

# Handbook for Research Students In the School of Law, Politics and Sociology (PhD and MPhil) 2013-2014



# **Welcome to Sussex**

## **A Message from the Director of Doctoral Studies**

As Director of Doctoral Studies in the School of Law, Politics and Sociology (LPS), I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all new and returning students. You join a dynamic, growing and truly international environment for doctoral and advanced research in the University.

### **A vibrant research environment**

The research students in LPS represent a large and lively community concerned with the analysis of key issues of contemporary law, politics, culture and society. The School is home to national and international expertise on issues of: environmental law; corporate governance and social responsibility; criminal law and criminal justice; international criminal law; media law; European politics and law; commercial law; representative and party politics; social theory; and political sociology. Cross-disciplinary areas of research expertise include: corruption and governance, ethnicity, citizenship and migration; European integration; gender and inequality; human rights; medicine and health; comparative public policy; and criminology. Advanced doctoral research is being carried out in each of these fields and several others.

We currently run: 25 undergraduate courses; 6 international LLM in Law courses; 3 MA courses in Politics, Contemporary European Studies and Corruption and Governance; an MA in Gender Studies; a core MSc research training course; and 5 postgraduate research degrees.

The School hosts four research centres in areas where we have particular strengths: the Sussex European Institute; the Centre for Gender Studies; the Centre for Rights, Responsibilities and the Law; and the recently formed Centre for the Study of Corruption, the only such centre that currently exists in the UK.

Postgraduate researchers are integral to the School's research activity and we encourage you to present your work at national and international conferences. We also have a vibrant programme of research seminars in which doctoral students are encouraged to present alongside faculty and externally invited specialists.

Sussex also boasts an ESRC supported Doctoral Training Centre. This is a prestigious indicator of the quality of doctoral research at Sussex and a valuable opportunity for PhD students gain access to systematic research skills training alongside access to and awareness of funding, publication, career development, knowledge exchange and research dissemination issues.

The University also has a Doctoral School with lead responsibility for developing the skills and competencies of doctoral students and the early career development of post doctoral fellows and academic researchers. You will see material from time to time publicising Doctoral School events and initiatives. <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/doctorschool>

## **This handbook**

This handbook is intended to fulfil three functions.

First, it gives you practical information that you will need – especially for those of you who are in the first few weeks of studying at Sussex.

Second, it offers academic guidance, including a summary of key rules and regulations, and annexes containing important documents that you will need during your time here.

Thirdly, it provides information on the kinds of academic and pastoral support you can expect. As a research student, your first point of contact will normally be with your research supervisors.

However, each Department also has a postgraduate research convenor responsible for maintaining the strength of doctoral supervision within that particularly research community.

I am always happy to receive suggestions about how we might improve the quality of the research experience. The Schools hold termly meetings of its Research Degree Committee (RDC) and you are encouraged to get involved either directly or via your PhD student representative. Up-to-date information will be sent to you by email and also published throughout the year on the LPS School website at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/aboutus/schoolsdepartments/lps/research>

Within LPS we aim to foster a sense of community – both socially and intellectually – so that research students feel they belong to, and are partners in creating, a vibrant research community committed to cross-cultural and comparative research. I hope you enjoy the graduate research experience. On behalf of all of us working together in the LPS research community, I wish you a happy and successful time at Sussex.

**Professor Aleks Szczerbiak**  
Director of Doctoral Studies, LPS  
September 2013

# Contents

## **1 Welcome to the School of Law, Politics and Sociology (LPS)** **p5**

- 1.1 What is LPS?
  - Departments
  - Interdisciplinary programmes
- 1.2 Where is the LPS School?
- 1.3 Who's who in LPS
- 1.4 Student representation
  - The Students' Union
  - LPS representation
- 1.5 How to contact academic staff
- 1.6 Administration: who does what
- 1.7 Organising things for yourself
- 1.8 Doctoral School

