form and forward this to your Primary Supervisor. This form is used to nominate your examiners so there is sufficient time for examiners to be approved and appointed before your viva; we cannot send out your thesis to the examiners without this form.

The ITS form is available at [A-Z of Forms and Procedures - Student Administration - University of Liverpool](https://liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/a-z-forms-procedures/)

Thesis submission

There are two stages of thesis submission:

1. Electronic submission of your thesis, in advance of your viva examination
2. Submission of your final thesis to the University Library after passing your viva and completing your corrections (if any), when you have been notified that your thesis has been approved by the examiners.

Submitting the electronic thesis

Your electronic thesis should be sent to **E: rda@liverpool.ac.uk** in either pdf format or link in a commonly used shared document space. Please ensure you include your student ID in the email and include a copy of the Submission of a Softbound Thesis form found here liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/a-z-forms-procedures. Please be aware that the thesis you submit will be the one you are examined on, you cannot make changes to that, post submission.

Guidance on the format of your thesis is provided in Annexe 1 of Appendix 7 of the PGR Code of Practice liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-7-PGR-CoP.pdf



Chapter 6 | Submission and Viva Examination (Continued)

Your viva examination

The viva examination is an important milestone in your research programme. The aim of the viva examination is to allow you the opportunity to explore, clarify and defend your research in the presence of academic leaders in your discipline area. Your viva examination will normally be conducted by an external and an internal examiner. Your supervisor will not take part in or attend the viva examination. Most vivas are taking place on campus. If you are planning a remote viva, you should complete the Remote Viva Form prior to the examination taking place liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/a-z-forms-procedures

Once the viva examination is over (it usually takes around two to three hours), the examiners will come to a decision about their recommendation in terms of whether to make an award and if so what conditions may apply. The possible outcomes are detailed in the following section. This decision and the reasons behind it are forwarded to the Research Degree Administration Team in the form of a Joint Examiners' Report. The decision will be confirmed to you by the Research Degree Administration Team via your University email address.

Disability Support

If you have a disability and require adjustments for your viva, please inform your Departmental Disability Contact to discuss appropriate arrangements. It is also helpful for your School/Institute PGR administrator to be aware.

You can find a list of contacts here: liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/disability/support/ddc/ You can also contact Disability Advice and Guidance at E: disteam@liverpool.ac.uk and/or discuss your requirements with your School/Institute Director of Postgraduate Research.

You are entitled to see a copy of the examiners' reports, both initial and final, following your viva examination. To obtain a copy please email E: rda@liverpool.ac.uk

For more information, please see the University's Policy on Research Degree Examinations and Examiners (Appendix 8 to the PGR Code of Practice) at liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-8-PGR-CoP.pdf

Viva outcomes

For the degree of PhD, examiners can recommend:

- a) That the degree of PhD be conferred
- b) That the degree of PhD be conferred subject to minor modifications to the thesis, normally completed within three months of the formal notification of the outcome of your viva
- c) That the degree of PhD be conferred subject to major modifications to the thesis, normally completed within six months of the formal notification of the outcome of your viva
- d) That you are invited to resubmit your thesis for the degree of PhD, no later than one calendar year from the date of the formal notification of the outcome of your viva (see section on 'Resubmission of your thesis' Page 23)

- e) That the degree of MPhil be conferred, subject to minor modifications being made to the thesis, normally completed within three months of the formal notification of the outcome of your viva
- f) That the degree of MPhil be conferred subject to major modifications to the thesis, normally completed within six (6) months of the formal notification of the outcome of your viva.
- g) That you are invited to resubmit your thesis for the degree of MPhil, no later than one calendar year from the date of the formal notification of the outcome of your viva (see section on 'Resubmission of your thesis' Page 23)
- h) That you are deemed not to have attained the standard required for the degree of PhD or MPhil and that no further opportunity for examination be allowed.

Please note: this is a summary of the outcomes – a more detailed list can be found in the relevant ordinance for each degree [Programme Ordinances – Governance – University of Liverpool](#). You should ensure that any changes required to the thesis are given to you in writing by the examiners on the day of the viva or shortly afterwards.

If you are undertaking a degree other than a PhD, please see the relevant Ordinance;

Master of Philosophy, Ordinance 56 (A) [liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/cgso/programmeordinances/ORDINANCE,56\(A\),ii,Degree,of,Master,of,Philosophy,from, April,2015.pdf](https://liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/cgso/programmeordinances/ORDINANCE,56(A),ii,Degree,of,Master,of,Philosophy,from,April,2015.pdf)

Doctor of Medicine, Ordinance 58 (A) [liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/cgso/programmeordinances/ORDINANCE,58\(A\),ii,Degree,of,Doctor,of,Medicine, from,September,2016.pdf](https://liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/cgso/programmeordinances/ORDINANCE,58(A),ii,Degree,of,Doctor,of,Medicine,from,September,2016.pdf)

What happens if the examiners recommend the award of a degree?

You will receive an email from the RDA Team advising you how to submit your final thesis.

What happens if the examiners recommend Pass subject to minor or major modifications?

