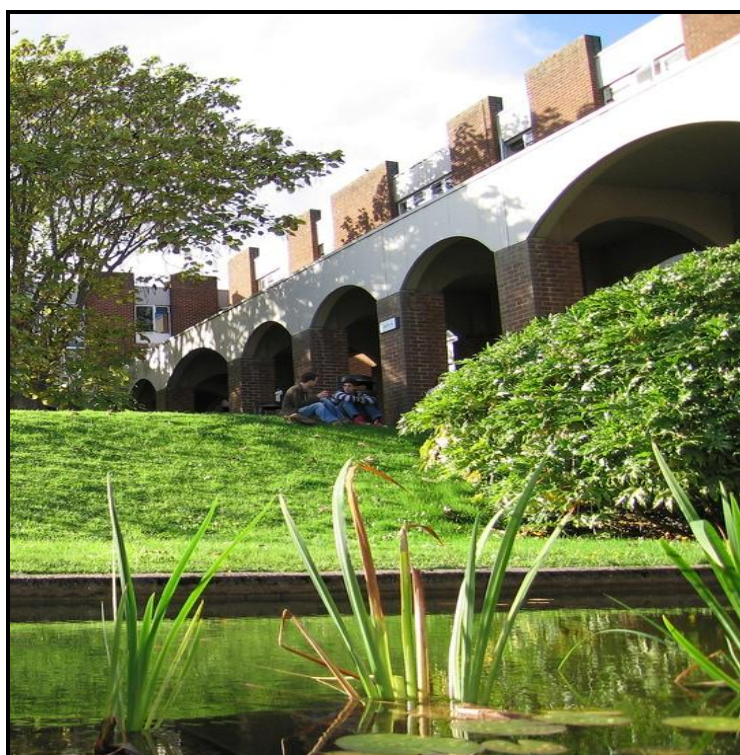


School of English

Doctoral Research Handbook



US
University of Sussex
English

Updated September 2012

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Welcome!



From **Professor Lindsay Smith**, Director of Doctoral Studies for the School of English.

Welcome to the School of English and congratulations on obtaining a place to study on one of our PhD or MPhil research programmes.

We are a large and diverse School, supporting a rich variety of taught programmes alongside doctoral and post-doctoral research. As members of the School, your contribution is vital to the spirit of critical inquiry at the heart of the Sussex tradition. We look forward to working with you, and to helping you throughout your graduate career.

The School of English is a cosmopolitan community, with an international reputation for research in the humanities and a culture driven by interdisciplinary problem-solving. The School believes that a trained critical imagination - one that grasps the importance of the analytic and the evocative, the poetic and the explanatory, the visual and the verbal - is essential to understand and to re-envision a world increasingly shaped by the speed of technological innovation and unprecedented global change.

To this end, the School is home to a number of interdisciplinary initiatives that foster intellectual collaboration and experimentation. We hope that you will take the opportunity to become involved in the various events supported by the School and to develop your own contribution to the graduate culture at Sussex.

There will be many opportunities throughout the year for students and faculty to discuss their research in different forums (research colloquia, reading groups, conferences). The School puts great emphasis on encouraging student initiatives, and we will facilitate student-led events wherever possible – look out for information about such events in your e-mail inbox and the graduate student notice boards in Arts B.

We very much look forward to working with you throughout your time at Sussex.

Some Key Web Links

We try to ensure that all the important information for our postgraduate researchers is on the web, particularly since doctoral students are often not on campus every day. Please familiarise yourselves with the following web links:

School of English website for Postgraduate Researchers:

www.sussex.ac.uk/english/internal/forstudents/researchstudents

English Signpost: for up-to-date listings of seminars, colloquia and conferences held by the School of English: **<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/english/about/signpost>**

Doctoral School: ('umbrella' unit on campus for all doctoral researchers at Sussex):

www.sussex.ac.uk/doctorschool/internal/

...in particular the researcher development workshops that are regularly held:

www.sussex.ac.uk/doctorschool/internal/researcherdev/events/

...and their Doctoral Researcher Handbook:

www.sussex.ac.uk/doctorschool/internal/index

The Library: **<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/>** for the main library site, and

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/infoplus/> for **Infoplus** – the Library's on-line guide to using the Library effectively if you are a postgraduate researcher.

