FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
GRADUATE SCHOOL

handbook for postgraduate research students
(PhD, MD and MPhil)

2017–18
A full-time MRes/PhD thesis must be submitted within 4 YEARS of first registration
A full-time PhD thesis must be submitted within 4 YEARS of first registration
A part-time PhD thesis must be submitted within 7 YEARS of first registration
A full-time MD thesis must be submitted within 3 YEARS of first registration
A part-time MD thesis must be submitted within 5 YEARS of first registration
A full-time MPhil thesis must be submitted within 2 YEARS of first registration
A part-time MPhil thesis must be submitted within 3 YEARS of first registration
CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL ................................................................. 3
   Commitment to Quality ........................................................................................................ 3
   Postgraduate Research Culture and Common Room .......................................................... 3
   Student Support .................................................................................................................. 3
   Induction .............................................................................................................................. 3
   Graduate School Executive Group ...................................................................................... 4
   Graduate School Office Staff .............................................................................................. 4
   Fellows Register and Supervisory Teams ........................................................................... 5
   Institute Postgraduate Research Student Coordinators and Institute Staff Contacts ........ 5
   Student Representative Committee .................................................................................. 5

2 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ......................................................................................... 6
   Graduate School Policies ..................................................................................................... 6
   Code of Practice for Research Degrees.............................................................................. 6
   What the University Expects of You ................................................................................... 6
   Project Approval .................................................................................................................. 7
   Learning Agreement ............................................................................................................ 8
   ePortfolio (Research Training Portfolio) ............................................................................... 8

3 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ..................................................................................... 9
   Graduate School Policy on Training and Development ...................................................... 9
   Research Seminar Programmes ......................................................................................... 9
   Learned Societies ............................................................................................................... 10
   Bionow ............................................................................................................................... 10
   Vitae ................................................................................................................................... 10

4 STUDENT PROGRESS AND ASSESSMENT ................................................................... 10
   Regulations and University Guidelines for Research Students ......................................... 10
   Conditional Candidature for PhD / MD / ........................................................................ 11
   Annual Progression ............................................................................................................. 11
   Guidance for preparation and submission of thesis ........................................................... 15
   Doctoral Viva Seminars ....................................................................................................... 17
   Medical Sciences Doctoral Prize Thesis ............................................................................ 17
   Problems ............................................................................................................................. 17
   Policy on Extensions ........................................................................................................... 18
   Interruption of Studies ........................................................................................................ 18
   Maternity Leave .................................................................................................................. 18
   Holidays .............................................................................................................................. 18
   Assessment Irregularities .................................................................................................... 19
   Ensuring the Quality of your Degree .................................................................................. 19

5 GENERAL INFORMATION ............................................................................................... 19
   Student Self Service Portal (S3P) ....................................................................................... 19
   Communication and Website Address ............................................................................... 19
   Laboratory Facilities ......................................................................................................... 20
   Research Governance ........................................................................................................ 20
   Laboratory Book/Research Diary Guidelines for Postgraduate Students ....................... 20
   Sources of Help and Support .............................................................................................. 22
   Computing Facilities ......................................................................................................... 23
   Library Facilities ............................................................................................................... 25
   Travel Grants for Graduate Students registered for PhD .................................................. 25
   Training Grants for Doctoral Students ............................................................................... 26
INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Commitment to Quality

The Graduate School has a commitment to the delivery of postgraduate training of the highest possible quality. We attach considerable importance to the academic training and pastoral care of our postgraduate students, and have an excellent record for timely PhD thesis submission and completion rates. Postgraduate culture is thriving in the Faculty and particular attention is devoted to additional support for international students.

Postgraduate Research Culture and Common Room

All students belong to the Graduate School, providing a sense of identity and giving more opportunities for interaction for students from smaller research groups. The Graduate School Common Room provides excellent facilities including bookable private study rooms (each equipped with a PC), a small PC cluster, and lounge and café areas. The Common Room is situated on the ground floor of the Catherine Cookson Building, in the Faculty of Medical Sciences. A new training suite within the Common Room was opened in 2015, and this is where much of the training related to the Development Programme takes place. A new social space for staff and postgraduate students, the Ridley Atrium, also opened in 2015. The atrium provides a space for refreshments and informal conversation between PG students and staff and is located on the ground floor of the Medical School.

The Graduate School administrative office is located on the third floor of Ridley Building 1. Here you will find our reception, open from 8.45 to 5.00 pm (4.45 pm on Fridays), and Graduate School staff will be on hand to help you with any queries.

The first event of the year is induction when you are introduced to key figures within the Faculty and informed about sources of help and support within the University. Throughout the year further events are organised, for example visiting speakers and a postgraduate conference which provides an ideal opportunity to put into practice skills learnt during the presentational skills course and to view and discuss the work of colleagues.

There is a tailored research skills development programme (see separate booklet at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/skills/index.htm), supported by the Research Skills Development Coordinator.

Research student representatives from each institute form a committee which provides a forum for raising any issues of common interest to the student body, for consultation, and for planning social activities. In addition students are represented on the Graduate School Committee, which is responsible for devising Faculty policy.

Student Support

The Graduate School infrastructure to support students is excellent. As a research student you will be appointed a supervisory team. Each Institute has a Postgraduate Research Student Coordinator (PgRSC). There is also a Faculty Postgraduate Tutor who oversees the training and pastoral care of the students. Administrative support is provided by the Graduate School Office. (See next page for contact details.)

You will find lots of useful information about your studies on the Graduate School website:

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/

Induction

For students starting at the beginning of the academic year induction takes place the week beginning 2 October and for mid-year starters you will be contacted about further induction meetings. Graduate School staff will introduce themselves and explain about your studies and what you can expect to learn and achieve over the next few years. Details of further Graduate School induction events are provided in the Graduate School Development Programme Brochure for 2017–18.
### Graduate School Executive Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor John Kirby</td>
<td>Dean of Postgraduate Studies</td>
<td>88683 <a href="mailto:john.kirby@ncl.ac.uk">john.kirby@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Alison Tyson-Capper</td>
<td>Faculty Postgraduate Tutor (Associate Dean)</td>
<td>87156 <a href="mailto:alison.tyson-capper@ncl.ac.uk">alison.tyson-capper@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Rakesh Heer</td>
<td>Director of MD Studies</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rakesh.heer@ncl.ac.uk">rakesh.heer@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Tim Cheek</td>
<td>ICaMB</td>
<td>87010 <a href="mailto:tim.cheek@ncl.ac.uk">tim.cheek@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Rob Taylor</td>
<td>IoN</td>
<td>83685 <a href="mailto:robert.taylor@ncl.ac.uk">robert.taylor@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Richy Hetherington</td>
<td>Researcher Skills Development Co-ordinator</td>
<td>83846 <a href="mailto:richard.hetherington@ncl.ac.uk">richard.hetherington@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Ann Daly</td>
<td>Associate Dean for Internationalisation</td>
<td>87031 <a href="mailto:a.k.daly@ncl.ac.uk">a.k.daly@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Jeremy Brown</td>
<td>DPD, MRes</td>
<td>87470 <a href="mailto:Jeremy.Brown@ncl.ac.uk">Jeremy.Brown@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Barbara Sumner</td>
<td>Graduate School Administrator</td>
<td>85034 <a href="mailto:barbara.sumner@ncl.ac.uk">barbara.sumner@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Graduate School Office Staff