## **2 Academic matters** **p9**

- 2.1 Guidance for all research students
  - What are PhDs, DPhils and MPhils?
  - Research outline approval procedures
  - Annual Review
  - Information for PhD Students wishing to take MSc courses
  - Registration categories and fieldwork
  - Supervisors
  - External supervisors
  - Changing Schools
  - European Doctorate
- 2.2 Information for overseas students
  - Finding things out
  - Academic and English language support
  - National societies
- 2.3 Useful reading

## **3 Academic support** **p16**

- 3.1 The Library
- 3.2 Centre for Language Studies
- 3.3 Student Life Centre
  - Student support
  - University-wide support services
- 3.4 Information and communication
  - Workspace
  - Email
  - Noticeboards
  - Websites
  - University Bulletin
  - Mail and addresses

- 3.5 Resources and facilities
  - Computing
- 3.6 Support for research-related activities
  - Conferences and Training
  - Learned societies
  - Additional research support
- 3.7 Funding your studies
  - Chancellor's International Scholarships
  - Access to Learning Fund
  - ESRC Studentships
  - Overseas Research Student Awards Scheme
- 3.8 Employment
  - Working whilst you study
  - Teaching opportunities

<b>Annex I Research outline approval process guidelines</b>	<b>p23</b>
<b>Annex II Research outline: notes for guidance for Politics and CES PhDs</b>	<b>p25</b>
<b>Annex III Research outline: notes for guidance for Law</b>	<b>p27</b>
<b>Annex IV Research outline: notes for guidance for Sociology and Gender Studies</b>	<b>p31</b>
<b>Annex V Useful forms</b>	<b>p33</b>
<b>Annex VI Responsibilities of research students and their supervisors</b>	<b>p34</b>
<b>Who to contact in LPS</b>	<b>back cover</b>

# 1 Welcome to the School of Law, Politics & Sociology

## 1.1 What is LPS?

The School of Law, Politics and Sociology was established in 2009. There are approximately 1,300 undergraduate, 240 MA/MSc/LLM and approximately 100 post graduate research students.

### Departments

- Law
- Politics
- Sociology

### Interdisciplinary programmes

- Contemporary European Studies, in the Sussex European Institute (SEI)
- Gender Studies, in the Centre for Gender Studies (CGS)

## 1.2 Where is LPS?

The School of Law, Politics and Sociology is currently based in Friston a temporary building between Hastings Building and Chichester III. In summer 2014 the School will move to the Freeman Centre which is currently being re-modeled.

## 1.3 Who's who in the School?

The Director of Doctoral Studies in LPS is Professor Aleks Szczerbiak.

The Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator is Lindsey Allen-Cavell.

Each PhD programme within LPS has a research convenor. The research convenor responsible for you is located in your Department or Centre. These members of faculty have general administrative responsibility for students within that programme, and an oversight of the research supervision.

- Dr Mark Walters, Friston (242, ext 6553)  
[mark.walters@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:mark.walters@sussex.ac.uk)
- Politics and Contemporary European Studies:  
Dr James Hampshire (Friston 226, ext 6806)  
[j.a.hampshire@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.a.hampshire@sussex.ac.uk)
- Sociology: Dr Lizzie Seal (Friston 260, ext 3470)  
[e.c.seal@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:e.c.seal@sussex.ac.uk)
- Gender Studies: Dr Alison Phipps (Friston 256, ext 7689)  
[a.e.phipps@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:a.e.phipps@sussex.ac.uk)  
Gender Studies: Dr Tamsin Hinton-Smith (Friston 253, ext 7546)  
[j.t.hinton-smith@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.t.hinton-smith@sussex.ac.uk)

In addition, the University Doctoral School has responsibility to organize support activities for doctoral students across the board and for leading academic policy towards improvements in doctoral student performance.