It is the responsibility of the Internal Examiner to provide you promptly (normally within 10 working days of the viva) in writing with a list of the required corrections. Once modifications have been made to the thesis you should send it directly to the examiner(s) for their approval, usually within three or six months of the date that you were notified by the Research Degree Administration Team of the outcome of your viva. You will receive an email from the RDA Team when the examiners have confirmed the modifications have been made to their satisfaction. This email will provide you with information on how to submit your final thesis, if you do not meet the requirements of the examiners the thesis will fail.



Chapter 6 | Submission and Viva Examination (Continued)

What happens if the examiners recommend Resubmission?

It is the responsibility of the Internal Examiner to provide you promptly (normally within 10 working days of the viva) with a list of the required corrections, in writing. Candidates who receive a Resubmission recommendation will be written to by the RTDA Team formally notifying them of their resubmission deadline and fee.

You will have one year from the date that you were notified by the Research Degree Administration Team of the outcome of your viva to submit a revised thesis.

You will be re-registered as 'Resubmission Pending' from the date of your viva examination until you resubmit your thesis. A fee is charged during this period for access to University services. During your resubmission period you will be subject to normal progress procedures. Your primary supervisor will monitor your progress at regular intervals during your resubmission period. You should keep in contact with your supervisory team during the resubmission period and continue to record a minimum of one meeting per month in the PGR Toolbox. You will also need to complete the Annual Progress Report.

Once you have completed your revisions, the thesis should be resubmitted electronically to the Research Degree Administration Team at [E: rda@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:RDA@liverpool.ac.uk) along with a completed Resubmission of Soft-bound Thesis form.

Where PGRs re-submit their thesis for re-examination, a re-examination fee will be charged. We are unable to send your thesis out to be re-examined until this fee is paid.

When you have resubmitted, the process is the same as for the initial submission: your thesis will be re-examined within three months of being sent to the examiners.

For all resubmissions a second viva will be required and for this, an independent chair will be appointed alongside the examiners. The possible outcomes are similar to those for the first viva however, you cannot be asked to resubmit again. If you do not meet the requirements of the examiners, the thesis will fail. The Research Degree Administration Team will write to you by email with the outcome of the re-examination of your thesis.

Submitting your final thesis to Liverpool Elements

Finally, you should deposit your final thesis to Liverpool Elements within four weeks of the date you are officially notified of your result by the Research Degree Administration Team. You should note that you will not be awarded the degree nor be able to graduate until you have deposited your thesis with Liverpool Elements and confirmation of this has been received by the Research Degree Administration Team. When you deposit your thesis you can indicate whether or not you wish to restrict access to your thesis. You can also present your supervisor with a hard bound copy but this is not obligatory. Guidance to help you deposit your thesis is here liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/liverpool-elements

Graduation

Once all the paperwork related to the award of your degree has been gathered and you have submitted your thesis electronically to the library, your award can be confirmed and you will be able to graduate at the next ceremony. The University holds graduation ceremonies in July and December each year. The final deadline for submission of paperwork for graduation is available on the website below or liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/submission-and-examination/submissions/

Further details about graduation ceremonies are available online at liverpool.ac.uk/graduation



Chapter 7

When Things Change

PhD research takes a long time and obviously, things can occur which mean you may need to take time out of your research or extra time to complete. Both of these are possible as long as they are within the maximum period allowed for your overall registration (see page 11). If you find yourself needing some time out, you are advised to refer to the Policy on PGR Interruption of Studies, on Extensions of Study, and on Extenuating Circumstances in relation to the Viva Voce Examination, which is Appendix 6 of the PGR Code of Practice liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-6-PGR-CoP.pdf

Requests are approved in the first instance at the discretion of the university, in line with the criteria noted in Appendix 6 of the PGR Code of Practice. It is vitally important you consult this Appendix before putting in a request to avoid both delays and disappointment. Please also note that any interruption of studies or extension of your study must be recorded on your record via My Liverpool or it will not be recognised. Medical evidence must be provided where relevant or the request will be returned to you causing potential delays. If you do not act in reasonable time, you could be withdrawn from your studies

Applications for interruption of studies and extensions need to be supported by your Primary Supervisor, School/Institute Director of PGR and Faculty Director of PGR. However, this support does not guarantee approval if the request does not meet the criteria of the PGR CoP.

Interruption of studies and extensions can be applied for through the Interruption of Studies and Extensions link in My Liverpool. Once you have completed your section, it will be sent to the Research Degree Administration Team, who will then pass it to your supervisor (or return it to you if it needs modification – requests not supported by evidence or of an unreasonable length will be returned at this stage) before it is presented to the School/Institute PGR Director and the Faculty PGR Director for final consideration. The request must meet the requirements of the PGR Code of Practice. Requests for extensions made too early, will be rejected in all cases. Please see the following page for more information about extensions.

Interruption of Studies

In some circumstances, an academic interruption of studies may be the most appropriate solution. An academic interruption of studies allows you to take time away from your research before you submit your thesis.

During a period of academic interruption of studies you do not pay tuition or bench fees and as a result, will not be able to access University resources or facilities but you will still have access to your University email account.

Common reasons for an interruption of studies include:

- Serious short term illness or accident; evidence of deterioration in a chronic health condition
- Maternity/paternity leave
- Bereavement
- Significant adverse personal/family circumstances.

Please consult Appendix 6 of the Code of Practice (see opposite) for a more detailed list of circumstances potentially leading to an interruption of studies.