Student Life Centre: for students experiencing difficulties that are affecting their studies such as financial problems or illness, the Student Life Centre has a team of student advisors who are well equipped to offer advice and support:

www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre

Sussex Direct: each student will be able to set up a Sussex Direct account in order to keep their contact information up to date, to be able to access reports from their supervisor, and to see teaching times if they become Assistant Tutors:

www.sussex.ac.uk/direct

Facebook.com: there is a Facebook site called 'University of Sussex English Postgraduates' which posts information about conferences and symposiums, as well as other potentially useful information. Click 'like' to join the group.

...And Some Key People!

Laura Vellacott, Research and Enterprise Coordinator

☎ (01273) 873429

English School Office, Arts B133

email: l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk

**Working hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9am-2.30pm
and Thursdays 9am-5pm.**

Laura is based in the English School Office and provides administrative support and advice for doctoral students. Laura is the first port of call for queries about your studies, and will be happy to help or point you in the right direction.



Professor Lindsay Smith, Director of Doctoral Studies

☎ (01273) 678831

Arts B, Room 238

email: L.J.Smith@sussex.ac.uk

Lindsay Smith is the Director of Doctoral Studies and has overall academic and administrative responsibility for PhD programmes within the School of English: their planning and development, for admissions and recruitment; overseeing the arrangements for effective supervision of research students; for quality assurance and the academic effectiveness of the programmes; and for overseeing the monitoring of student progress. Where appropriate, the Director will receive and act on the reports on student progress.



Dr Lynne Murphy, Research Degree Convener for Linguistics Researchers

☎ (01273) 678844

Arts B Building, Room B348

email: m.l.murphy@sussex.ac.uk

Lynne Murphy is the convener for PhD and MPhil degrees in Linguistics and English Language, and as such oversees the progress of students on these research programmes and the development of the programmes themselves.



Your Supervisor

☎ (01273)

Room number:

email:

Please get in touch with your main supervisor when you arrive at Sussex, to arrange to meet with him/her and plan your work during your first term.

Role and responsibilities of research students and supervisors (taken from the Sussex University Doctoral Researcher Handbook)

- 1 All research students should be provided at minimum with a 'main' and 'additional' supervisor. In the case of joint supervision, one of the supervisors will be designated as the 'main' supervisor for administrative purposes, and so that you have a clear point of contact in the event of difficulties.
- 2 An 'additional supervisor' (or the supervisor not designated the 'main' in the case of joint supervision) should be able to provide advice and support when the 'main' supervisor is not available. In the event of loss of a supervisor, your department and school are responsible for finding a suitable replacement, and ensuring that arrangements are in place to support you during any interim period.
- 3 Where a student has joint supervision (50/50) with 2 members of faculty, it is advisable to draw up an agreement at the start of the research degree as to the different responsibilities of each supervisor. Regular sessions must be set up for the student to meet both supervisors, and for all three to meet together.
- 4 Your responsibilities as a research degree student, and the responsibilities of those involved in your supervision, are outlined in the following two sections.

Responsibilities of research students

The responsibilities that must be observed by research degree students are as follows:

- (1) maintaining regular contact with the main supervisor;
- (2) discussing with the supervisor/s the type of guidance and comment which will be most helpful, and agreeing upon a schedule of meetings;
- (3) taking the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they may seem;
- (4) ensuring that any research which involves human subjects (interviewing etc) goes through the correct ethical review procedures before the research commences.
- (5) preparation of a research plan, to be approved during the student's first year of study;
- (6) planning a research project which is achievable within a schedule consistent with the normal expectations of the relevant Research Council, and maintaining progress in line with that schedule;
- (7) maintaining the progress of work in accordance with the stages agreed with the main supervisor, including in particular the presentation of written material as required in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage;
- (8) providing annually a brief formal report to the Director of Doctoral Studies as part of the annual review process;
- (9) deciding when he or she wishes to submit the thesis, taking due account of the supervisor/s opinion, which is however advisory only, and of the need to take account of University requirements regarding the length, format and organisation of the thesis;
- (10) taking responsibility for their own personal and professional development;

- (11) agreeing their development needs with the main supervisor at the outset of the programme, reviewing these on an annual basis, and attending any relevant development opportunities so identified;
- (12) being familiar with institutional regulations and policies that affect them, including the regulations for their qualification;
- (13) being aware of the University's Codes of Practice for Research and Intellectual Property and adhering to the requirements and observing the principles contained therein.