## **1.4 Student representation**

### **The Students' Union**

As a student of the University you are automatically a member of the Students' Union. The Union provides representation, advice, campaigning, clubs and societies, sports, entertainments, childcare facilities, volunteering opportunities, student media, shops, and bars. Services in Falmer House include the Student Advice Centre, second hand bookshop, stationery shop, a print room and East Slope bar.

The Students' Union represents all students collectively in the University. There are slots on the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee reserved for representatives of the Students' Union Postgraduate Association (PGA). As a graduate student, you are automatically a member of the PGA, which receives a budget from the Students' Union. The PGA exists to facilitate contact, formal and informal, among graduates from all parts of the university. It provides an opportunity to help each other with academic, welfare and social problems. If you are interested in becoming actively involved, please either sign up at the Freshers' Fair or see the Union's Education officer in Falmer House.

In practice, the Union will tend to represent those graduate interests that are flagged up by the students, so it's up to you how involved you get. It also has representatives on many committees, such as the Equality and Diversity Committee, and they too could take up issues you want to raise. Contact your representatives through the Education officer, who has specific responsibility for postgraduate concerns. There are also graduate student representatives on the University Senate, the key academic committee. Nomination forms will be available at registration.

### **LPS representatives**

Student representatives play an important role in LPS, providing a link between students and staff and ensuring that student views are heard. Student representatives from each department or interdisciplinary area sit alongside research convenors on the School's Research Degrees Committee. This committee meets once each term, is chaired by the LPS Director of Doctoral Studies, and is the main forum for discussing all aspects of graduate research in LPS.

There is also a termly Student Forum meeting, chaired by School's Director of Student Experience to which student representatives are also invited and where a wide range of matters are discussed: academic, welfare and other issues concerning the postgraduate student body. Other members of this forum include the LPS Head of School, Student Advisors and School Administrative Manager.

Student representatives are elected from each research programme. This year the elections will be co-ordinated by the School but backed by the Students' Union and the University. Nominations (you can nominate yourself or others) will take place from the beginning of term. For further information go to <http://www.ussu.info/> and look out for the

publicity. We really do want you to stand for election and, it is as important to vote for your preferred candidates.

In addition to the structure of representation, each taught-course programme has a system of collecting student feedback on the progress of teaching, often involving a combination of anonymous questionnaires and meetings. Please make your views known through whatever mechanisms are provided, so that we may find ways to improve and to respond to student opinion.

## **1.5 How to contact academic staff**

All academic staff should have office hours posted on their doors and/or their on-line personal profile on the School website. It will normally be appreciated if you do not interrupt work at other times, unless the matter is an urgent one. Some people put timetables on their doors so that you can tell when they are likely to be free. The most convenient way of contacting teaching staff is either via email (you can find them by going to the University's Home page and searching under 'people'), or by leaving a note on their door. You should arrange a regular schedule of meetings with your supervisor at the beginning of each term. If you find you are having trouble contacting a member of staff, then please see your research convenor, or the LPS School Office.

Research students and supervisors are required to maintain an electronic log of supervision meetings. This is in order to comply with University policy on monitoring of PGR student attendance. You will be given details during induction or at your first supervision.

## **1.6 Administration: who does what**

The most important administrative units for the postgraduate research student are the LPS school office and the Student Progress and Assessment Office (SPA) based in Sussex House. The School Office co-ordinates supervisory arrangements, research outline submissions, the annual review, and general School administration. The SPA office is responsible for central university administration, i.e. registration matters, change of status, submission of theses. Financial matters are dealt with by the Student Accounts Supervisor in the Student Accounts Office in Sussex House.

If you have a query and it is an academic matter, begin with your supervisor. If the matter is not settled satisfactorily at that level, you could try the next level up: your research convenor, or the Director of Doctoral Studies in LPS. If your query is to do with computing, you can contact the Computing Service by emailing [help@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:help@sussex.ac.uk). If you have a query to do with your future registration status, or official rules about examinations, you should approach the Student Progress and Assessment Office. If you have a personal issue, you can see contact Student Advisors at the Student Life Centre (see section on Student Advisors).