You can contact the Graduate School Office on the general telephone number 0191 208 7002, or email medpg-enquiries@ncl.ac.uk. Individual contact details for Graduate School staff are listed below (prefix internal extensions with 0191 20 if phoning from outside the University):

#### Research students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Sumner</td>
<td>Graduate School Administrator</td>
<td>85034 <a href="mailto:barbara.sumner@ncl.ac.uk">barbara.sumner@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Golightly</td>
<td>Senior PGR Student Support</td>
<td>88683 <a href="mailto:sarah.golightly@ncl.ac.uk">sarah.golightly@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin James</td>
<td>PGR Student Support (IGM, IoN, NICR)</td>
<td>83049 <a href="mailto:lindsey.james@ncl.ac.uk">lindsey.james@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Walker</td>
<td>PGR Student Support (ICAMB, ICM, IHS)</td>
<td>83846 <a href="mailto:kimberley.walker@ncl.ac.uk">kimberley.walker@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
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#### Research skills

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Richy Hetherington</td>
<td>Researcher Skills Development Co-ordinator</td>
<td>87874 <a href="mailto:richard.hetherington@ncl.ac.uk">richard.hetherington@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Oswald</td>
<td>Researcher Skills Development Support</td>
<td>83846 <a href="mailto:robert.oswald@ncl.ac.uk">robert.oswald@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Masters by Research (MRes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kirsty Sanderson</td>
<td>MRes Programme Co-ordinator</td>
<td>85379 <a href="mailto:kirsty.sanderson@ncl.ac.uk">kirsty.sanderson@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Fisher</td>
<td>MRes Support Assistant</td>
<td>86754 <a href="mailto:ruth.fisher@ncl.ac.uk">ruth.fisher@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Pritchard</td>
<td>MRes Project Support and MSc Medical Sciences Programme Coordinator</td>
<td>83847 <a href="mailto:olivia.pritchard@ncl.ac.uk">olivia.pritchard@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fellows Register and Supervisory Teams

The Fellows Register lists all academic supervisors who are accredited to the Graduate School. You will be supervised by an appropriately qualified, trained and experienced team. Additionally, examiners of research degree theses must also fulfil similar criteria. Experienced supervisors are accredited as Fellows/Honorary Fellows of the Graduate School and newer supervisors are recognised as Associate Fellows/Honorary Associate Fellows.

You will have a supervisory team comprising at least one Fellow. It is possible for an Associate Fellow to be the lead supervisor.

The Graduate School has a policy for leave of absence arrangements for supervisors and a policy for arrangements when a supervisor leaves. If you become aware that a member of your supervisory team is leaving please contact the Graduate School Office for advice. In most instances arrangements will already be underway to re-form your supervisory team.

Institute Postgraduate Research Student Coordinators and Institute Staff Contacts

Institute for Cell & Molecular Biosciences

Dr Tim Cheek 87010  tim.Cheek@ncl.ac.uk
Louise Campbell 86961  louise.campbell@ncl.ac.uk

Institute of Cellular Medicine

Dr Xiao Wang 88792  x.n.wang@ncl.ac.uk
Karolien Jordens 88988  icm.pgstudentenquiries@ncl.ac.uk

Institute of Health and Society

Professor Elaine McColl 87260  elaine.mccoll@ncl.ac.uk
Janice Fuller 88754  janice.fuller@ncl.ac.uk

Institute of Genetic Medicine

Dr Joanna Elson 228630  joanna.elson@ncl.ac.uk
Trish Dunham 228611  trish.milton@ncl.ac.uk

Institute of Neuroscience

Dr Peter Gallagher 87166  peter.gallagher@ncl.ac.uk
Beckie Hedley 88244  beckie.hedley@ncl.ac.uk

Northern Institute for Cancer Research

Professor Steve Clifford 84422  steve.clifford@ncl.ac.uk
Pauline Stephenson 84407  pauline.stephenson@ncl.ac.uk

Regional Research Student Advisors

Dental School PGR Students  Dr Ralf Kist  ralf.kist@ncl.ac.uk
Medical Education PGR Students  Prof Steve McHanwell  stephen.mchanwell@ncl.ac.uk
Campus for Ageing and Vitality PGR Students  Prof Marion Petrie  marion.petrie@ncl.ac.uk

Student Representative Committee

Student Representatives are appointed for each Institute, the MRes and Doctorate in Clinical Psychology programmes. They are friendly and approachable individuals who are happy to have informal chats or discuss issues/concerns that may arise during your studies. Representatives are also appointed by the Students Union as members of Graduate School Committee. If you are interested in this role please find further details at http://www.nusu.co.uk/representation/

Student representatives are listed at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/contacts/studentreps.htm
2 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Graduate School Policies

The Graduate School has well-established policies and procedures designed to ensure that you receive training and support of the very highest quality. These can be found at [www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/documentation/faculty.htm](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/documentation/faculty.htm).

Code of Practice for Research Degrees

Graduate School policies encompass the requirements of the University Code of Practice for Research Degrees. This Code of Practice sets out expectations and you will find a copy in the University Research Handbook and at the following website:

[www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/index.htm](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/index.htm)

Many of the key points are introduced in the next section which you may remember reading about in the documentation provided with your offer letter.

What the University Expects of You

You are required to inform your supervisors and the Graduate School administration about any sponsorship you have received for your research project and obligations in terms of reporting to sponsors on progress.

You are required to attend the induction programme.

You are required to indicate that you have received, understood, and accepted the expectations of your doctoral programme by signing a formal Learning Agreement with your supervisors, within the first month of your programme starting.

You are required to attend the research training programme, which will be tailored to meet your needs. In conjunction with your supervisory team, you will agree a personal plan. This will take into account your prior learning and experience, needs in terms of study skills, needs of your research project, and employment-related skills. Your training will be reviewed annually by your progress panel who will expect to see an up-to-date Research Training ePortfolio.

You are required to maintain regular contact with your supervisors. Many of you will see your supervisors on a weekly, if not daily basis, especially if you are undertaking laboratory research. However, you will have at least ten formal interactions with your academic supervisor per year, approximately monthly with no more than an eight week gap between meetings, and attend regular progress meetings with the supervisory team with a minimum frequency of three per year. If you are not able to meet these requirements because you will be studying outside the University for a period of time, you are required to agree an equivalent schedule of contacts with your academic supervisor, using for example e-mail and video-conferencing. You are required, by the University’s Code of Practice, to record and confirm the outcomes of these formal meetings, via ePortfolio. Your supervisor will also be required to confirm that these formal supervisor/student interactions have taken place. NB: this is the mechanism to monitor international student engagement and to report any non-attendance to the UKVI. International students are required to continue to record and confirm the outcomes of supervisory meetings throughout candidature and whilst under examination until completion of their studies.