A student who considers that his or her work is not proceeding satisfactorily for reasons outside his or her control should discuss the matter with the supervisor/s and, failing satisfaction, with the Director of Doctoral Studies concerned who will advise on any grievance procedures. In particular, the student should ask to meet the Director of Doctoral Studies if the student feels that he or she is not establishing an effective working relationship with the supervisor/s, bearing in mind that the alleged inadequacy of supervisory or other arrangements during the period of study would not constitute grounds for an appeal against the result of a research degree examination unless there were exceptional reasons for it not having come to light until after the examination, in which case it might be considered.

Responsibilities of research degree supervisors

The *main* supervisor is directly responsible in their role as supervisor to the Director of Doctoral Studies and, through that officer, to the Head of School and then to Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research). The main supervisor is expected to provide the student with advice at every stage in the planning and conduct of research and in the writing of the thesis and to ensure that replacement supervision is available in the event of any significant period of absence. The more specific responsibilities of the *main supervisor* are as follows:

- (1) to complete an annual report on the student's progress for consideration within the framework of the School's annual review procedures, for later submission to the Director of Doctoral Studies;
- (2) to provide advice and support to the student on the preparation of a suitable thesis research outline during the first year of their study, in accordance with School procedures;
- (4) giving detailed advice on the necessary completion of successive stages of work so that the whole may be submitted within the scheduled time;
- (5) ensuring that the student is made aware of inadequacy of progress or of standards of work below that generally expected;
- (6) identifying prospective external examiners.

The more general responsibilities of those involved in the student's supervision are as follows:

- (1) to agree a schedule of regular meetings with the student, in accordance with School policy and in the light of discussion of arrangements with the student;
- (2) being accessible to the student at other appropriate times when he or she may need advice;
- (3) giving guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected, the planning of the research programme, literature and sources, attendance at taught classes, requisite techniques (including arranging for instruction where necessary), and the problem of plagiarism;

- (4) being familiar with the standard expected of research degree examiners, consistent with the guidance laid down by relevant Research Councils;
- (5) requesting written work as appropriate, and returning such work with constructive criticism and in reasonable time;
- (6) arranging as appropriate for the student to talk about his or her work to faculty or graduate seminars, and to be well briefed about the procedures involved in oral examinations;
- (7) providing clarification on the guidance or comment that will be offered on the student's written submissions;
- (8) ensuring that the student is aware of the University's Codes of Practice for Research and Intellectual Property and that he or she adhere to the requirements and observe the principles contained therein;
- (9) providing training in the ethical, legal and other conventions used in the conduct of research, and supporting the student in the consideration of these as appropriate.
- (10) initial assessment, and ongoing review, of the student's training and skills development needs, in accordance with the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, and taking account of the training provision available at Sussex;
- (11) ensuring that the student is aware of institutional-level sources of advice, including careers guidance, health and safety legislation and equal opportunities policy;
- (12) maintaining and developing the necessary skills and expertise in order to perform all facets of the role effectively (including taking up appropriate continuing professional development opportunities)

Training and Resources for Research Students

Supervision is only one part of research education. To complete your thesis, you will also need specific and generic research skills. Throughout your time here you will be invited to a range of different seminars or events organised by the School of English or by the Doctoral School, intended to complement the core research education supplied by doctoral supervision.

Being a research student can at times feel like a lonely existence – unlike researchers in the sciences who often work together in a lab, it's easy for arts researchers to work in isolation. However, the School of English aims to foster an environment where research students can regularly meet one another - to socialise, share ideas, learn from one another, and collaborate in their work.

Training programmes run by The Doctoral School

The Doctoral School run a Researcher Development Programme to support your professional development throughout your doctoral studies, and enable you to develop your own tailored research profile. Information on all training programmes and the opportunity to book a place on them can be found on the Doctoral School *Researcher Development Website*:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/doctoralschool/internal/researcherdev/events/>

Workshops for English Research Students

The School of English aims to run several 'in-house' workshops each year specifically focussed on English research students. These include 'how to write a good research plan' for 1st year students, workshops to improve your academic writing skills, and 'preparing for your viva' for students in the latter stages of their degree. Laura Vellacott will send out e-mails about these workshops as and when they happen.