## 1.7 Organising things for yourself

We would like to encourage you to organise some activities. For starting new societies it is worth, contacting the Students' Union as some financial support may be provided. For academic and related activities - such as reading groups, student-run seminars and workshops - the LPS School Office is the first place to ask – we may be able to help either in kind, or with small amounts of financial support. If you need a room for your activity, please check with the School Office. Students' Union rooms can be booked through the Students' Union Reception (Ext 8152).

If you need to advertise your activity, advertisements are free in the fortnightly Bulletin or the Students' Union weekly student-run newspaper, The Badger. If you are organising an activity and would like to discuss the possibility of financial or administrative support then please talk to Lindsey Allen-Cavell or Aleks Szczerbiak prior to the event.

## 1.8 The Doctoral School

The Doctoral School is a University-wide structure supporting doctoral research across all Schools of Study. Sussex has over 900 doctoral students who play a vital role in developing our vibrant intellectual culture. The Doctoral School seeks to enable doctoral students to feel fully integrated as members of this wider research community. Its web pages provide information on diverse issues including training and funding opportunities as well as the university's regulations and codes of practice for PhD researchers (with which you should be familiar).

With a new structure this year, the Doctoral School will also be organising a number of University-wide events, including a 'Welcome' for all new PhD students and a programme of speakers through the year. Please check the Doctoral School internal website for updates: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/doctorschool/internal/> or general information

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/doctorschool>

The Doctoral School offers further information and helpful articles through the following social media channels:

Blog:	<a href="http://doctorschool.wordpress.com">http://doctorschool.wordpress.com</a>
Facebook page:	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/SussexDocSchool">http://www.facebook.com/SussexDocSchool</a>
Twitter feed:	<a href="https://twitter.com/SussexDocSchool">https://twitter.com/SussexDocSchool</a>

## 2 Academic matters

### 2.1 Guidance for all research students

#### What are PhDs, DPhils and MPhils?

A DPhil is the same as a PhD – it is a quirk of Sussex (and Oxford) that we used to award research degrees with this title until recently. We now award PhDs, but you may still hear people referring to DPhils. An MPhil is also a research degree, but involves a shorter period of registration, and a shorter dissertation.

The maximum time allowed by the University regulations to complete a PhD is four years for full-time students and six years for part-time students. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. It is essential that full-time students take the four year deadline very seriously to avoid the risk of de-registration, which means denial of the opportunity to submit your dissertation.<sup>3</sup> It is, of course, possible to take less time, and some people do. Note that funding agencies do not necessarily calculate time in the same way the University does; in particular, they may – or may not – count time spent doing an MSc in research methods as part of your research time. If in doubt, check.

It is to everyone's advantage not to let your research carry on too long: the subject may get stale; your earlier work may risk becoming out of date; it is liable to create either financial problems or difficulty in completing; if you have a grant from one of the major funding agencies this may also jeopardise the chances of future students holding their grants here. It is not wise to allow it to drift on while you try to over-insure against all possible criticisms; ask your supervisors' advice on this. Referral is obviously not as satisfactory as passing outright, and you should do your utmost to ensure that your thesis is not referred because of trivial, easily avoidable mistakes, but it can also be a helpful part of the process of obtaining your doctorate, by indicating precisely what more you need to do. Bear in mind too that the PhD is a stage in your career, not its culmination, and do not fall into the trap of thinking of the thesis as if it were a life's work. There is life after the PhD, and the work can always be extended later for that major book. There will be guidance on writing your dissertation and preparing for your viva at Research Gateway Days organised by the Doctoral School.

#### Research outline approval procedures

**All research students must submit an extended research outline during their first academic year, which has to be approved in order for you to progress (re-register for the next academic year).** The purpose of the research outline is to ensure that you clarify your topic and plan your time sensibly, and that what you propose to do is intellectually appropriate and practically feasible with the time and other resources available. It does not constitute an absolute commitment from which you can in no way depart as you learn more, though, of course, changes of plan will be discussed with your supervisors, and if they are significant, a change of title or revised version of the outline should be submitted.