You are required, with support from your supervisory team, to develop a formal research project proposal for consideration by an independent panel. This must be submitted to the review panel within three months.

You must take responsibility for listening to, understanding, and accepting feedback from your supervisory team and progress review panel.

You must take responsibility for keeping your research project on track so that it is completed within the normal timescale prescribed by your candidature.
You must bring any academic problems with the research project to the attention of your academic supervisor or supervisory team immediately so that they can provide support. It is also a good idea to inform them of any non-academic problems with a bearing on the progress of your research as they may be concerned about you and able to help.

You are required to undertake an annual progress review, which will involve preparing a written progress report on your research project and submitting it to an independent review panel who will interview you. You will also be required to give a brief presentation to your review panel. See Section 4 below for details.

You are expected to contribute to the research environment by attending appropriate internal and external events and giving at least one formal presentation per year on your work. You will record this in your Research Training ePortfolio.

We hope that you will help us to improve research provision by providing feedback and through representation on relevant committees and decision-making bodies.

**Project Approval**

**Graduate School Research Project Approval Policy**

All research proposals must be submitted for approval by an independent panel.

Your progress panel will consist of at least two independent (not part of your supervisory team) members of University academic staff (one of whom can be an Honorary member of academic staff) with relevant skills and knowledge, at least one of whom should be demonstrably research-active and at least one of whom should have experience of successful supervision. Your progress panel will normally review your research proposal.

**Criteria for evaluation of research proposals**

- that the project has clear aims and objectives;
- that the student has (or can acquire) the knowledge, skills and aptitudes to complete the project successfully;
- that the proposed supervisory team has, or will be able to acquire, the skills, knowledge and aptitudes necessary to supervise the project to a successful conclusion;
- that the project is suitable for the programme of study and for the award;
- that it can be completed within the time-scale for the programme;
- that sufficient resources will be available to complete the project;

In cases where the project involves extended absences from the University on fieldwork or work in collaborating organisations, that appropriate arrangements will be made to support and monitor the progress of the student.

A component of the project approval process includes considering potential ethical issues and confirming that, where necessary, ethics committee approval has been sought, or the need to seek approval has been noted.

**Procedure**

Postgraduate research student coordinators will appoint progress panels for all students at the beginning of their studies.

Project approval is administered through the ePortfolio system, help and instructions are available within the relevant section (see [https://portfolio.ncl.ac.uk/](https://portfolio.ncl.ac.uk/))

The first section of the form is completed by the candidate and the following information should be attached:

- a research proposal
- a research plan of milestone dates
approval by the supervisory team

The research proposal can be typed directly into the form or can be uploaded as a Word document, which should be approximately 2 sides of A4, however, please note this is only a guideline and the crucial point is to present sufficient information to enable the panel to reach an informed decision.

The form and information will be forwarded to your supervisor and then sent to the appointed panel for signature/approval.

Once the project has been checked and signed off by the Institute, final approval will be required by the Dean of Postgraduate Studies.

Timescale

1. The research proposal and plan should be submitted for approval no later than three months from registration; project development and approval is encouraged to take place as early as possible.
2. In cases where a proposal is not approved then a further proposal should be submitted within one month.
3. If a project changes further peer review is required within one month.

Learning Agreement

You are required to indicate that you have received, understood, and accepted the expectations of your doctoral programme by signing a formal Learning Agreement with your main supervisor. After agreeing the terms with your supervisor, the form should be returned to your Institute PGR Secretary.

You and your supervisor should also complete the confidentiality agreement and return this with the Learning Agreement as above.

ePortfolio (Research Training Portfolio)

Research degrees are highly regarded by employers and academics. The essential purpose of a research programme is a period of training in research and the generation of an original piece of work. During your studies you will develop a range of personal and professional skills. These skills will prove invaluable for the transition onto your next career.

The purpose of the ePortfolio is to provide a record of your personal development at Newcastle University. The ePortfolio is designed to assist you to get the most from your postgraduate experience, helping you to plan and reflect upon your research and how it will relate to future aspirations. It will help you to identify areas of strength and those areas you feel need more attention. By completing your ePortfolio you will be able to build on the learning and results you achieve, which will provide an ongoing record that can contribute towards your personal growth and career planning. The ePortfolio is intended to help you understand how your learning can be applied to a wide range of subjects and activities. It will help to improve your research and generic skills and identify opportunities for personal development.

Your ePortfolio will include relevant information on the following;

- Research Programme
- Personal Development Plan (PDP)

This ePortfolio is a means of planning/developing and recording both research and generic skills and should be viewed as a serious method for your Continuing Professional Development (CPD). You will be responsible for the generation and maintenance of your ePortfolio, for which you will be expected to show commitment, planning, action and evaluation/reflection.

ePortfolio can be found at https://portfolio.ncl.ac.uk/

This system is integrated with your project approval, progress reviews, approval of title and nomination of examiners and recording of supervisory meetings.
The ePortfolio is your document. At your annual progression review you will be asked to provide evidence of research training undertaken during the year (eg from your Research Training ePortfolio). In addition, ePortfolio is used to record the outcome of formal supervisory meetings and both you and your supervisor will need to confirm the dates these meetings have taken place. Otherwise the document is for your use and it is up to you how much of this you share with your supervisory team.

3 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Graduate School Policy on Training and Development

You will be offered the opportunity to develop a relevant range of knowledge and skills, including skills for employment. The Programme has been devised to support the development of research students in a range of areas which align to the expectations of the UK Researcher Development Framework. The Graduate School will make appropriate arrangements to:

- identify your development needs and skills gaps
- provide opportunities for development
- record the development of skills in your ePortfolio
- ensure that you are introduced to relevant academic networks
- advise on opportunities to attend seminars and conferences
- encourage you to present academic papers
- support career development

Full details of the Research Student Development Programme are published in a separate training booklet which you will be issued with each October for the new academic year, and which will also be available on the Graduate School website at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/skills/index.htm. Also check the events calendar at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/calendar.htm for the most up-to-date listings.

Teaching opportunities are available each year and details are published on the Graduate School website at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/teaching.htm

The University’s policy on teaching for postgraduate students is available at www.ncl.ac.uk/quilt/assets/documents/qsh-pgswhoteach-pol.pdf

The Faculty’s guidelines on teaching and demonstrating for postgraduate students is available at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/documentation/faculty.htm

Research Seminar Programmes

An important element of the research environment in which you will be working is the many programmes of research seminars within the Faculty. Some of these are run by Institutes and others by research groups either within or between Schools or Institutes. Some of these are publicised on the Development Programme Calendar of Events at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/calendar.htm. Others are publicised via email lists which you need to join.

It is recognised that the best researchers gain experience outside their own immediate research area. It is recognised that research meetings span the diversity and breadth of research in the Faculty and that they are a valuable resource to you. Attendance at these meetings would be an excellent opportunity for you to broaden your knowledge and interests. We recommend that you discuss what you feel would be of benefit to you with your supervisor, bearing in mind that it doesn’t have to be directly relevant to your research, and then record attendance in your Research Training ePortfolio. Remember that you must attend a minimum of 10 research seminars per year, but it is likely that you will be interested in more than this.