The English Lecturer Training Programme (ELTP)

The English Lecturer Training Programme (ELTP) is designed to prepare doctoral students for work as academic tutors at university level, through a series of discipline-specific seminars, and co-teaching placements on undergraduate modules. Completion of the ELTP is a requirement for any doctoral student who wishes to be considered for an Associate Tutor post on undergraduate modules run by The School of English. *The programme is aimed at students who have completed their first full year of research.*

Research Centres

The School of English aims to facilitate a lively and stimulating research culture, where researchers with different backgrounds and specialisms can share ideas and inspire one another. There are a number of specialist **research centres** in the School of English, which host activities ranging from conferences and colloquia to professorial lectures by distinguished visiting scholars.

We strongly encourage research students to get involved in the life of one or more of the research centres in English, depending on where your research interests lie. For example, if your thesis topic is based around Shakespeare you may want to get involved in the Centre for Early Modern Studies. Sometimes research centres employ postgraduate researchers for a few hours a week to keep the centre website up to date or help plan events. Being part of a research centre is a great way to meet other students and members of faculty who share your research interests.

Information on the Research Centres in English can be found on the website: www.sussex.ac.uk/english/research and an up to date calendar of all the talks and seminars run by Research Centres in English can be found at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/english/about/signpost>

Postgraduate Colloquia and Reading Groups

Many of our research students have shown great initiative in setting up reading groups or round-table discussions – if you would like to do something similar please talk to Laura Vellacott, who will be happy to help you make arrangements. Keep an eye on your Sussex e-mail inbox for news of postgraduate reading groups and colloquia, both in English and in other areas of the University. At the end of each academic year we hold an **End of Year Graduate Colloquium** for research students in English, at which 1st year students are invited to present a short paper on their research and take questions from the audience.

The School of English Colloquium

This runs every Thursday during term time, and aims to bring together postgraduate researchers and faculty from different disciplines, to share their research interests and help develop a cohesive and supportive research community. Look out for e-mails and notices about events organised by the Colloquium (most occur on a Thursday afternoon 4-6pm during term time), and see the website:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/english/newsandevents/colloquium>

Excursions Journal

The interdisciplinary and cross-campus journal, which is externally peer reviewed, has editorial positions available for PhDs and MPhils, which can be a fantastic boost to an early career researcher's C.V. in these harsh times. See

www.sussex.ac.uk/doctorschool/internal/researcherdev/excursions

Postgraduate Workspace in Arts B

There are a number of rooms in the School of English main building (Arts B) which are reserved for postgraduate researchers, including a small library (the **Larry Trask Library**, Arts B317), and rooms with computer facilities. The system is one of 'hot desking', so whilst you will not be able to have your own designated desk, you will be able to use any free desk in any of the rooms for quiet study. There are also **lockers** provided in some of these rooms – a £5.00 deposit is required if you wish to have a locker, but they are limited (ask Laura Vellacott if you would like one). All the workspace rooms are opened by a door code – listed below, which should not be shared with anyone other than postgraduates. Please note that you should not leave your work or personal items in the rooms overnight, although there is some shelving in the rooms on which to store books.

B210 (kitchen)	3542	For use by postgraduates and staff
B317 (Library)	4532	Includes PCs and Printer, plus copies of past PhD theses.
B214	6197	PG workspace
B316	3254	PG workspace
B347	1324	PG workspace

Arts B274 is the **School of English Social Space** for postgraduate students and faculty, and there are 2 small computer clusters for use there. The social space is also often used for research talks and workshops.

Please note that the **pigeon holes** for postgraduate students are situated in on the ground floor of the Arts B building, in room B134, and you should check your pigeon hole regularly for mail.

Sussex University Library

The Library has a small team called **Research Liaison**, whose job it is to support researchers at Sussex. Their main roles are to make sure the Library's collections meet the needs of researchers and to provide support in using these resources effectively.

