



Institute for Social and Economic Research

Faculty of Social Sciences

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. 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.

Contents

Year 1 (Full time), Year 1 and 2 (Part time)	2
Ahead of the first Supervisory Panel	2
Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel (Confirmation Board)	2
Year 2 (Full time), Year 3 and 4 (Part time)	3
Ahead of the third Supervisory Panel	3
Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel	3
Year 3 (Full time), Year 5 and 6 (Part time)	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Ahead of the fifth Supervisory Panel	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Ahead of the sixth Supervisory Panel	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Completion Period	Error! Bookmark not defined.

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

Milestone	Requirement	Term to undertake work <i>(To be used as a guide only)</i>	
		FT	PT
M1.1	Assess training needs and knowledge required to undertake research for Paper 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Needs Analysis to be completed • Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate • Regular attendance at ISER research seminars and research meetings 	1 2-3	1 1-3
M1.2	Choose research topic for Paper 1 and demonstrate potential significance/impact of research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Project Proposal, including (dependent on subject area): • Produce a clear statement of the central research problems/questions to be answered • Methodological considerations • Feasibility Report – identifying data sources, access and ethical considerations (especially if experimental work involved) • Create project plan, outlining objectives for each stage 	1	2-3

Ahead of the second Supervisory Panel (Confirmation Board)

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"> • Critical Literature Review (where relevant) 	2	4
M1.4	Demonstrate the ability to produce work of the quality and quantity in order to complete an MPhil within standard period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that academic writing is at (or close to obtaining) the standard expected at MPhil level, including • By end of year 1 SB and RSPB – (Term 3) for full-time students • By end of year 2 SB and RSPB – (Term Approved by Faculty Dean (Postgraduate) via PGRE Office: September 2021 adequate referencing and language skills • It should be clear that the student is on track to produce a complete draft of Paper 1 by the end of Term 3 (for full-time students; Term 6 for part-time) 	2-3	5-6
M1.5	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 and timetable for Year/Paper 2 • Produce supervisory panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style 	3	6

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>

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	Term to undertake work <i>(To be used as a guide only)</i>	
		FT	PT
M2.1	Review training needs and knowledge required to continue with Paper 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Needs Analysis to be reviewed • Attend Proficio courses and plan for further courses to attend, as appropriate • Regular attendance at ISER research seminar and research group meetings 	4	7
		4-6	8-9
M2.2	Demonstrate effective project management by setting research goals and prioritising of activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a detailed and realistic completion plan • Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style 	4	7-9

Ahead of the fourth Supervisory Panel

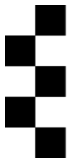
Milestone	Requirement	Term to undertake work <i>(To be used as a guide only)</i>	
		FT	PT
M2.3	Demonstrate work of the quality and quantity expected for MPhil for entry to completion at the end of Year 2 (or equivalent for part-time students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research completed (experimental, empirical and theoretical work, where relevant) • Produce full drafts of both papers close to MPhil standard Draft of chapter 1 (introduction) and chapter 4 (conclusion) • Produce Supervisory Panel report written in a clear and self-reflective style • Present research to students and staff at seminars/conference Completed final draft of thesis for supervisor(s)/ supervisory panel comment • Enter completion 	5-6	10-12

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>

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>



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 <i>(To be used as a guide only)</i>
C1	Clear evidence of progress towards submission <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timeline of work needing to take place before submission• Final polishing of all chapters• Completed final draft of thesis for supervisor(s)/ supervisory board comment	Timeline agreed by Supervisory board.