Here are some of the advantages of attending research seminar programmes:

- You will acquire a broader knowledge base.
- It will engender the Faculty research ethos.
- You will have the opportunity to meet other researchers/postgraduate students.
– It will engender a sense of belonging to the Graduate School.
– The flexibility of the scheme enables your programme of study to be tailored to your needs.
– It will expose you to areas of research strengths in the Faculty and foster inter-disciplinary collaboration.

**Learned Societies**

As a postgraduate research student you are encouraged to join appropriate learned societies. Your supervisor should be able to provide information about which societies would be most appropriate to you. The student membership subscription is often much lower than full membership and there may be a number of benefits to be gained from joining (e.g., free or reduced-rate attendance at the society's meetings; travel awards/bursaries, free or reduced-rate publications etc). This should be your first port of call for funding to support travel/attendance at a conference. If you are unable to obtain funding from any other source, the Graduate School holds a small travel grant budget (see page 25 for details). Some societies hold events particularly aimed at postgraduate students (e.g., Careers Fairs).

**Bionow**

You will have the option to attend free research seminars and workshops organised by bionow [www.bionow.co.uk/home.aspx](http://www.bionow.co.uk/home.aspx). You will benefit from the wealth of information on the website including a searchable database of local scientific expertise and resources, a diary of events, job vacancies and links to many other related sites.

**Vitae**

Vitae is an organisation which supports all academic researchers. Vitae supports postgraduate researchers to be fully equipped and encouraged to complete their studies successfully and then to make the successful transition from their PhD studies to their future careers. Their belief is that:

*“Doctoral researchers are our most talented: they have the potential to make a significant difference to the economic competitiveness of the UK. The UK GRAD Programme has a key role in enabling them to realise their potential.”*

The website address of this important organisation for UK students is [www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk) and you will probably want to keep up-to-date on what training events are available. They run excellent UK Grad Schools which are free residential workshops for research council-funded students (and are open to other UK students too) and are designed especially for postgraduate researchers. So, if you’re looking for inspiration, motivation, self-awareness and the chance to decide your next move, then these courses are for you. Remember they can count towards your development training and are an excellent networking opportunity. It is hoped to make funding available to non-research council-funded students. This is what recent participants had to say:

*“The GRADschool was such a worthwhile use of my time. I have no doubt that it has had a huge impact on my life.”* (Catherine Morgan, Heriot-Watt University).

*“The GRADschool is excellent, it far outdid my expectations and I came out feeling confident about myself academically”* (Feluzia Shariff, University of Warwick).

**4 STUDENT PROGRESS AND ASSESSMENT**

**Regulations and University Guidelines for Research Students**

For details of the regulations for postgraduate research degrees see the following web site: [www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/)

The University Guidelines for Research Students are available in the University Handbook for Research Students and should be read carefully. You will be provided with a copy of the University Handbook at registration. These Guidelines describe in more detail the essential elements of student/supervisor,
student/university relationships and detail the minimum requirements that you will be expected to comply with during your programme of work.

www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/PGR/

Conditional Candidature for PhD / MD /

Your candidature for the above degrees will be confirmed as appropriate following a positive recommendation by your progress panel. For full-time candidates this will normally take place during year 1 and for part-time candidates during year 2. Exceptionally, you may be permitted to continue studying for a further period and be reconsidered no later than two months after the initial decision (four months for part-time candidates)

Annual Progression

An Annual Progress report is required for each postgraduate research student. While no one likes examinations, these annual progress reviews will allow you to gauge your progress and to identify any potential problems which might affect the successful completion of the research degree for which you are registered.

Before describing the progress review process, it is necessary to set out the differing timelines we use to assess students registered for each of the research degrees on offer in our Faculty, during the period of minimum candidature:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree and minimum candidature</th>
<th>PROGRESS REVIEW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRes/PhD 4 years FT</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRes approx. 6 months</td>
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<td>12 months (MRes result)</td>
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<td>PhD studies 8 months</td>
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**NB:** pending submission progress reviews in red only takes place if the student has not submitted six months before final submission date
NB: annual progress reviews will continue during pending and/or extended submission, until submission of your thesis.

It is a common criticism levelled by students registered to research programmes that a first progress review after 8 months is too early. However, experience has led us to believe it is vital to pick up problems sufficiently early to allow corrections to be made before the student registers for a second year of study.

Following each progress review your progress panel will complete an annual progress report form.

Progression is carried out via the ePortfolio on-line system. Guidelines and the electronic system can be accessed at:

www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/progression.htm

What preparation is required for each progress review?

The Graduate School is always mindful of the breadth of research that is undertaken within our Faculty. For example, the development of research methodology in a patient-based project is likely to differ from that required for a molecular biology project; it is likely that the processes for progression of students working in these two areas will also need to be a little different.

For this reason only framework recommendations for the whole Graduate School are provided, allowing each institute to tailor the process to their specific requirements. However, we do believe that some general guidelines will be helpful.

The first point to be borne in mind is that the progression process is to help you rather than to hinder progress with your research! We certainly would discourage any student from taking leave from their research in order to produce an overlong and highly detailed report for each of their progress reviews.

For this reason we make very clear recommendations on the maximum length of any report. We are also mindful that a report submitted after, for example, 8 months should be longer and contain more detail of the background to the project and the planned experimental work than a report submitted late in the project when many students will have finished data collection and may already be beginning to prepare their thesis.

In all cases, reports should be word-processed and presented to a high standard. The pages should be numbered and the first page should show the student’s name, institute address, supervisor(s) name, date of first registration, details of the research degree programme undertaken, the number of the progress review (Year 1, 2 etc), the date of submission of the report and the title of the research project.

In order to simplify the process as far as possible, we believe that you and your supervisors should liaise with your assessors to schedule your progress reviews appropriately. The Graduate School should be informed if any progress review, and particularly the first progress review, is delayed as this could also delay your registration at the start of the next academic year.

In addition to my written report, what else is needed for the progress review interview?

1. For all progress reviews you will be required to present a 10–15 minute PowerPoint presentation detailing your aims, the progress you have made against the milestones listed in your Project Approval document, significant results you have obtained and your plans for work you still need to complete. Don’t worry if data projection facilities are not present in the room where your review is held, presentation using a computer screen will be fine.

2. You will need to complete and submit to your assessors an ‘annual report from student for progress panel’ form to pair with a similar from completed and submitted by your supervisor(s).

3. You will need to show the assessors your laboratory book(s), research journal(s) or research diary(s).

You should also bring evidence of your Self-Assessment and Personal Development Plan (E) and List of Training Courses Attended (G) from your research training ePortfolio.
Please be aware that University regulations state that:

“The annual progression review procedure will be deemed equivalent to a board of examiners and therefore the University’s procedure for assessment irregularities shall apply to any reported or suspected cheating or plagiarism.”

