



# Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies

## Faculty of Social Sciences

### 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. Students should determine whether they will produce a monograph- or paper-based dissertation during year 1 and should then read reference to chapters and/or papers below as relevant to their thesis format.

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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"> <li>• Training Needs Analysis to be completed.</li> <li>• Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate.</li> </ul>	1	1-3
M1.2	Choose research topic and demonstrate significance/impact of research. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area):</li> <li>• Write central research problem/questions to be answered.</li> <li>• Methodological considerations.</li> <li>• Feasibility Report – identifying sources, access and ethical considerations</li> <li>• Create project plan, outlining objectives for each stage.</li> </ul>	1	1-3

**Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel**

Milestone	Requirement	Full time term	Part time term
M1.3	Demonstrate understanding of chosen topic within the context of the field. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical Literature Review (where relevant)</li> </ul>	2	4
M1.4	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete an MPhil within the two-year standard MPhil period (four years for part-time students). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that academic writing is of standard and ability expected at MPhil level, including adequate referencing and language skills.</li> </ul>	2	5
M1.5	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a detailed, realistic plan of work/ timetable for Year 2.</li> <li>• Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style</li> </ul>	3	6
M1.6	Subject-specific milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• student has completed a review of the pertinent literature in the field and identified the major secondary and, where relevant, primary sources to be used</li> <li>• student has begun examining relevant literature and has demonstrated this in a draft chapter(s) of the thesis</li> <li>• student has adequately formulated the topic and produced a clear outline of the thesis, together with a plan of work for the remainder of the minimum period</li> </ul>	3	6



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in addition to formulating a research question, student has established a hypothesis in relation to the research question</li> <li>• student has clarified the original contribution he/she is making to the field -- student is able to demonstrate a critical stance in relation to the relevant literature of their chosen topic</li> <li>• student has clearly defined relevant psychoanalytic and analytical psychological concepts, and has grasped the relevant secondary literature surrounding these</li> <li>• student is aware of key psychoanalytic and analytical psychological debates pertinent to their project and can begin to take a critical stance in relation to them</li> <li>• student has explored various methodologies that may be used in their project and has selected the most appropriate approach for their thesis. Where possible, student has begun to explore how the chosen method/methods may be situated within, or related to, different psychoanalytic methodologies</li> <li>• where appropriate, the student has audited relevant postgraduate taught modules</li> <li>• student must attend the Research Student Week activities in person in order for an upgrade to be approved</li> </ul>		
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Has the student and supervisory team considered whether the research will be using human participants, and if so, has sought and received formal university ethics approval.

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

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

### Year 2 (Full time), Year 3 and 4 (Part time)

#### Ahead of the third Supervisory Panel

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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed.</li> <li>• Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate</li> </ul>	4	7-9
M2.2	Demonstration of effective project management through the setting of research goals and prioritisation of activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a detailed, realistic completion plan.</li> <li>• Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style</li> </ul>	4	7-9



**Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel**

Milestone	Requirement	Full time term	Part time term
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) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research completed (empirical and theoretical work, where relevant) Produce sufficient draft chapters/ papers</li> <li>• Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style</li> <li>• Present research to students and staff at seminars/conference</li> </ul>	5	10
M2.4	Completed final draft of thesis for supervisor(s)/Supervisory Panel comment	6	11

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 Students' 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 fourth 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 made by 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	Clear evidence of progress towards submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeline of work needing to take place before submission</li> <li>• Submission date agreed</li> <li>• Student is expected to complete the course 'Surviving the Viva', which is offered by the Learning and Development Unit of the University</li> </ul>	Timeline agreed by Supervisory Panel.