---

<sup>3</sup> When intermission is granted for medical or other reasons, the period of intermission does not count towards the total.

Outlines have to be approved by your supervisors, and your research convenor (who is usually advised by a research panel or independent reviewer in your department or centre). You will also be asked to make a presentation of your outline, although precise regulations for this vary between departments and centres.

Only when all these stages are complete can the research outline be approved by the Director of Doctoral Studies, allowing you to continue your studies.

Details of the research outline approval process are set out in Annex 1 of this handbook and guidance notes for PhD students on the Politics and Contemporary European Studies programmes are contained in Annex 2, Law in Annex 3 and Gender Studies and Sociology in Annex 4. If you are unclear about the requirements for your programme then please contact your relevant departmental/programme convenors for further information.

The timetable for obtaining approval of your research outline is important. Key dates are as follows for full-time students starting the full-time PhD in Autumn:

- In the autumn term: discuss your outline with your supervisors, and make sure you know any special arrangements for your subject.
- In the spring term: a draft of your outline should be submitted to your supervisors by the end of February and following liaison and revisions, approved by your supervisors by the end of the April. It is also likely that you will be asked to make an oral presentation of your outline at some point during this term depending on your department.
- In the summer term

Once approved by your supervisors, the outline should be submitted to your postgraduate research convenor. It will be read by independent reviewers (chosen for their expertise and experience by your postgraduate convenor), and you may be asked to make substantial amendments. You should allow sufficient time for these amendments to be made before you plan to go on fieldwork or move onto the next stage of your planned research.

All requested amendments **must** be completed and the outline formally approved by the Director of Doctoral Studies by the end of your first year of registration, or you will not be allowed to proceed to the following year. We take this deadline very seriously, as experience shows that those who cannot produce an outline in their first year are unlikely to complete the degree.

Please also note that the arrangements for students on registered on the MSc/1+3 programme (except for those in Law) the process is different, and that for students who register part-time and/or in January or May have their outline dates adjusted. Further details of this are set out in Annex I in this handbook.

If in doubt, ask your programme convenor, the Director of Doctoral Studies or the Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator.

## **Research Outline Ethical Review**

All postgraduate students planning to undertake research with human subjects as part of their research must complete the University's Application for Ethical Review online. Please read the notes on this web page first: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/res/1-6-12.html>

In a few cases, if your research does not involve interaction with human subjects and you can answer 'no' to all of the questions on this checklist: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/res/1-6-12-2.html> you do not need to fill out the 'Application for Ethical Review form. Simply print out the above webpage, sign it and ask your supervisor to countersign.

In most cases researchers will need to apply for Ethical Review online as described in this link: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/spg/researchgovernance/apply> and using the relevant Sussex Direct tabs.

Please note that the ethical review process takes some time, and you may be asked to make some revisions and resubmit your application. The C-REC works on a monthly cycle: if you submit your form by the 20<sup>th</sup> of a month, you should receive a reply by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

If your application is successful, you will receive a certificate of approval from the C-REC. This should be included as evidence in your dissertation. Please do not begin your data collection until you have received approval.

## **Annual Review**

The Annual Review is an important exercise carried out by the School on behalf of the University to ensure the proper monitoring of research student progress against milestones. Therefore your supervisor and other members of faculty in your department will devote attention to making sure that all relevant facts are fully considered before agreeing to allow you to continue. The Director of Doctoral Studies will not approve re-registration unless the process has been followed and there is a clear recommendation for continuation from supervisors and postgraduate research student convenors.

In the second half of the Spring term all students and supervisors are required to write a detailed Annual Review report using a pro forma that will be circulated by the School Office. This will outline the progress you have made throughout the academic year. The deadline for this to be sent by email is usually in May or June, but will be confirmed on the annual review form instructions. This will give you the opportunity to identify any obstacles that may have prevented you from progressing in your work.