The procedures are available at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/

The first progress review of PhD and MD students

This is an important academic exercise and the report must provide your assessors with clear evidence that you have developed a good understanding of the background to and the aims of your work. Furthermore, this knowledge should have led to the development of appropriate and achievable research plans with some evidence of progress with data acquisition, analysis and discussion.

We believe that one of the important features of regular progress review is to reinforce awareness of the timeline leading to successful submission of a thesis. For this reason, we would also expect each student to end the report with a realistic projection of what work will be undertaken throughout the remainder of the project.

The first progress review report should be written in your own time and should not delay the progress of your research.

We recommend the following structure for your report:

1. Table of contents
2. A literature review
3. A clear statement of the aims of your project
4. A summary of the methods developed and results obtained to date
5. A discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of your work to date
6. An outline of your future work.

We are aware that research is hard to do and anticipate that some students will have relatively few results after a period as short as 8 months. For this reason, we believe that the literature review is likely to be a particularly important part of this report and should be up-to-date, comprehensive and fully referenced. Naturally all figures or material which are not your own should be fully acknowledged.

One possibility you might like to consider is that after your progress review the literature review in your report could be submitted to a learned journal for formal publication. There are many examples where this has already happened in the Faculty. Clearly this will almost certainly require further work and discussion with your supervisor(s).

In order to stop students from submitting over-long mini-theses, the Graduate School suggests a maximum word limit for this report (excluding references and figures) of 7500 words. Reports should be uploaded via the e-progression online process (see www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/progression.htm for further information).

In addition to your written report, the panel will expect you to give a PowerPoint presentation as detailed above.

The first progress review of MPhil students

Time is even more precious for MPhil students than for students registered for longer degree programmes. For this reason, we feel that the first progress review should be a rather shorter document than is required for PhD and MD candidates. However, we still feel the report should contain a significant literature review, a statement of your aims and details of your progress to date. Although we normally indicate a word limit (excluding references and figures) of 3000 words for this report, we would not wish to discourage you from developing a longer literature review for use in your MPhil thesis.
In addition to your written report, the panel will expect you to give a PowerPoint presentation as detailed above.

Intermediate progress reviews

The purpose of this progress review is to monitor your progress and to identify any factors which might lead to a delay in the submission of your thesis. We do not require a written report of the length you produced for your first progress review.

We recommend the following structure for your report:

1. A summary of the data you have acquired to date
2. Detailed analysis of a completed portion of your data, showing statistical methods if appropriate
3. A discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of your study to date
4. A list indicating what you will need to achieve in order to complete your work
5. An appendix containing any abstracts, manuscripts or papers you have written or presented

As projects develop differently, we believe a word limit is of limited value by this stage. However, we would expect this report to be about 3–4 pages (excluding any figures), but not to exceed 10 - 15 pages (double line spacing), including figures but excluding any appendix. If you feel a longer report is necessary, please discuss this with your panel before completion and submission of the document.

In addition to your written report, the panel will expect you to give a PowerPoint presentation as detailed above.

Final year progress reviews

The most helpful form of report at this time will contain a detailed breakdown of the structure of your thesis, presented in the form of a comprehensive table of contents. This should show all main chapter headings with a breakdown of the key sub-headings. It will also be useful to show you have assembled your results (tables, figures etc) into a logical order and have divided them into chapters. There is no need for any discussion but it will be useful for you to identify any outstanding areas of research work together with the approaches you will adopt to complete your study on time. The most crucial aspect of this progress review is to show that you have developed a realistic timetable indicating how and when you will complete preparation of your thesis.

In addition to your written report, the panel will expect you to give a PowerPoint presentation as detailed above.

Where there are additional requirements specific to your institute, a link is provided on the Graduate School website at:

www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/documentation/ProgressReviewprocess.htm

What happens at the end of your period of minimum candidature?

If you have not submitted your thesis on completion of your period of minimum candidature we are still keen to help you to gain the degree you have worked so hard for. For this reason we will contact you to check your progress, to find out if there is anything we can do to help you and to let you know that time is running out! During this period progress reviews will continue on an annual basis. All candidates are required to remain continuously registered until completion of their studies. For regulations concerning ‘pending submission’ and ‘extended submission’, see PhD progress regulations at the following web address: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/.

Guidance for preparation and submission of thesis

Full details of the research degree examination process can be found at:
Preparation of Thesis

One successful outcome of your postgraduate studies will be a thesis, presented for examination. It is recognised that a doctoral thesis should be a piece of work which a capable, well-qualified and diligent student, who is properly supported and supervised, can produce within the times specified in the University Regulations (three years, or at most four years of full-time study for a PhD).

You are advised not to underestimate the time it will take to write and ‘put together’ (formatting text, final formatting of illustrations, bibliography, etc) your thesis. This process will be greatly helped if your results have been organised and collated as you have proceeded through your studies. If some of the work has been written up for publication, this will also greatly facilitate production of your thesis. Nevertheless, a minimum of three months concentrated and continuous effort should be recognised as the absolute minimum effort required (and for many students six months may be nearer the mark).

The thesis should exhibit substantial evidence of original scholarship and contain material worthy of publication. The simplest way of demonstrating the latter is to have papers published or in press based upon your own work described in the thesis.

Criteria for the Doctorate and MPhil awards are included in the Code of Practice, which can be accessed via www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/PGR/.

Length. The normal length of a doctoral thesis in the Faculty of Medical Sciences should not exceed 80,000 words, exclusive of bibliographies and footnotes, and it is strongly recommended that only in exceptional circumstances should a thesis be more than 200 pages in length. A thesis should not be a complete diary of events. Rather, it should reflect a concise, yet complete, exposition of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the studies. Many examiners comment that good work has been spoilt by the inclusion of unsatisfactory and unnecessary material that adds little to the overall thrust of the thesis. Do not confuse quantity with quality!

In preparing your thesis you should consult the following:

*Rules for the Submission of Work for Higher Degrees and Rules for the Form of Theses*

Both can be found in the University Calendar, available on the Web at www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/

Further guidelines on the submission and format of theses are available on the Student Progress Service website at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/exam.htm

Appointment of Examiners

The exact title of a candidate’s thesis must be submitted via ePortfolio for approval by the Dean of Postgraduate Studies not less than three months before the thesis is submitted. You will need to log onto ePortfolio to initiate the process. It is the responsibility of your supervisor to nominate examiners, although you will be consulted and have an opportunity to voice any concerns (please note that examiner appointments will only be reviewed if it is clear that there may be bias or prejudice by the examiner).

Submission of Thesis

You need to submit the following to the Graduate School Office:

- 2 softbound copies of your thesis
- a copy of your abstract
- examination entry form signed off by your supervisor and the finance office
- an electronic copy of your thesis

The University will test a sample of theses for originality. Where evidence of plagiarism is detected it will be dealt with under the University’s Procedure for Assessment Irregularities.
Instructions on how to submit your electronic copy can be found at: www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/PGR/eSubmission.htm

NB: For FMS, please use a USB or the University’s drop box facility. CDs are not recommended as not all of our IT equipment supports a CD Drive.