N.B. All requests for interruption of study must be supported by evidence and meet the requirements of the PGR Code of Practice.

Interruption of Studies should be applied for in full months from a minimum of one month to a maximum of twelve. Requests of longer than 12 months will not normally be permitted, although extensions to a pre-existing interruption of studies may be considered on a case by case basis. The length of an interruption of studies should therefore be considered carefully, while an interruption of studies 'stops time' towards your submission deadline, it does not do so in relation to the maximum period of registration.

See the Ordinances for more information liverpool.ac.uk/governance/programme-ordinances

If you are externally sponsored you must ensure that you liaise with your sponsor to seek their approval before requesting an

academic interruption of studies as this is not done as part of the University's consideration and approval of your request.

Proposed absence for a period of less than one month does not require a request to suspend studies. However, you should consult your Primary Supervisor for any absences of more than ten working days (and remember that you are entitled to 25 days annual leave per year for full-time PGRs). For international PGRs the School/Institute will be required to maintain a record of the approved short period of absence.

International PGRs

International PGRs are advised to seek advice from the International Advice and Guidance Team (see page 28) before applying for an academic interruption of studies. Study visa holders should note that following approval of an interruption of studies the University is obliged to notify the UK Home Office of your interruption of studies and withdraw your immigration sponsorship. You may be required to leave the UK at the point your studies are suspended and for the full duration of the interruption of studies. Please check this with IAG before making the request. Your current study visa will be cancelled by the UK Home Office. Before resuming your studies you will need to request a new CAS from the University and make a new study visa application. You will only be able to make this application from outside of the UK. If you need an extension, you may need to extend your visa as well.

Chapter 7 | When Things Change (Continued)

Returning from academic interruption of studies

You will need to confirm your intention to resume your research at least one month before you intend to return (or two weeks if your interruption of studies has been for less than three months). International PGRs should check the requirements of their visa, as you may need to make contact sooner.

To formally confirm your intention to resume studies, please email your Primary Supervisor, copying in your School/Department/Institute PGR Administrator. Your record will then be amended to reflect your return from an interruption of studies. You will need to complete any outstanding Annual Progress Reports before you can formally resume your programme.

If you are a Home PGR, you should ask your Primary Supervisor to email the Research Degree Administration Team to confirm you have resumed your studies before your registration will be amended.

If you are an International PGR you will need to show the new visa to the Research Degree Administration Team which demonstrates your right to study in the UK and with the University of Liverpool, as you did when you first registered.

Annual progress while on academic interruption of studies

If your Annual Progress Report is outstanding at the time of your return from interruption of studies you will need to complete it before your registration can be amended formally to return you from an interruption of studies. You will also need to settle any outstanding debt with the University before you will be permitted to resume.

Unless you are granted a further period of an interruption of studies, you will start to accrue fees from the date you are due back from your interruption of studies regardless of the date you physically return to your programme. If you fail to resume your studies following a period of interruption of studies you may be 'deemed withdrawn'.

Financial interruption of studies

An academic interruption of studies on financial grounds differs to Financial Interruption of Studies which is the penalty imposed by the University if you fail to clear a debt. The latter will mean that your access to all services provided by the University will be curtailed until such time as you pay the outstanding amount. For Policies and Guidance on Fees, Fines and Charges liverpool.ac.uk/feespayment

Extension of study

An extension of study gives you extra time prior to submission of your thesis, extending your submission date. Extensions must be requested in terms of whole months, from a minimum of one month to a maximum of twelve and within 10 working days prior to the expected date for thesis submission. Extensions of study might be granted where there are eligible exceptional, unforeseeable circumstances, supported by evidence, which will prevent you from submitting your thesis by the final submission date noted on your student record. Please note: extensions for reasons that are not judged as severe will not be approved – for example, simply requiring extra time to complete writing up will not be considered a sufficient reason; however, a request for an extension due to proven health issues is often likely to be granted.

Common reasons for an extension include:

- Serious short term illness or accident
- Bereavement
- Significant adverse personal/family circumstances
- Other significant exceptional factors.

Common reasons for a request to be rejected include but are not limited to:

- Aesthetic or formatting issues with thesis. It should be completed before the deadline
- Supervisor not having read the thesis, this should be ongoing
- Any event that occurred at some chronological distance from the deadline, for example, in the second year of study
- Requests which ask for unreasonable lengths of time for the circumstances
- Reasons related to immigration status, including visa renewal
- Requests made too far in advance will be normally be rejected, they must be as close as possible to the submission deadline, when it becomes clear that current circumstances mean you won't be able to submit on the required date. Please don't ask as a precautionary measure.

Please consult Appendix 6 of the Code of Practice (see page 24) for a more detailed list of circumstances potentially leading to an extension. All requests for extensions must be supported by evidence. If no evidence is supplied, the request will be returned to you, failure to address the return within a reasonable time and certainly before the end of your registration may result in you being withdrawn from your studies.

Extenuating circumstances and the viva

The University recognises that there may be circumstances beyond your control which could impact on your performance in the viva. If this is the case, you can apply for these circumstances to be considered in mitigation. If considered eligible, this will result either in having your viva postponed, or for the viva to go ahead but that the Examiners would give due consideration to your extenuating circumstances.