When completed the form should be sent clearly marked as 'Student Annual Review' by email to your Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator in the LPS School Office. Annual review reports from both supervisor and student form the basis on which decisions are made about the following year, for example about whether you will be permitted to re-register or to change registration status from full-time to continuation etc. They also allow us to monitor whether we are providing a good service to research students, and whether there are any areas – either specific to you or general for all students – where we could do things differently.

Arrangements for the review meeting will be organised at department level led by the relevant research student convenor. The final approval by the Director of Doctoral Studies will normally be made by the end of June so that students and supervisors can plan ahead.

### Information for PhD students wishing to take MSc in Social Research Methods courses

PhD students can take courses from the MSc as part of their programme. Please discuss with your supervisors which courses are appropriate or required for you.\*\*

Please note:

- We cannot always guarantee availability of places in any given year.
- If a place is available on the course, you must attend all sessions, contribute to the work of the group as a whole and submit assessments for credit.
- Timetable arrangements will be available via Sussex Direct, once a course has been added to your records. Make sure you check the timetable on a regular basis, as arrangements can be subject to change.

*\*\*To register for any courses on the MSc please contact the Doctoral School: [doctoralschool@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:doctoralschool@sussex.ac.uk)*

### Registration categories and fieldwork

The majority of students register as either full-time or part-time. However, there are other statuses that might be important to you as you go through your degree. You should talk to your supervisor(s) and/or research student convenor before applying to go onto any of these alternative registration categories:

- **Fieldwork** – you can apply to go on fieldwork **after** the completion and approval of your research outline. Fieldwork is normally approved for a minimum of one term, and a maximum of three terms.
- **Intermission** – you may be permitted to intermit for personal, financial or medical reasons. You may also go on intermission whilst you learn a foreign language. Intermissions are also normally approved for a minimum of one term, and a maximum of three terms. You do not pay fees whilst on intermission<sup>4</sup>, but you will not have access to supervision or University facilities. Please note that ESRC-funded students should first talk to the Doctoral School about suspension of their ESRC award, before requesting a University intermission form.
- **Distance learning** – this category is available on an **exceptional basis** to students who are based abroad. To be approved for distance learning, you must have a base within an appropriate academic environment abroad – such as a partner university abroad, or as part of a university-funded research project. You will be required to submit a learning plan each year setting out when you will be away, and when you will be at Sussex.

---

<sup>4</sup> An exception to this rule is ESRC-funded students on intermission to learn a language. In approved cases, fully-funded ESRC students continue to pay fees to Sussex, a portion of which can be put towards the cost of language learning.

- **Continuation** – although the PhD can be completed full-time in anything from two to four years, we normally expect students to register and pay fees for three years full-time, after which you can request to move to continuation status. You are not, however, entitled to continuation status until your thesis materials are collected and you are well into writing up your dissertation. Those on continuation status are charged a nominal fee, reflecting the fact that you are expected to have nearly completed your degree, and so are not using substantial University resources.

Please note that students can request to move between statuses throughout the year, but fees and registration normally operate in units of a term.

## **Supervisors**

Your supervisors are the people who have immediate general responsibility for your academic progress and for advice about how to conduct your research; they should also act as your personal tutor and as a first port of call if you have a welfare problem. So, if you have any problems, it is a good idea to make sure that your supervisors know about them first, even if they are ones with which they cannot help directly.

If the problem is regarding one of your supervisors, you should arrange to see your departmental research student convenor, or the Director of Doctoral Studies. In exceptional circumstances, it is possible to change supervisors; however, this is not easy, and we cannot guarantee to find a replacement supervisor with sufficient expertise to advise you on your specialist area.

## **External supervisors**

In **exceptional** circumstances, it is possible to appoint an external supervisor. Normally this is done in a case where students are working within a collaborative research project with a university overseas, or an external organisation. A small honorarium may be paid to the external supervisor, subject to negotiation of a contract with the university.