The Graduate School Office will send your thesis out to examiners asking them to complete a preliminary report within 6 to 8 weeks. It is your supervisor’s responsibility to arrange your viva date (NB for the degree of MPhil a viva is not always required) in consultation with your examiners. Under no circumstances should you contact your examiners directly, either prior to or following the oral examination.

Options Open to Examiners

Options open to examiners are set out in the relevant degree programme examination conventions at www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/

Doctoral Viva Seminars

In order to enhance the research culture, student experience and the PhD/MD examination process, each student will present a seminar immediately before their viva examination. The seminar will not form part of the formal examination and shall not contribute to the examiners’ decision on the student’s performance. Full details can be found on the Graduate School website at: www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/staff/supervisor/documents/DoctoralVivaSeminarguidelines.pdf

Medical Sciences Doctoral Prize Thesis

In order to recognise outstanding quality of research carried out during doctoral research studies, a limited number of prizes are awarded biannually on the nomination of examiners of PhD and other doctoral research theses. Further information is available at: www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/documentation/documents/PhDPrize.pdf

Problems

It is expected that every attempt will be made to resolve any problems within the institute in the first instance and that your academic supervisor will liaise with the Faculty Postgraduate Tutor, and/or the Graduate School Administrator if appropriate. We always try to be available to meet informally with students so please make an appointment at the Graduate School Office to talk to us if there is anything we can do to help.

In the case of a serious problem it will be necessary for the Dean of Postgraduate Studies to meet with your supervisor and then with you individually to attempt to resolve the situation. Examples of serious problems are a breakdown in student/supervisor relationship; very poor progress causing concern that a student may not be capable of achieving his or her degree; significant other factors impeding a student's progress. Such meetings are formally minuted.

If at any stage throughout the period of study the supervisor feels that the progress of a student is unsatisfactory or that the standard of work generally is below that expected, he/she should inform the student by letter as well as orally and a copy of the letter should be sent to the Graduate School Office and to the director of the institute concerned. The supervisor should discuss with the student what action should be taken to improve the position.

If a student’s progress/performance during the year has been sufficiently unsatisfactory, the director of the institute, in conjunction with the supervisor, may recommend to the Dean of Postgraduate Studies that the student either discontinue his/her studies or change his/her registration if this is possible and appropriate. The situation would be formally investigated as discussed in paragraph 2 before any action was taken. If the Dean of Postgraduate Studies approves such a recommendation the student would be informed in writing by the Graduate School Office.
Policy on Extensions

You must take responsibility for keeping your research project on track so that it is completed within the normal timescale.

Extensions are not normally granted. If you believe you are in danger of failing to submit on time please contact the Graduate School Office immediately for advice.

Interruption of Studies

We sincerely hope you will not experience any personal misfortune during the course of your studies but recognise that significant life events affect all of us at some time in our lives. If you become seriously ill or are prevented from working due to illness, bereavement or some other major life event, we recommend that you seek an interruption of studies for an appropriate length of time until you are able to resume work. Depending on circumstances, a medical note may be required.

To request an interruption of studies please complete the appropriate form which is available at www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/PGR/Changecircs.htm; you will need to return this to the Graduate School Office, enclosing supporting evidence, at the time of the interruption. **NB: retrospective requests for interruptions will not normally be granted.** Once this has been approved we will formally write to you to interrupt your studies. At this point the clock governing the time prescribed by the regulations stops ticking and does not start again until you resume your studies. This ensures that you are not disadvantaged. When you are able to resume work the completion date will be moved forward by the equivalent amount of time to ensure that you have the correct amount of time to finish your thesis. On returning to study, following a substantial period of interruption, you will be invited to attend a ‘re-entry interview’ with your institute postgraduate research student coordinator.

It is very important to note that an interruption of studies often enables a student who has experienced problems/had a baby to still complete their thesis on time. If you are absent for a period of 2 months or more, a re-entry interview will be arranged by your postgraduate research student coordinator to ensure that you are supported through your return to studies.

International students seeking an interruption of studies will be required to return home to comply with the terms of their visas. Advice on visa issues is available via the visa team, see www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/visa/

Students who receive a stipend paid via the University should note that payments during a period of interruption will normally be discontinued.

The Graduate School will normally inform your sponsor of any periods of interruption but students should take responsibility for ensuring they check the terms of their studentship for any financial or other implications.

All students who are absent through illness should inform their supervisor as soon as possible, and should complete a ‘student notice of absence form’ via S3P for any period of illness between 3 and 7 days. Periods of absence of more than 7 days require in addition a medical certificate from your doctor.

Further guidance can be found in the University’s policy on sickness absence, which is available at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/

Maternity Leave

The University policy on maternity/paternity leave can be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/

Holidays

The University’s policy on holiday entitlement for postgraduate research students can be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/pg-research/
**Assessment Irregularities**

The University is committed to ensuring fairness in assessment and has established a procedure for dealing with assessment irregularities.

The University’s procedure in full can be found at:

www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/assessment.htm

Information on Good Academic Conduct, including a link to ‘Right-cite’ can be found at:

www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/conduct.htm

You will find help on this website on how to avoid problems with plagiarism, collusion, and proof reading. There is also a web-based tutorial package on plagiarism which you are recommended to work through if in doubt.

Information on the University’s complaints procedure can be found at:

www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/complaints.htm

Information on the University’s appeals procedure can be found at:

www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/appeals.htm

**Ensuring the Quality of your Degree**

Postgraduate Research Degrees are reviewed annually via the Quality and Enhancement Framework. Details of this process, which includes student representation and external review, can be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/governance/monitoring/researchdegree/

5 **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Student Self Service Portal (S3P)**

The Student Self Service Portal (S3P) allows you to register on your programme of study and keep your personal details up-to-date. You can also pay fees online, produce standard documents to confirm your status (eg for council tax purposes) and report an absence. Use this system as your first point of call if you want to:

- Register on your programme of study
- Keep details (addresses etc) up-to-date
- Pay fees
- View and print documentation to confirm your student status
- Report an absence to your institute

Further detail is available here: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/s3p/

You can log in here: https://s3p.ncl.ac.uk/login/index.aspx

Remember that S3P does not use your campus log-in details. You will need your campus username and a DIFFERENT password.

**Communication and Website Address**

The main means of communication with postgraduate students is by e-mail via Campus Management. Look out for messages from the Graduate School Office.

You will find lots of useful information about your studies on the Graduate School Website:

http://www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/
Laboratory Facilities

Over the past few years, the Faculty has invested heavily in a range of facilities to support and enhance our own research and that of our commercial partners and customers.

Specialist support ranges from large facilities such as electron and confocal microscopy and flow cytometry to access to techniques such as bio-informatics and proteomic analysis. Clinical Research Platforms combine state-of-the-art facilities with staff experienced in all phases of clinical research. New facilities added recently include the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre at the Freeman Hospital; a new Dental Clinical Research Facility; and our ‘Biobank’, providing access to clinical samples for research.

Full details of all facilities are available at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/medicalsciences/research/facilities/

Research Governance

Before starting your research it is important that you are aware of ethical and legal regulations that govern research. To help you understand these regulations and your role in conducting research in a legal, ethical and safe manner, the Graduate School provides introductory training in safety (mandatory), research governance and ethics.