You will need to fill in a Claim Form for Extenuating Circumstances and submit it to your supervisor, who will ensure the documentation reaches your School or Institute Director of PGR.

If the extenuating circumstances arise during the viva, you should express your concerns at the time to the Examiners, who will decide whether to adjourn or continue the viva.

For more information about extenuating circumstances, please see the University's Policy on Interruption of Studies, on Extensions of Study, and Extenuating Circumstances in relation to the Viva Voce Examination (Appendix 6 to the PGR Code of Practice liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-6-PGR-CoP.pdf)

Withdrawal

Occasionally circumstances are such that you may decide to withdraw from your programme. Before you take this step you are strongly advised to discuss your concerns with your supervisor(s) or School/Institute/Department Director of Postgraduate Research. There are also a number of support services within the University who can provide advice and support – these include Advice and Guidance at Student Services (see page 27); the Guild Advice Centre (see page 28), the University Counselling Service (see page 28), and the Mental Health Advisory Service (page 29).

To formally withdraw from the University you should complete the Withdrawal Form which you can find here liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/your-student-record/withdrawing/ and pass it to your Primary Supervisor to sign so they are aware of your decision.

Chapter 7 | When Things Change (Continued)

Your School/Institute/Department should then forward the form to the Research Degree Administration Team. If you don't notify the University of your withdrawal you will continue to accrue fees.

Termination of studies

If your School/Institute/Department deem your progress as unsatisfactory the termination of studies procedure may be invoked leading to you being withdrawn from your degree. This policy is documented in the PGR Code of Practice – Policy and Procedures on the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-3-PGR-CoP.pdf

Deemed withdrawn

In some cases the University can deem you to have withdrawn from your studies. The deemed withdrawn procedure can be instigated in the following circumstances:

- You do not return to your research following a period of interruption of studies
- You do not complete your APR by the deadline
- You do not engage with your programme or do not make contact with the University for more than one month
- You do not submit your thesis and/or revisions on time.

Please consult the Policy and Procedures on the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students for more information liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/pgr-code-of-practice

Withdrawal, voluntary or otherwise, will not remove or cancel any debt that you may have to the University.

The University is obliged to inform the UK Home Office of any study research students that withdraw, are deemed withdrawn, or have their studies terminated. The UK Home Office will then cancel your study visa and you will be required to leave the UK.



Chapter 8

Beyond Your Research: Facilities and Support

School support and advice

If you encounter difficulties at any stage of your studies at the University, you can raise these directly with your Primary Supervisor during your regular meetings, or more formally as part of the Record of Supervisory Meetings (within the PGR Toolbox) and Annual Progress Report processes (see page 20).

If you feel unable to raise any issues with your own team, there is a departmental PGR Director for each School/Institute and a Faculty PGR Director whom you can approach. It is important that any problems are highlighted as early as possible to enable them to be addressed.

Within the School's Professional Services Support Team there will also be a member of dedicated PGR staff, who will act as a first point of contact if you are experiencing difficulties with any aspect of your academic life. This contact within the School will provide both advice on School level procedures and signposting to central and specialised support services. For more information please visit the Student Support Office or PGR Student Experience Office within your School.

Central support and advice

Student Services, including Counselling, Disability Support, and many others, are available to PGRs. This chapter details the range of support services offered by the University, both as part of Student Services and across the wider University community.

As a postgraduate research student, you are also a member of the University's Guild of Students, which provides numerous services including a helpful Advice Centre.

Student Services

Student Services is made up of the following teams: Disability Advice & Guidance, Money Advice & Guidance, International Advice & Guidance, Wellbeing Advice & Guidance, The Counselling Service, and the Mental Health Advisory Service. The role of these services is to provide students with advice, support and information. They have teams of experienced, specialist advisers who are available for you to come and talk through any issues you may have. They provide a confidential and quiet space for you to come and talk to them about any issues affecting your wellbeing.

They offer face-to-face appointments and also remote appointments by telephone and via Microsoft Teams, so you can get support wherever you are. To book an appointment, please follow the link to our [Student Services Hub](#) where you can book an appointment with the relevant team, update your consent to share information preferences, and upload any documents that you need to share with them.

If you would like to contact any of the individual teams you can find their details on the following pages: liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/

Wellbeing Team

The Wellbeing Team is here to provide information, advice and guidance to students on a range of personal and social issues, with a focus on improving the overall mental and physical wellbeing of students at The University of Liverpool. Our Student Wellbeing Practitioners provide confidential, non-judgemental one-to-one support on campus, and remotely via video and telephone calls. We offer other forms of support such as workshops, activities, and presentations. To speak with a practitioner simply complete our triage form available on our website.

You can feel confident to get in touch with the Wellbeing Team for advice on anything that is worrying you at any time during your studies.

If you wish to speak with someone right now, you can phone our helpline for students, provided by Health Assured. It offers round the clock access to support from counsellors and advisors who are ready to listen and provide practical advice and emotional support on issues such as mental health, stress, personal difficulties. Call **T: 0800 028 0199** for free, you'll be asked to confirm our university and what your issue relates to, and the adviser will put through to the right person to talk to.



