



School of Health and Social Care

Faculty of Science and Health

PhD Students

Postgraduate Research milestones are used to ensure students are making sufficient progress during their studies, and to provide a supportive framework to guide students through the various stages of their research. The Milestones should also help to keep students on track to submit within the appropriate period. PGR supervisors should talk through the relevant milestones during supervisory meetings, and they should be referred to on a regular basis.

Supervisory Panels and Research Students' Progress Boards will use the milestones to reflect on the level of progress being made, ahead of making a recommendation. Whilst the milestones are specific for each department and type of course, it is recognised that every research journey is different, and that whilst the milestones provide an overarching framework of expectations, a degree of flexibility should be given, based on the trajectory and scope of research.

Students and supervisors are encouraged to supplement these milestones with individual research plans which take into account the specifics of an individual research project and the individual circumstances of the PGR student.

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**Year 1 (Full time), Year 1 and 2 (Part time)****Ahead of the first Supervisory Panel**

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.1	Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research project and complete the thesis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Needs Analysis to be completed. 	1	1
M1.2	Choose/narrow down the research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research. Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write central research problem/questions to be answered. Methodological considerations. Feasibility Report – identifying sources, access, and ethical considerations Planning for research impact - Define intended impact, identify key stakeholders, and outline engagement activities. Set indicators for measuring progress (refer to the Research Impact Toolkit on the Moodle page) Create project plan, outlining objectives for each stage.	1	2/3

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.3	Demonstrate work of the quality expected at end of year 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,000-word report- this may be a first draft of the research proposal or other piece of work. 	3	5
M1.4	Demonstrate knowledge of Ethics and Research Governance approval processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions have been made regarding which ethics and approvals are required. Any relevant ethics applications have been drafted, and where possible, submitted to relevant boards. 	3	6
M1.5	Demonstrate involvement in school- wide research activities as expected at the end of year 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poster presentation at School's Staff-Student Research Conference 	At the School's Annual Conference (summer term).	At the School's Annual Conference (summer term).

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research will be using human participants, and if so, has sought and received formal university ethics approval.

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research uses security-sensitive material, and if so, has sought and received formal university registration of this material.

The Supervisory Panel will make a recommendation to the Research Students' Progress Board, ahead of the next academic year. Further information regarding Supervisory Panels and Research Students' Progress Boards can be found here: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/pgr-progress>

Year 2 (Full time), Year 3 and 4 (Part time)**Ahead of the third Supervisory Panel (Confirmation Board)**

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.1	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities.	4	7



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 2. ▪ Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self- reflective style ▪ Engage with potential stakeholders and research users to inform them about the research, gather their reflections on its relevance, process, and potential impact 		
M2.2	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Critical Literature Review (where relevant) 	4	7
M2.3	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete within the three-year standard PhD period (six years for part-time students). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A 10,000-word document that evidences academic writing is of standard and ability expected at PhD level, including adequate referencing, critical evaluation/discussion, and language skills. 	4	7
M2.4	Demonstrate the ability to communicate appropriately to lay and expert audiences as expected in year 2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A 10-minute oral presentation of the proposed research outlining progress to date. 	4	7
M2.5	Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed. ▪ Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate. 	4	7

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.6	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected at the end of Year 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produce at least 40% of thesis in draft form. ▪ Report on research undertaken to date (3,000-word report). 	5	10
M2.7	Review significance and impact of research and articulate output. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver workshop ▪ Present research to students and staff at seminars/conferences ▪ Write journal articles ▪ Engage with potential stakeholders and research users to inform them about the research, gather their reflections on its relevance, process, and potential impact 	6	11
M2.8	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 3 which demonstrates the ability to submit within the three-year standard PhD period (six years for part- time students). ▪ Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self- reflective style 	6	12
M2.9	Demonstrate involvement in School- wide research activities as expected at the end of year 2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poster presentation at the School's Staff- Student Research Conference. 	At the School's Annual Conference (summer term).	At the School's Annual Conference (summer term).



Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research will be using human participants, and if so, has sought and received formal university ethics approval.

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research uses security-sensitive material, and if so, has sought and received formal university registration of this material.

The Supervisory Panel will make a recommendation to the Research Student Progress Board, ahead of the next academic year. Further information regarding Supervisory Panels and Research Student Progress Boards can be found here: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/postgraduate-research/pgr-progress>

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

Ahead of the fifth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M3.1	Ability to reflect on skills and knowledge development and its application to the research project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training Needs Analysis reviewed 	7	14
M3.2	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected when nearing submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research completed (experimental, empirical, and theoretical work, where relevant) ▪ Produce 60% draft chapters/ papers that supervisor(s) have judged to be of acceptable standard ▪ Engage stakeholders by presenting findings and gathering feedback on clinical and policy implications, potential impact, and future research 	7	15

Ahead of the sixth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M3.3	Clear evidence of progress towards submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed final draft of thesis for supervisor(s)/ supervisory panel comment 	9	18
M3.4	Demonstrate involvement in the school-wide research activities as expected at the end of year 3 (or equivalent for part-time students). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oral presentation at the School's Staff-Student Research Conference. ▪ Engage stakeholders by presenting findings and gathering feedback on clinical and policy implications, potential impact, and future research 	At the School's Annual Conference (summer term).	At the School's Annual Conference (summer term).

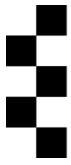
Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research will be using human participants, and if so, has sought and received formal university ethics approval.

Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research uses security-sensitive material, and if so, has sought and received formal university registration of this material.

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

Completion Period

If, at the 6th supervisory Panel, a student isn't on track to submit their thesis by the end of year 3 (year 6 for Part time students), a recommendation for a period of completion can be requested from the RSPB, for approval by the Faculty Dean (Postgraduate)



Milestone	Requirement	Term to undertake work <i>(To be used as a guide only)</i>
C1.1	Clear plan to submission <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timeline of work needing to take place before submission• Submission date agreed	Timeline agreed by Supervisory panel.