If you wish to have an external supervisor, please discuss this first with your LPS supervisor, and then with the Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator.

## **Changing Schools**

Every postgraduate research student is assigned to a School on the basis of the initial nature of his or her research. It is possible for you to arrange a transfer to another School, but if you are thinking of doing this, you should discuss the matter carefully with your supervisor. You are strongly urged to wait until your topic is finalised with the completion of your Research Outline, since that may determine what is most appropriate. A transfer can only be made with the approval of the Director of Doctoral Studies of both your present School and the proposed one; there is a form to be used for this.

## **European Doctorate**

It is possible to graduate from LPS with a European Doctorate. To do this, you must fulfill the following conditions:

- you must spend at least 10 consecutive weeks in another European country as part of the preparation of the thesis;

- the thesis should be examined by at least **two** examiners from **two** other European countries outside the UK;
- the viva voce examination should include at least **one** external examiner from another European country outside the UK;
- part of the viva voce examination should be conducted in a language other than English.

If you wish to be entered for a European Doctorate, you should talk to your Sussex supervisor as early as possible, to ensure that the above conditions can be fulfilled.

## **2.2 Information for overseas students**

### **Finding things out**

If you find that the system at Sussex is strange to you and that you do not understand what is expected, please ask. It is not always easy to know what people need to be told about, especially when they come here from a variety of different backgrounds and experiences, but we are very eager to help you in any way you need. Please contact the LPS School Office if you want advice or help. The International and Study Abroad Office not only arranges the introductory orientation programme for overseas students, but can also give advice at later stages. You can visit its website at:

[www.sussex.ac.uk/International](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/International)

### **Academic and English language support**

There are free weekly seminars, starting in the third week of term, on academic writing and study skills for overseas postgraduates who come from academic systems with somewhat different customs. You need to register for these – please go to the Sussex Centre for Language Studies in Arts A. That is also where you should go if English is not your first language and you would find it useful to improve it by further tuition; there are special English for academic purposes courses. You may be entitled to English language support during your first year of study.

### **National societies**

Some of the Students' Union societies might be of special interest to you. You can find a definitive list of them at the Student's Union Website [www.ussu.info](http://www.ussu.info) . This website lists a variety of different social and cultural groups that may be of interest to you.

## 2.3 Useful reading

You may find it helpful to read general books about post graduate research work – or read the relevant parts during the course of your studies, for example, what the viva is all about and how to prepare for it. Here are some suggestions which may be useful to you. It is best not to follow these books slavishly, but to use them for reassurance or even inspiration. Your main guide should be your supervisors, but these books may raise issues you might want to discuss with your supervisors.

- Cryer, Pat (2000) *The Research Student's Guide to Success*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Dunleavy, Patrick (2003) *Authoring a PhD: How to Plan, Draft, Write and Finish a Doctoral Thesis or Dissertation*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Madsen, David (1983) *Successful Dissertations and Theses: A Guide to Graduate Research from Proposal to Completion*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Murray, Rowena (2003) *How to Survive your Viva*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Phillips, Estelle M. and Pugh, Derek S. (2000, 3rd ed.) *How to Get a PhD: a Handbook for Students and their Supervisors*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Preece, Roy (1999) *Starting Research: An Introduction to Academic Research and Dissertation Writing*, London: Pinter.
- Rudestam, Kjell E. and Newton, Rae R. (2001, 2nd ed.) *Surviving your Dissertation: a Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage Publications.
- Sharp, John, Peters, John and Howard, Keith (2002) *Management of a Student Research Project*, Aldershot: Gower.
- Tinkler, Penny and Jackson, Caroline (2004) *The Doctoral Examination Process: A Handbook for Students, Examiners and Supervisors*, Maidenhead: Open University Press with the Society for Research into Higher Education.
- Watson George. (1987) *Writing a Thesis: A Guide to Long Essays and Dissertations: From Proposal to Completion*, London: Longman.
- Wellington, Jerry, Bathmaker, Ann-Marie, Hunt, Cheryl, McCulloch, Gary and Sikes, Pat (2005) *Succeeding with Your Doctorate*, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications.