Chapter 8 | Beyond Your Research: Facilities and Support *(Continued)*

International Advice and Guidance

International Advice and Guidance (IAG) is a specialist team within Student Welfare Advice and Guidance that supports and advises international and European students both on arrival and throughout their studies. It is based in the Student Services Centre, Alsop Building on University Square. The team provides advice on Student visas, other immigration matters such as dependent visas and family visitors, personal and cultural issues, integration, safety, wellbeing and advice for students who have their family with them in the UK. If IAG cannot help directly, they have a wide range of contacts and can refer you to another service that can assist.

IAG offers an induction programme in September called 'Hello International!' as well as regular presentations throughout the year, including living on a budget in Liverpool, integration, visa advice for working during/after your studies, visas for travelling in Europe, improving English language skills, how to extend your student visa and how to arrange a host visit to a British family.

International students are kept informed by email of any important information including any changes to immigration rules and procedures so it is essential that students read this information.

The team also promotes events and opportunities to encourage students to have a rich and diverse student experience.

The team's website contains lots of useful information on matters that international students often need advice on liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/visas-and-immigration/

You can also email the team for advice or to request an appointment
E: iagteam@liverpool.ac.uk
T: +44 (0)151 795 1000

Student Health Services

All students and PGRs are advised to register with a local GP to ensure access to full medical care. Those who register with Brownlow Health can use the Student Health Service, which is a valuable and important amenity provided by the University. Access includes a same day appointment service, email consultations, telephone consultations and booked appointments. Registration can now be completed online via campusdoctor.co.uk/liverpool

'Student Health' is based on campus and is open from Monday to Friday during term time. See brownlowhealth.co.uk for full opening hours. The service can be contacted by telephone on T: +44 (0)151 285 4578

Out of Hours service

If you need to be seen urgently by a doctor and cannot wait until the next working day, you can contact the Practice on T: +44 (0)151 285 4578 who will direct your call to the service managing out of hours. The telephone lines are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For further information, visit brownlowhealth.co.uk. Unless it is an emergency please contact your GP before attending the local Accident and Emergency departments.

Additional information

For confidential advice on any health question or for information about where to find services in the area, 24 hours a day, visit nhs.uk

Disability Advice and Guidance

The University encourages a supportive and accessible environment for students and researchers with a wide range of disabilities, mental health difficulties, health conditions, or specific learning differences (eg dyslexia, dyspraxia).

Disabled students are advised to discuss their individual needs with Disability Advice and Guidance so that appropriate support arrangements can be made. The University actively encourages students to disclose disability related support requirements as soon as possible, and can discuss support needs in a friendly and confidential environment. Working to a person-centred approach, the team, with your consent, can create an individual support plan. This details specific support requirements and recommends reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, and is used to inform relevant University contacts of your support needs. With consent, the team can assist students in all areas of disability related support within their academic environment, including:

- Liaison with the Professional Services within the University eg Library, Accommodation Team and Facilities Management Guidance about applying for appropriate funding or support.
- Referral to a wide range of internal and external contacts for specialist advice
- Access to study assistants eg Specialist mentors, and personal library assistants.

The Disability Advice and Guidance Team is based in the Student Services Centre, Alsop Building, and can be contacted via T: +44 (0)151 795 1000
E: disteam@liverpool.ac.uk

Further information can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/disability

Student Counselling Service

Based at 14 Oxford Street, the Counselling Service helps students deal with a wide range of personal and emotional difficulties or worries that may be affecting their capacity to study effectively or indeed their lives in general.

The Counselling Service is a confidential, inclusive service with qualified therapists trained in a range of evidence based psychological therapies.

You can contact the Counselling Service for support with a variety of issues such as home and family relationships, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, bereavement and loss, sex, sexuality, relationship difficulties and loneliness. The service provides a supportive pathway with a stepped care model; this means that you can access them quickly and get the most effective help for your needs.

They offer Single Session Therapy (SST); the model is designed so that students can fill out two simple forms and be seen by a counsellor. Single Session Therapy is designed to address students presenting concerns within one session. This appointment is usually sufficient for many students. SST is also the entry-point to their other counselling services, should a student present with more complex needs. They offer longer-term counselling over a few weeks or months, should this be appropriate. It's really easy to access the service. You can have a face-to-face session here on Campus or, if you prefer, you can talk to them via a video or telephone call from wherever you feel most comfortable.

The University also has a free 24/7 support service through Health Assured which students can access directly by ringing T: 0800 028 3766. You can also download the app 'My Healthy Advantage' using the code MHA 187679, the username Wellbeing and password TeamHopeTile20 when you log in. You can then create your own login.

Chapter 8 | Beyond Your Research: Facilities and Support *(Continued)*

The Student Services website has lots of self-help information on a wide range of topics as well as links to other useful sites. This information can be accessed via the following link: liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/mental-wellbeing/counselling-service/

The Counselling Service can be contacted on **T: +44 (0)151 795 3304** or by email at **E: counserv@liverpool.ac.uk**. Further information can be found at liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/mental-wellbeing/counselling-service/

Mental Health Advisory Service

The Mental Health Advisory Service (MHAS) offers a range of mental health interventions to students including casework, guidance and liaison with Mental Health Trusts and General Practice Surgeries. MHAS works to an ethos of recovery and early intervention. The Service works in partnership supporting students to access the right pathway at the right time.

MHAS underpins its' service with key values – inclusion, collaboration, compassion and care.