1-2-1 support

Research Liaison offer bookable 1-2-1 sessions to help you get the most from the Library's resources. These are tailored to your own research interests. This includes:

- Useful online resources for your subject
- Effective searching for relevant results
- Keeping up to date with research in your area

There is also a designated space for postgraduate researchers in the Library, called **The Research Hive**. This offers bookable meeting rooms, space for informal discussion and collaborative work, space for quiet work, and also hosts regular events for doctoral researchers and research staff. For more information go to: www.sussex.ac.uk/library/researchhive

The Library runs an on-line service called **InfoPlus**, which is full of useful information for the postgraduate researcher on maximising use of the library – such as effective searching, evaluating information and how to reference. Go to www.sussex.ac.uk/library/infoplus

Useful reading on doctoral research

You may find it helpful to read general books about doing graduate work - or read the relevant parts as issues come up, for example, what the viva is all about and how to prepare for it. Here are some suggestions which may be useful to you. Some may assume details of the university systems, or about how to present your research outline or thesis which do not apply here. It is best not to follow these books slavishly, but to use them to get reassurance or even inspiration.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Preece, R. (1999) | <i>Starting Research.</i> |
| Cryer, P. (2000) | <i>The Research Student's Guide to Success.</i> OUP. |
| Dunleavy, P. (2003) | <i>Authoring a PhD.</i> |
| Howard, K. and Sharp, J.A. (2002) | <i>Management of a Student Research Project.</i> |
| Madsen, D. (1983) | <i>Successful Dissertations and Theses: A Guide to Graduate Research from Proposal to Completion.</i> |
| Murray, R. (2003) | <i>How to Survive your Viva.</i> |
| Phillips, E.M. and Pugh, D.S. (2000) | <i>How to Get a PHD</i> , revised edition. |
| Tinkler, P. & Jackson, C. (2004) | <i>The Doctoral Examination Process.</i> |
| Watson, G. (1987) | <i>Writing a Thesis: A Guide to Long Essays and Dissertations: From Proposal to Completion.</i> |

Computing Facilities

IT Services offers a variety of courses on a range of software programmes at different levels of ability at various points across the academic year. You can register for these by contacting IT Services directly. Apart from the small number of computers in some of the postgraduate workspace rooms in Arts B, computing facilities are available in various locations across campus. For details please see the IT Services website: www.sussex.ac.uk/its

Conferences and Learned Societies

We warmly encourage research students to offer papers at conferences; this is good experience, and you get feedback on your work and get to meet others with similar and related interests. Your Supervisor should be able to advise on suitable ones, and they are frequently advertised on the School website. If you are not ready to offer a paper, it can still be well worth attending. Some conferences, in particular those run by Learned Societies, are regular annual events, while others are one-off occasions. The School of English might be able to provide some **financial support** to attend conferences at which you are presenting a paper – contact Laura Vellacott for an application form.

You might also think about joining a learned society. A number of them arrange special activities (and special subscription rates) for graduate students, and these can be very valuable both for the activities and for the opportunity to meet graduate students from elsewhere with related interests. There are many other subject specific and interdisciplinary Learned Societies, so ask your Supervisor(s) for relevant details. These societies provide many activities, services and publications, and often have cut-price rates for students.

The Careers and Employability Centre, Falmer House

(www.sussex.ac.uk/careers) has a student employment office which offers a range of short-term jobs both internal and external to the University. You can visit Careers and Employability for guidance on jobs after you complete your postgraduate study. It has general information especially relevant for graduate students. The people there are well-informed and very willing to help and you are strongly advised to contact them. If you are combining your degree with paid employment we recommend you discuss with your supervisor the possible implications of this for your studies. You should also check the conditions of your funding body, which may also have its own rules on this.

Funding Opportunities

Information is most readily available on the University website. For University information on bursaries and scholarships, follow the link:

www.sussex.ac.uk/study/funding

The AHRC is the main funding body for home PhD students, and current students are eligible to apply for funding for the remainder of their PhD programme. Information on AHRC funding is sent out each year in December.

Access to Learning Fund

The University has an Access to Learning Fund, which you can apply to if you encounter financial difficulty during your programme of study. For further information and please contact the Student Life Centre in Chichester 1

(www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre), where you can speak to a Student Adviser about financial assistance opportunities.

School of English Financial Assistance for doctoral students

If you want to go to a conference, a special library or archive, or to take a short language course and do not have access to alternative sources of funding, the School of English can sometimes make a contribution towards such expenses. If you

wish to apply for financial assistance, please e-mail Laura Vellacott (l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk) for an application form.