The following websites give details of research governance frameworks, policies, legislations and safety.

Research Governance Framework – Health and Social Care (Human Research)


The Research Council UK Policy and Code of Conduct on the Governance of Good Research:

www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc/

The Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 legislation:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2012/9780111530313/contents

Safety

Postgraduate students are expected to be aware of the School/Institute and University policies on safety and to attend appropriate safety courses provided by the University. Postgraduate students must adhere to all legal requirements governing experimental procedures. The University and Faculty have a good safety record that they wish to maintain. Relevant information can be found within the University Health & Safety Policy (2004) and on the University Safety Office website

www.safety.ncl.ac.uk/Home.aspx

Faculty health and safety policy is available at

https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/medical/services/safety/index.htm

PLEASE NOTE: you must not proceed with any work involving radioactivity, carcinogens, toxic chemicals, microbiological hazards, genetic modification, animals, human subjects or human-derived materials without appropriate risk assessment, training and authorisation. Immunisation (and in some cases allergy screening) is recommended before certain types of work with animals (eg tetanus immunisation) and human biological material (eg hepatitis B). Your supervisor should be able to advise you on all these aspects, but in addition your institute will have designated safety officers available to consult.

Finally, remember that an appreciation of health and safety issues is likely to feature as an important element in your future career.

Laboratory Book/Research Diary Guidelines for Postgraduate Students

Keeping a good record of your research or experiments is essential for the management of your project and for writing up your thesis. In addition, a robust set of records is essential to demonstrate your ‘ownership’ of the data (it can be used as a legal document) and is likely to be used by your supervisor or other members of the research team who may want to follow up your work. It is almost like keeping
a diary, for recording the experimental procedures that you do on a daily basis. Your laboratory
notebook/research diary reflects your personal style, but you should write it so that your supervisor or
a co-worker familiar with the subject of your research could understand it. You yourself will need to refer
to the notebook at a later date, so do not omit any information necessary to understand what you did,
or to repeat it. Thus for every event/experiment you need to record:

What you did
Why you did it
How you did it
What you concluded

You will be provided with a standard laboratory book by your institute. You should number the pages in
the book. The use of a notebook helps you to develop good laboratory habits which will serve you well
in your future career – in many commercial and clinical research settings there will be very rigid
procedures for logging records.

The first 2–3 pages should be left blank, as these will ultimately become a list of contents for the rest of
the book.

Entries should be made in ink, not pencil. Do not erase or use correction fluid. If you make errors, cross
out with a single, horizontal line, so the original entry is still visible (you never know if you might need to
be able to read what you crossed out at some time in the future). Make sure you define all abbreviations
and make all entries clear, organised and complete and neat enough for someone else to read.

Make daily notebook entries as the diary/experiment progresses, as a running record of the work. The
notebook includes a complete history of all research events/experiments performed, and their results.
Some research or experiments go on for weeks or months and you need to write up every step, referring
back to earlier stages as appropriate.

Each time you perform an experiment or procedure or attend a research meeting, enter the date the
work is started, and enter the title of the event at the top of the page. Also, enter the date, title and the
page number at which the event/experiment starts in the contents section that you create at the
beginning of the book. The contents pages should be filled in as the work progresses.

For each experiment, note the purpose and the conclusion (even if the conclusion is that you need to
repeat it).

Enter the aim of the event or new experiment, and then outline the methods used. If you are repeatedly
using the same method, it is not necessary to enter the methodology each time the event or experiment
occurs, but you can refer back to the first time you used that particular method instead. Include enough
information on experimental conditions so that you could repeat the experiment if necessary.

Enter the results of the event or experiment, along with any observations you have about how it worked
out.

Write notes or explanations essential to proper performance of the research or experiment or
interpretation of the results. This might include your explanation of how you overcame any difficulties
encountered in the research or experiment and your own thoughts on research progress.

If there are photographs or printouts from computers or other equipment, mark them with the date and
glue or staple into the lab book at the appropriate point. ‘Magic Tape’ is recommended and Pritt Stick is
not.

Keep a record of batch numbers of chemicals, kits etc and where you have stored samples.

The reader won’t expect the lab notebook to contain a polished report of the experiment, but will expect
to find enough evidence to determine what you did, how you did it, and what results you obtained.
Finally, remember the saying ‘if you didn’t write it down, you didn’t do it’. 
You will be required to return your lab book/research diary to your supervisor before a pass list for your award can be issued. A training session is available through the Research Student Development Programme on ‘Recording your research, lab books, research diaries and more’.

**Sources of Help and Support**

As a postgraduate student there may be times when you need help/advice/support. This could be for academic, financial or other personal reasons. Here are some suggestions of where you might go to find this:

**Supervisor/s**

Often the first port of call for a range of problems.

If you want to talk to someone less involved with your research:

**Institute Postgraduate Research Student Coordinator**

Every institute has one. Make sure you know who it is for your institute. A list is included in this handbook.

If you would like to talk to someone outside your institute:

**Faculty Postgraduate Tutor (Associate Dean)**

Dr Alison Tyson-Capper. Can be contacted via the Graduate School Office or on extension 87156 or email medpg-enquiries@ncl.ac.uk for a confidential meeting or to help you find other sources of support.

**Graduate School Office**

Barbara Sumner is the Graduate School Administrator in the Faculty and her office is in the Graduate School which is located on the third floor of the Ridley Building 1. She will be able to advise on queries relating to your studies, funding or welfare and to point you in the direction of other sources of help if necessary. Barbara is also available for a friendly chat about any difficulties you may be experiencing. Phone (85034), e-mail (barbara.sumner@ncl.ac.uk).

**Dean of Postgraduate Studies**

Professor John Kirby, Graduate School, Faculty of Medical Sciences. He should be informed of any major difficulties likely to affect your progress. The earlier he is aware of issues, the more likely he will be able to find an effective solution. Phone (83848), e-mail (john.kirby@ncl.ac.uk). He may also be contacted via the Graduate School Office.

**Importantly, the following may also be able to help:**

**Student counselling service, King’s Gate**

[www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/support/counselling.htm](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/support/counselling.htm)

A free and confidential service for students.

**Student advice centre, Student’s Union Building**

[www.nusu.co.uk/welfare/sac/](http://www.nusu.co.uk/welfare/sac/)

A source of information, advice and assistance on practical problems encountered by students.

**Provision for Disabled Students, King’s Gate**

[www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/disability-support](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/disability-support)

The University has a Disability Unit which is a centre offering advice, guidance and support for students and staff.

**The Careers Service, King’s Gate**

[www.ncl.ac.uk/careers](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/careers)

The Careers Service provides the support you need to gain skills and experience, to make informed decisions about careers and to find jobs or further research opportunities.
Writing Development Centre, Robinson Library
www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wdc
The Writing Development Centre offers guidance and tuition for students who wish to improve their writing skills for study or employment purposes.