The service is staffed by experienced mental health professionals who are committed to contributing to the mental wellness of the university community via supporting students and delivering training to staff.

MHAS can be contacted on **T: 0151 795 1000** or by email **E: mhaadvice@liverpool.ac.uk** and further information at the link: liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/mental-wellbeing/mental-health-advisory-service/

Money Advice and Guidance

Money Advice and Guidance (MAG) provide support and advice to students on a range of money and funding relating matters. We offer the following services:

- Advise on student loans and grants for students including liaising with funding bodies where required;
- Advise on the financial implications of suspending, withdrawing or repeating elements of the course;
- Students who are starting their course and already have other previous higher education study should contact the team for advice as this may affect any entitlement to funding.
- Debt Advice Service – (including liaising with creditors if necessary);
- Advise on eligibility for welfare benefits;
- One-to-one or group budgeting sessions.
- Discretionary financial help through the University Hardship Fund for students experiencing financial hardship; Details on eligibility for support can be found on our website: liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/money

Our Money Advisers are here to provide advice and support. If you would like more information on any of the above, you can email us: **E: money@liverpool.ac.uk** or telephone **T: +44 (0)151 795 1000**. Bookable drop-in slots are available either face to face in the Alsop Building or virtually via MS Teams. To book please use the following link: liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/book-an-appointment/

The team have Student Money Coaches who offer peer to peer support on budgeting and can provide hints and tips on managing your money as a student. Please see our website to find out how to meet our coaches. liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/money

Childcare

The University's purpose-built nursery is located on campus and operated by Kids in Bloom. It provides flexible full and part-time provision for childcare for babies and pre-school children. Some term-time only places are also available for students. Holiday play schemes are also available for school age children. The nursery is popular, and we recommend that you apply for a place or join the waiting list as soon as possible.

The Children's Centre operates within an equal opportunities framework and offers students the freedom to study, knowing their children are in a safe, caring and stimulating environment.

It is rated as Good by OFSTED. For more information about the nursery please visit www.kidsinbloom.co.uk/kib-university-of-liverpool

Certain home and EU students using childcare may be eligible to apply for assistance with childcare fees through their Local Authority or the NHS Grants Unit, who will pay up to 85% of the cost (up to a limit). Additional help may also be provided by the Hardship Fund. For more information, contact Support and Guidance.

T: +44 (0)151 795 1000 or by email at **E: money@liverpool.ac.uk**

More information about other childcare provision in Liverpool can be found at liverpool.gov.uk/children-and-families/early-years-and-childcare/nursery-and-childcare-providers/



PGR Community

Alongside your research group and the University services, there is a number of peer-led groups within the PGR community that can offer support. Meeting your fellow peers to share experiences, support one another and enjoy social activity is very important for your journey as a postgraduate researcher. We are focused on increasing the PGR community visibility and promote the groups to both new and existing postgraduate researchers. The current groups available to join in the PGR community are:

PGR Peer Wellbeing Ambassador Network

The PGR Peer Wellbeing Ambassador scheme was introduced as a small pilot in 2018. This was part of an Office for Students funded PGR wellbeing improvement project. The aim of the scheme is to provide a safe peer-to-peer support network for PGRs to access to enable the opportunity to meet individuals who are going through the same or similar experiences, to meet new friends, to have the chance to discuss worries and concerns and to take some time away from the busy PhD schedule. The scheme has continued to grow each year and is now recognised as the PGR Peer Wellbeing Ambassador Network, with schemes now operating in most areas of each faculty. PGR Ambassadors are usually located locally within departments and are a friendly approachable source of support.

They host regular events such as weekly tea and coffee breaks, walks or other physical activities to get you out of the office, themed workshops and talks from both internal and external speakers usually discussing how to manage your PhD and life after your PhD is complete.

To find out more about the Network and how to access your local scheme in your faculty, please email **E: PGRwellbeing@liverpool.ac.uk**

PG Society

The PG Society bring together postgraduates across all departments at the University of Liverpool. They aim to provide a network of support to encourage friendships and improve wellbeing in the postgraduate community. You can join them for a range of events, from pub quizzes, board game nights, coffee mornings and film screenings.

To get in touch and find out more, you can contact them in the following ways:
E: postgraduate@society.liverpoolguild.org
UoL Postgrad Society @PostgradUoL
@postgrad_uol

Peers for PhDs

Peers for PhDs is a student-led group to support the wellbeing of PhD students at the University. It was initially started by three postgraduate researchers from different parts of the University who wanted to provide more opportunities for PhD students to network outside of their department. They began during the researcher development week of 2018, holding a workshop to gather ideas for how the group should run and what themes they might discuss. They have continued to grow year on year and up until recently, they have been meeting monthly for group meetings, with a different theme to discuss, or something social. Ideas are chosen by the group members and a small team of project leaders facilitate each group. With the chaos of 2020, they have currently moved onto Zoom, and they meet more often and more informally, to allow opportunities for PhD students to have a morning coffee together during this time.

To find out more please visit their Facebook page: **facebook.com/groups/LivuniPGRsupportgroup/about**



Liverpool Guild of Students

Liverpool Guild of Students, the Students' Union, exists to ensure all students, including postgraduate research students, enjoy their time at the University of Liverpool. The Guild has existed for over 100 years to provide students with a voice. That voice has been used to lobby, link communities and liberate members. And it continues to be heard.

