Essex Law School

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

MPhil 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.

Contents

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. Complete the Training Needs Analysis in order to do this.	1	1
M1.2	Choose research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research with the Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area): • Write central research problem/questions to be answered. • Methodological considerations. • Feasibility Report – identifying sources, access and ethical considerations • Create project plan, outlining objectives for each stage.	1	2/3

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M1.3	Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.	2	4
M1.4	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field with a Critical Literature Review.	2	5-6
M1.5	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete an MPhil within the standard two year period and evidence that academic writing is of standard and ability expected at MPhil level, including adequate referencing and language skills.	3	5-6
M1.6	Demonstrate effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities, in the following ways; • Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 2. • Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self- reflective style	3	6

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

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.1	Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with research project and complete the thesis. Review the Training Needs Analysis in order to do this.	4	7
M2.2	Demonstrate effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities, with the following steps;	4	8

		Full Time term	Part Time term
	• Create a detailed, realistic completion plan. • Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self- reflective style		
M2.3	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected for an MPhil at the end of Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students), with the following steps; • Research completed (empirical and theoretical work, where relevant) • Produce sufficient draft chapters/ papers • Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self- reflective style • Present research to students and staff at seminars/conference	4	9

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

Milestone	Requirement	Full Time term	Part Time term
M2.4	Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend as appropriate.	5	10
M2.5	Produce a completed final draft of thesis for supervisor(s)/ supervisory panel comment.	5-6	10-12

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

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

The Supervisory Panel will make a recommendation to the Research 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

Completion Period

If, at the 4th supervisory Panel, a student isn't on track to submit their thesis by the end of year 2 (year 4 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 *(To be used as a guide only)*
C1.1	Demonstrate clear evidence of progress towards submission with a timeline of work needing to take place before submission.	Timeline agreed by supervisory board.