English Language Materials Online (ELMO)
www.ncl.ac.uk/langcen/facilities/elmo.htm
ELMO is a website of multimedia, self-study English language activities to help you improve your English for Academic Purposes (EAP). It is free for Newcastle University students and staff.

Visa Support, King’s Gate
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/staff-resources/Visa/
A range of assistance from student visa renewal to advice on the immigration implications of changes of study plans.

Accommodation, King’s Gate
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/accommodation/current/
Information on a range of accommodation issues

Finance, King’s Gate
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/internal/finance/
Information on a range of finance issues

Computing Facilities
Faculty of Medical Sciences
Faculty IT Skills teaching staff, Faculty Learning Technologies staff and the central IT Service provide support for the Information and Communication Technology available within the Faculty buildings.

Computing clusters
Clusters of computers are provided within the Cookson building in the following locations:

- **Fell**: ground floor – 90 PCs – 24 hours;
- **Pool**: ground floor – 70 PCs – 8.45am to 6pm term time only;
- **Dene**: fifth floor, Walton Library – 30 PCs – Library hours;
- **Linn**: fifth floor, Walton Library – 20 PCs – Library hours
- **Glen & Torr**: fifth floor, Walton Library – 60 PCs – Library hours.

There are also quick access stations available in the main foyer (Cookson Building) and by the Dental Lecture Theatres.

Information for all clusters can be found online at [www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/clusters/](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/clusters/)

Other clusters are available across campus and as clusters are often busy, you should use the cluster availability displays in the Walton Library and Cookson foyer, also available from m.ncl.ac.uk or via the Newcastle University app for mobile users, to find the nearest available PC.

Cluster etiquette
Whilst working within a computing cluster, please remember this is an academic place of work, not an internet café.

- There must be no drinking or eating. Food and drink should be kept off benches, within bags.
- Work quietly and respect that those around you may need to concentrate.
- Turn your mobile phone to silent and conduct all conversations outside of the cluster.
• During busy times unless you are doing academic work you may be asked to leave so someone else can use the facilities.

Failure to comply with these and other cluster rules of use may result in the temporary suspension of your computing account. See http://www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/rules/ for more information.

Computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis, unless a teaching session is in progress, when you must check the traffic light sign and only enter quietly if the sign is set to orange. Weekly timetables are displayed outside the cluster and you should check this before entering the cluster to see if teaching is or will be taking place. Information is also available from m.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/ or the NU app.

**Printing and scanning**
A4 black & white printing is available from all clusters across campus. In the Cookson building, colour A4 printers are available from most clusters and Walton Library foyer. Specialist printing (larger paper) can be printed from any cluster PC and collected from the Old Library Cluster, 1.57. It is also possible to print to a limited range of printers across campus using RAS (ras.ncl.ac.uk).

An initial printing allocation of £37 is provided, and you can top this up online using a debit or credit card, from http://www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/clusters/printing/.

Scanners are located within all clusters.

**Software**
A range of software is available through the cluster machines. Some specialist software is available through specific clusters only. More information is available from www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/software/.

Student licences are available for most major software, including Microsoft. See information online at www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/software/licences/ and www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/software/softwaredeals/student/ before purchasing your own.

**Off-campus access**
The Remote Application Service (RAS) provides access to the networked drive, email, on-campus browser and a range of applications. It is available online and requires uninterrupted internet access.

Students can also use the University network – see www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/connect/

Web-based e-mail is available from http://www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/email/student/outlookwebappowa/.

**Computing support**
Term-time helpdesk support is located within the Dene Cluster on Tuesdays from 1pm to 2pm (Semester 1 only) and Fell cluster on Wednesdays from 2pm to 4pm (Semester 2 only) by Faculty IT Skills teaching staff. Online documentation is also available at fms-itskills.ncl.ac.uk/.

Documentation is available online at www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/ or from the IT Service Desk on extension 85999, email at it.servicedesk@ncl.ac.uk or from Claremont Tower, Reception.

**Computing Contacts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University IT Service Desk</th>
<th>(0191 20) 85999</th>
<th><a href="mailto:it.servicedesk@ncl.ac.uk">it.servicedesk@ncl.ac.uk</a></th>
<th><a href="http://www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/">www.ncl.ac.uk/itservice/</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty IT Skills support: Ramla Gabriel</td>
<td>(0191 20) 84542</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ITSkills.Support@ncl.ac.uk">ITSkills.Support@ncl.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>fms-itskills.ncl.ac.uk/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Library Facilities**

The University Library provides an excellent centrally funded service for supporting student learning. It is a repeat holder of the Customer Service Excellence Award.

The Walton Library, is the University's specialist medical, dental, pharmacy and biomedical sciences library. Based in the Medical School, its facilities include over 40,000 items of book stock, and 900 current journal titles in addition to extensive back runs. It also provides extensive electronic journal, ebook and database access, which is also available off-campus to the staff and students of the University. The Library has 578 study spaces, three PC clusters, an inter library loan service, a silent working area and a café. It has wireless working throughout, and provides laptop docking stations for students to use their own computers as well as laptop loans.

The library subject support team teach on the Graduate Skills Development Programme and places on these sessions can be booked here: [faculty-tools.ncl.ac.uk/training](http://faculty-tools.ncl.ac.uk/training)

More information about the Library including opening hours, and further details of services and staff contacts can be found at the Library homepage:

Walton Library

[www.ncl.ac.uk/library/](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/)

0191 208 7550

**Travel Grants for Graduate Students registered for PhD**

Research students registered for PhD are eligible to apply to the Faculty for a travel grant to support, for example, attendance of a conference or a laboratory visit. Unfortunately this is not available to MD students who normally have alternative sources of funding through their employment. Similarly, salaried staff candidates usually have alternative arrangements.

Students may make only one application during a three-year period of full-time study; successful applications will typically be made during the second or third year of study. Applications for up to £800.00 will be considered. Under exceptional circumstances an award of up to £1000 may be requested but very few grants will be to this value. An element of competition will exist, as it is likely that the fund will be oversubscribed. Factors such as student progress, supervisor’s recommendation, publication history and contribution to the meeting (eg poster or oral presentation), and attendance at development programme sessions will all be considered.

As we have finite resources we will obviously expect applicants to apply for funds from all other sources available. Typically these will include professional societies, etc – please consult your supervisor.

For an application form please see [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/funding/travelgrant/index.htm](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/funding/travelgrant/index.htm). Completed forms should be submitted online to the Graduate School Office at least three months in advance of the proposed travel.

Applications will be considered on a monthly basis.

Following notification of an award, the Fund will provide money up to a clearly stated maximal amount which can be used to support economy travel and reasonable accommodation; other expenses will also be considered if a clear case is presented at the time of application. Funds are only released after expenditure. It is vital that all receipts are submitted with your claim.

Successful applicants will be required to provide a brief report (~ 500 words) on the outcomes of their award.
Training Grants for Doctoral Students

Additional training grants are available from time to time and opportunities will be circulated to relevant doctoral students. Details will be published at www.ncl.ac.uk/fms/postgrad/funding/ together with relevant criteria and instructions on how to apply.