The Guild is proud of its history as a truly pioneering organisation. Members elected the first black Students' Union President in the UK; built the biggest Students' Union building in Europe and grabbed national headlines with a 300-strong sit-in protest against South African apartheid in 1970. The Guild continues to be the beating heart of the student body providing an on-campus theatre, music venue, cinema, recording studio and meeting spaces which are open for student societies to use. The Guild was recognised as the best higher education students' union in the country at the 2016 National Union of Students Awards.



Each year students vote in elections to select four Student Officers – President, Deputy and two Vice-Presidents – who they wish to lead the Guild. This means the Guild continues to be a student-led, dynamic and constantly evolving organisation; a not-for-profit charity of which every student at the University is a member. As a member of the Guild, you will be able to vote in elections and stand for an Officer role.

Representation

As a student at the University of Liverpool, you are automatically a member of the Guild, which is a democratic organisation and as your Students' Union, it's their responsibility to listen to members and provide effective representation, ensuring they are the University's critical friend and campaigning for positive change that will benefit your research, your wellbeing and your professional development.

The Guild lead various consultations and interdisciplinary workshops over the course of the year, these processes provide PGR students with the opportunity to discuss thoughts and ideas on the research student experience at the University of Liverpool. Liverpool Guild of Students supports the representation structures at the University of Liverpool including the system of PGR Representatives. PGR Reps are elected by their peers to report to and attend staff-student liaison meetings or committees and to work in partnership with academic staff to improve the PGR experience.

As a postgraduate researcher, should you experience issues with supervision, feel there is a lack of resources for your research, or feel there is anything else adversely affecting your academic experience, you should raise

this with your PGR Rep. If you are interested in becoming a PGR Rep just ask a member of staff in your department or contact the Guild's Student Voice Team.

Guild Advice Service

The Guild offers free and confidential advice to all University of Liverpool students. They are independent from the University and here to support you. The advice is non-judgemental and aims to provide you with the information you need to make an informed decision about the options available. They deal with a wide range of academic, housing and wellbeing issues so if you are unsure just get in touch; if they can't help you, they'll direct you to the people who can. The Advice Service supports PGRs having trouble with their supervisory relationship so feel to free to get in touch if you need support. You can book an appointment with an advisor by calling **T: +44 (0)151 794 6868**; emailing guildadvice@liverpool.ac.uk or by visiting the Guild reception. More information is also available on their website liverpoolguild.org/advice.

Guild Activities

If you're looking for a way to give something back and boost your CV and confidence in the process, look no further. The Guild offers fun and rewarding opportunities to develop skills and experience through hundreds of volunteering opportunities, both on campus and within the community. From beekeeping, to teaching Science in Schools, there's so much to choose from. The Guild also has more than 200 groups representing a range of interests and activities, from Astronomy to BakeSoc. If there isn't a society that's right for you, you can start a brand new one!

Apart from being a great opportunity to meet people with shared interests, becoming involved in a society is also a chance to gain valuable experience of managing events, projects, budgets and fundraising activity – all skills that will be useful in your future career, whether it is in academia or outside.

More information about societies and the opportunities currently on offer can be found on the Guild website liverpoolguild.org

My Liverpool

My Liverpool has been designed to promote activities offered within or facilitated by the University or the Guild of Students, which could enhance the skills and experience of students and postgraduate researchers. These activities include volunteering, community engagement work, widening participation activities, mentoring, being trained as a student/PGR representative, participation in Guild societies, discipline-specific or generic seminars, and voluntary accredited modules such as Continuing Education language courses and IT training.

A web portal, available at liverpool.ac.uk/my-liverpool, enables you to access information about these activities via links to existing web pages, where you are able to find out more and, in some cases, to book a place at relevant events or opportunities.

You can also search for particular activities (eg volunteering opportunities) and locate where such activities are offered and what skills you could be expected to achieve from engaging in this activity. The site allows you to record your experiences and map your learning.

Chapter 8 | Beyond Your Research: Facilities and Support *(Continued)*

Sport Liverpool

The University Sports & Fitness Centre has four squash courts, a swimming pool, two sports halls, a fully equipped gym, a spinning room and a large studio. We offer up to 50 classes per week, ranging from Yoga to HIIT and also offer Les Mills certified BodyPump and BodyBalance. Our Athletic Union comprises 54 sports clubs that are run by student officers with professional support from our sports development staff. Our clubs offer a smorgasbord of sports, from sky diving to handball. In addition, internal sports leagues and drop-in sessions are offered through our Active Campus programme and an Elite Athlete Support Scheme, along with other sporting bursaries, completes our offer.

Our campus facilities have recently been complemented outdoors with the addition of a container gym and outdoor gym stations, basketball hoops, a sand volleyball court, IV1 cage football, table tennis and teqball tables. We will also be adding a Padel tennis court in the near future.

For further information you can visit our website at liverpool.ac.uk/sports or contact the Sports Development Office on T: +44 (0)151 794 3307 or E: sfc@liverpool.ac.uk

Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy team endeavours to connect with students and staff at all levels within the University community, providing those with or without a faith with spiritual and pastoral care. We make it our priority to offer time to talk with others about the important questions of life but, most of all, we are available to listen and support those who contact us. The Chaplaincy Team consists of two Christian chaplains from two Christian traditions, a Jewish Chaplain and a Muslim Chaplain.