Your Research Degree: The First Year

On entry, initial meetings between the student and supervisor should be used to plan the work to be undertaken during the first year. This will include the successful completion of two pieces of formally assessed work. Supervisor and student should also discuss what research skills will be needed and plan any external training as well as attendance at the internal training programmes run by the School. Plans should also be made for attendance at any conferences or research visits.

Two pieces of work are required for formal assessment in the first year: the **Research Plan and Research Paper**.

The Research Plan

All first-year doctoral students in the School of English, including part-time students, are required to submit a Research Plan to their Supervisor. The Research Plan and provisional title must be approved by the Supervisor and the Director of Doctoral Studies. The Research Plan formalises what a research student will be doing and defines the project. It should highlight any particular difficulties at an early stage, allowing plenty of time for discussion, reconsideration and refocusing if necessary. Revised portions of the Research Plan may eventually feed into the introduction and Bibliography of the thesis proper.

A **Cover Sheet** must be attached to the Research Plan to enable the supervisor and Director to approve the Research Plan and provisional title. Laura Vellacott will e-mail out the cover sheet at the start of the new academic year.

The Research Plan should not normally have more than twenty or less than six pages and should contain key areas of your research:

1. The **title** of the thesis-project (this can be changed subsequently if necessary, but any changes need to be formally notified on a form and with the Supervisor's approval).
2. A **statement of the scope, aims and basic approach of the thesis** (though you should bear in mind the possibility that your accumulated evidence and/or your matured thinking may suggest a change of direction or emphasis as the work proceeds). This may well be a more detailed and more fully considered version of the original proposal submitted with your application. It needs to be sufficiently specific to indicate the distinctiveness of what you hope to do, bearing in mind that the criteria for the award of research degrees specify an 'original' (MPhil) or 'substantial original' (PhD) 'contribution to knowledge or understanding'.
3. An **indication of how the proposed project relates to existing work in the field** or, if there is no immediately relevant work, to work in adjacent areas or parallel investigations, or more general accounts of this sector of the disciplines involved.
4. An **indication of the resources**, published or unpublished, images, artefacts, questionnaires, interviews and so on, on which the thesis will be based, together with a statement of how you have gained or expect to gain access to these, particularly if they are in private hands or remote libraries or archives.
5. A list and description of **proposed chapters and a realistic timetable, term by term**, showing how you expect to complete all the phases of the work within your period of registration, allowing both for writing draft-chapters or interim reports as you go along (this is generally regarded as good practice) and for revising, checking and if necessary pruning when you have a complete draft.

6. A **specimen bibliography** including where appropriate unpublished materials, formally arranged and presented according to a standard form. Care should be taken here, as in the text of the thesis proper when it is finally submitted, to guard against even minor inconsistency or inaccuracy (including spelling mistakes).

Your Research Plan must be professionally presented with the selected reference system used consistently.

The Research Plan Submission Dates for 2012/13:

Your Research Plan should be submitted to your supervisor by the date shown below, and an electronic copy should also be e-mailed to Laura Vellacott (L.Vellacott@sussex.ac.uk)

Registration Status	Date of initial registration	Deadline for Research Plan submission
Full Time	September 2012	Friday 14 th December 2012
Part Time	September 2012	Thursday 28 th March 2013
Full Time	January 2013	Thursday 28 th March 2013
Part Time	January 2013	Friday 14 th June 2013

The Research Paper

The test of an effective Research Plan is whether it can be put to work. Evidence of this is to be demonstrated by the completion of a Research Paper. This comprises a substantial piece of written work towards the thesis, of a standard indicated as acceptable by the Supervisor. It is usually a draft chapter, the draft of the introduction, a substantive section of a chapter, a lengthy interim report or a position paper. **There is no Cover Sheet required for this piece of work.**

Completion of the Research Plan and the Research Paper act as evidence of the student's progress. The Supervisors will provide a report to the Director of Doctoral Studies confirming that this Research Paper has been received and that it is of appropriate standard. If the quality of the Research Paper gives cause for concern, a copy of the Paper should accompany the report. If the Paper has not been received by the specified time (see below) this should also be reported. No length is specified, but it is expected that full-time students will have been able to produce substantially more by this stage than part-time students.