More information about the work of the chaplaincy and contact details for chaplains can be found at liverpoolchaplains.co.uk. The Chaplains have details of faith contacts for other faiths not represented in the Chaplaincy and will try to assist staff and students of any faith background find the worship activities appropriate to their needs.

There is a Muslim Prayer Room in the Sydney Jones Library that is available to University of Liverpool staff and students.

For details of other faith facilities please visit liverpool.ac.uk/hr/diversityandequality/faithfacilities

Employment

If you wish to seek employment to support you during your PhD, you should remember that a PhD is a full-time endeavour and any paid work should be seen as secondary to your academic priorities. You should not, therefore, plan to take on paid employment for any more than 15 hours per week. If you do decide to take on a part-time job (or if you are working and undertaking your PhD part-time), you should remember that this will not be accepted as good reason for poor performance or for failing to satisfy the academic requirements of your programme. If you are in receipt of funding for your PhD, also remember to check the requirements of your funding body, as there might be restrictions.

In addition, international PGRs studying on a study visa should ensure they understand and comply with the working restrictions of their visa, as breaking these conditions is a criminal offence. Normally working in the UK during studies is permitted but there are restrictions on the type of work you can do, and how many hours per week you can work. Study visa students are not allowed to engage in or set up a business; be self-employed; provide services as a professional sports-person or entertainer or pursue a career by fulfilling a permanent full-time vacancy. If you are unsure, please contact International Advice and Guidance for assistance.

Part-time jobs are advertised via the Careers and Employability [@livuniptjobs](https://twitter.com/livuniptjobs) Twitter account.



Chapter 9

Beyond Your Research: Facilities and Support

University regulations and policy

The PGR Code of Practice

Together, this series of documents provide an authoritative institutional framework for the delivery of the University's postgraduate research degrees. The following documents relate to the PGR Code of Practice and are available at liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/pgr-code-of-practice

- PGR Admissions Policy and Procedures
- Policy on Research Student Supervision
- Policy on the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students
- Policy on PGR Plagiarism and Dishonest Use of Data
- Policy on PGR Students Undertaking Teaching Duties
- Policy on interruption of studies, on Extensions of Study and on Extenuating Circumstances in Relation to the Viva Voce Examination
- Policy on Submission of a Research Degree Thesis for Examination
- Policy on Research Examinations and Examiners

- Policy and Procedures for Conducting Remote Viva Examinations for Research Degrees
- Research Degree Appeals Procedure
- Policy on Off-Site and Split-site Research Degree Study (for a Single University of Liverpool Award).

Forms can be found here liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students

Ordinances

The formal Ordinances and Regulations for the degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor in Philosophy (PhD) and Doctor of Medicine (MD) can be accessed via liverpool.ac.uk/governance/programme-ordinances

The Student Charter

The University operates a Student Charter, which has been jointly created by the University and the Liverpool Guild of Students to encourage the commitment of all staff and students to the principle of partnership and to make clearer the basis on which that partnership rests. You can access the Student Charter at liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/student-administration/student-administration-centre/documents/Student_Charter_final_June_15.pdf

Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

The University operates a Student Complaints Policy and Procedure to be used when students have a complaint against the University. This procedure provides for complaints to be dealt with, as far as possible, on an informal basis.

It also sets out the formal route for the consideration of complaints should informal procedures fail to resolve a complaint satisfactorily. You can access the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure at liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/policies-procedures/complaints/

Key contacts

School/Institute PGR Teams

Faculty of Health & Life Sciences

Institute of Life Course & Medical Sciences (ILCaMS) –
E: ilcamspgradin@liverpool.ac.uk

Institute of Infection, Veterinary & Ecological Sciences (IVES) –
E: ivespgradin@liverpool.ac.uk

Institute of Population Health (IPH)
E: iphpgradin@liverpool.ac.uk

Institute of Systems, Molecular & Integrative Biology (ISMIB)
E: ismibpgradin@liverpool.ac.uk

Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences

School of the Arts
E: pgarts@liverpool.ac.uk

School of Histories, Languages & Cultures
E: HLC-PGR@liverpool.ac.uk

School of Law & Social Justice
E: slsjpgr@liverpool.ac.uk

University of Liverpool Management School
E: ulmsphdenq@liverpool.ac.uk

Faculty of Science & Engineering

School of Electrical Engineering, Electronics and Computer Science
E: eeecspgr@liverpool.ac.uk

School of Engineering
E: soepgr@liverpool.ac.uk

School of Environmental Sciences
E: soesresearch@liverpool.ac.uk

School of Physical Sciences
E: spspgr@liverpool.ac.uk

Directors of Postgraduate Research

Each School or Institute has a Director of Postgraduate Research. Where any issues cannot be resolved directly with your supervisory team, these key members of staff should be your first point of contact. The details for directors, faculty directors and other relevant contacts are listed here: liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students/contacts/

Research Degree Administration Team

E: rda@liverpool.ac.uk
liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/research-students

UoL Campus Maps

www.liverpool.ac.uk/maps/