The Research Paper should be completed **within 9 months of registration.**

The Research Paper Submission Dates for 2012/13 are:

Registration Status	Date of initial registration	Deadline for Research Paper submission
Full Time	September 2012	Friday 14 th June 2013
Part Time	September 2012	Friday 14 th June 2013
Full Time	January 2013	Friday 20 th September 2013
Part Time	January 2013	Friday 20 th September 2013

It is important to note that students who have not submitted the Research Plan and/or the Research Paper will not be given academic clearance to re-register for the following academic year.

Your Research Degree: from start to completion.

The School of English aims to foster a 'culture of completion', **expecting every student to finish his or her thesis within the maximum period of registration.** Students funded by the external funding bodies are required to comply with the completion times imposed by the acceptance of an award, except where personal circumstances intervene. Successful completion of a thesis has much to do with the devising of the subject in the early stages, and students and supervisors are recommended to agree early on **a timetable for progress**, divided into academic terms, towards and completion of the thesis.

Ideally the completion of a thesis is envisaged during the planning stages. Shaping and reshaping the project to ensure satisfactory completion is part of the process. It's a good idea to factor in a contingency of 5% additional time to allow for unforeseen delays or setbacks.

Preparing the bibliography as research proceeds, organising any illustrations as each chapter is completed, considering any appendices (perhaps for documentary materials) early on are all good strategies. It is important to decide at the outset which reference system you will use and to apply it consistently. **Remember to back up all your data and writing on your PC.** You are strongly advised to write up as you go. In the final stages, leave plenty of time for printing, collating and binding.

The Annual Review

Student progress is carefully monitored to ensure that the student and the supervisor regularly assess the situation. Your supervisor will provide feedback on your progress in January of each year (mid-year review) and at the end of each academic year (end of year review), to the Director of Doctoral Studies, and you will also be asked for your feedback on how your research and writing are going.

Annual Review Thesis Panels

All students are asked to attend a 'Thesis Panel' as part of the annual review process. The panel will normally consist of your secondary supervisor and one other member of faculty. Before the thesis panel, you will be asked to submit a ten-page sample of your work so far, to accompany your annual review form. This will be read by the thesis panel, and will form the basis of your discussion with the panel. The Thesis Panel is intended to give the student the opportunity to demonstrate how his/her research is progressing, and to discuss any problems that are perhaps not so easy to talk about with his/her main supervisor.

The Viva-Voce Examination

Arrangements for the Viva are made as soon as the student has notified the University's Student Progress and Assessment (SPA) Office of her/his intention to submit a completed thesis (this notification should normally be two months before the expected submission date). Forms for this procedure are available at the Student Progress and Assessment Office (e-mail spaenquiries@sussex.ac.uk). On receipt of these forms, the supervisor is asked to recommend an internal and external examiners, both of whom will be formally approved.

Supervisors may well discuss possible examiners with individual students, but it should be remembered that prominent experts in particular fields are not always available to examine and not always suitable as examiners even if they are. Copies of the thesis are then sent to both examiners when they have been selected and have agreed to examine.

The internal examiner takes responsibility for arranging the *Viva-Voce*, and for notifying the student and the Student Progress and Assessment Office as to when and where it will take place. The Supervisor can be invited to attend the *Viva-Voce*,

but may not take part in the examination process. The *Viva-Voce* should normally take place within two months of the thesis being sent out. Supervisors will discuss the *Viva-Voce* procedure with the student, and explain what to expect.

Information on paperwork can be found in *Regulations for the Award of the Degrees of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy*, which is provided by the Student Progress and Assessment Office when students notify the Student Progress and Assessment Office of their intention to submit. At the same time the Student Progress and Assessment Office issues the student with a guide to thesis style.

Complaints and Appeals

Students have the right to appeal against decisions of the Research Degree Examination Board or against a decision not to continue the student's registration. Details of the appeals procedure can be obtained from the Student Progress and Assessment Office, and are included in *Regulations for the Award of the Degrees Of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy*.

Complaints other than those relating to examination or registration decisions should be referred to the Director of Doctoral Studies. According to good practice, the Director will investigate these complaints in full and will present a confidential report to the appropriate authorities within the University, and to the tutor(s) and student(s) who are involved in the case. Complaints and investigations are of course treated and conducted with utmost confidentiality.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the registration time-frame for my degree?

A:

Programme	Status	Minimum Registration	Maximum Registration
PhD	Full time	2 years (6 terms)	4 years (12 terms)
PhD	Part time	3 years (9 terms)	6 years (18 terms)
MPhil	Full time	1 year (3 terms)	3 years (9 terms)
MPhil	Part time	2 years (6 terms)	4 years (12 terms)

Please note that for part-time students the maximum period of registration will depend on a number of factors, such as whether the student has combined full-time and part-time registration.

Q: What is the word length of a PhD and MPhil thesis?

A: The maximum word length for a PhD is **80,000** words – this includes the footnotes and bibliography, but does not include appendices. For an MPhil thesis, the maximum length is **40,000**. You can apply for an extension to the word length of your thesis, but you must have the support of your supervisor.

Q: How can I transfer from an MPhil to a PhD programme?

A: Students who wish to apply to transfer from the MPhil to PhD programme should consult their Supervisor in the first instance and obtain a form from the Research and Enterprise Coordinator in the School Office (e-mail l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk). Applications to transfer, which will not normally be considered until the second year, must be accompanied by evidence of competence to identify and explore the more substantial questions appropriate to the PhD and evidence that the issues or data are indeed appropriate for more extended treatment. Students will be asked to submit a detailed structure and timetable for completion of the proposed PhD thesis, together with two draft chapters, or the equivalent. A formal interview with the student, the supervisor and the Director of Doctoral Studies may be held, and a change in registration will depend on the satisfactory outcome.

Q: Can I change from Part-time to Full time or vice-versa?

A: Yes, it is advisable to discuss it with your supervisor first if you wish to change your registration status, and if you want to go ahead you can obtain a form from the Research & Enterprise Coordinator in the School Office (e-mail l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk). The Director of Doctoral Studies will approve the transfer.

Q: How do I transfer to Continuation Status?

A: After a minimum of two years (or three, in the case of part-time students) PhDs may apply to change to continuation status - for a much lower fee, but receiving no computing or library services (though library membership can be retained on payment of a supplementary fee) and minimal supervision. Normally continuation status is only granted if the student and Supervisor can show that the research has been completed and the thesis fully roughed out – in other words that the rest can be done by the student working largely unsupervised. A form to apply for continuation status is available from the Research and Enterprise Coordinator (l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk).

Q: Can I apply for intermission from my studies?

A: Intermission in the period of registration can only be granted by the Director of Doctoral Studies, provided that:

- (i) the student can show good cause for the application - personal trouble, authenticated evidence of illness, or some other interruption of the work;
- (ii) the Supervisor has been consulted and agrees and supports the application in writing. Fees already paid in relation to terms for which intermission has been granted are normally carried forward as a credit against future fees.

A form to apply for intermission is available from the Research and Enterprise Coordinator (l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk).


Q: Can I apply for an extension to my degree registration?

A: Extension of the maximum permitted period of registration is possible, but only in exceptional circumstances, and the student must (i) show good cause and secure the Supervisor's written support, and (ii) must also write a formal letter stating what has prompted the need for the extension, providing a detailed account of research and writing completed to date, and a realistic outline of the work still to be done, together with estimated dates for the completion of each phase in the work remaining. The decision will be made by the Director of Doctoral Studies. It should be noted that extensions are for one, two or three terms and that normally only one extension can be granted. Guidelines for the application to extend registration and a form is available from the Research and Enterprise Coordinator (l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk).

Q: I am going to a conference/library visit – can I apply for funding to offset the costs of this?

A: We do have a small budget available each year to support our doctoral students who are undertaking trips to conferences or specialist library visits, provided that it directly relates to your research and that your supervisor is in support. We can usually only fund a conference trip if you are presenting a paper at the conference. For an application form for the Doctoral Studies Fund, contact the Research and Enterprise Coordinator (l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk).

Q: How can I get in touch with my fellow postgraduate researchers?

A: The best way to make and maintain contact with other postgraduates is to keep your finger on the pulse of the School - check your e-mails and the notice boards for events and colloquiums coming up that will allow you to interact with other researchers. You could also join the facebook site for English postgraduates – go to  facebook and search for University of Sussex English Postgraduates, and click 'like' to join.

If you have further questions please do come to the School Office and see the Research and Enterprise Coordinator, Laura Vellacott (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays only) or e-mail Laura at l.vellacott@sussex.ac.uk, or telephone on 01273 873429.

There is also information on the School of English website:

www.sussex.ac.uk/english/internal/forstudents/researchstudents