## 3 Academic support

### 3.1 The Library

The University of Sussex Library has a wide range of resources and support services, and you will find it helpful to explore these as early as possible. The Library's introductory tours and drop-ins are recommended to help you familiarize yourself with the way the Library works. The best way to find information about the Library, its services, facilities and resources is to visit the library website at: [www.sussex.ac.uk/library](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library)

### 3.2 Sussex Research Hive

The Sussex Research Hive is the Library's new designated area for researchers, open to all doctoral students and research staff. It provides private study areas, bookable meeting rooms and space for informal discussion and collaborative work. SAGE Publications have given funding to support both the Research Hive and the Library's innovative work in engaging with the research community at Sussex. Further information is available from the University's [press release](#). Three Research Hive Scholars have been appointed to support the new area and to engage with and foster the research community at Sussex. The Scholars will be on hand in the Hive to talk about the support available to researchers and to find out what users want from their research community. These hours will be advertised in the Research Hive, the University's online events system and on the [Doctoral School blog](#). As part of their roles, the Research Hive Scholars will evaluate use of the space and make recommendations for its future development. Please send any feedback about the area to the Scholars: [researchhive@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:researchhive@sussex.ac.uk) Follow the Research Hive on [Twitter](#) to find out about the latest events and when the Scholars are available.

For key resources in your particular subject click on '**Subject Resources**' and select your subject. All the key resources are listed in the order of relevance. An increasing number of resources are now available from off-campus.

Journals are increasingly available electronically and in full text. Click on '**Electronic Journals**' or the Library's home page for access to journal collections, and journals by individual title.

There are a number of help desks in the Library if you encounter difficulty with any of the resources and services on offer. For general enquiries, go to the Enquiries/Reception desk at the Library entrance. For help with research and advanced enquiries, see staff on the Enquires/Helpdesk on the first floor.

### **3.3 Sussex Centre for Language Studies**

The Sussex Centre for Language Studies offers English as a foreign language and academic English language support. It can also offer tuition not just in the usual range of European languages, but in more distant languages, which you might need for your fieldwork or library research. The facilities of the Sussex Centre for Language Studies (located in Arts A) are open to everyone though there are charges for some of its services. Please enquire at the Institute for details (Ext 8006).

### **3.4 Student Life Centre**

#### **Student support**

Arriving at Sussex should be an exciting time but you are also likely to be making a transition, whether from one country to another, or from years of paid work to full-time or part-time study. All of you are making a transition from undergraduate to postgraduate modes of study or from a situation of being a taught student to the more independent learning involved in being a research student. Such transitions can be hard as you settle into new ways of doing things, face the new challenges thrown up by your postgraduate studies and, often in a strange place, try to make friends. It's no wonder that some of you experience degrees of homesickness and are sometimes lonely, anxious and confused about what is expected of you. Without the immediate support of your family and friends the first term especially can be unsettling. The student support team at Sussex are there to help ease that transition and offer you ongoing support throughout your time at University.

The Director of Student Experience has overall responsibility for ensuring that the LPS School offers you appropriate support during your period of study at the University. The School embraces students from a wide range of countries and from a diversity of cultural and social backgrounds. Working with the support team the Director of Student Support is committed to creating a welcoming and supportive learning environment for all of you.

If you would like some advice from a Student Life Advisor on a range of issues including settling into University life, managing time and study problems, you can get in touch with Student Life Centre. This is based in Chichester I and can be contacted via phone, fax, text or email : T: 6767, F: 01273 873344, Text 'siccetre' to 88020  
E: [studentlifecentre@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:studentlifecentre@sussex.ac.uk) or [www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre) or [www.twitter.com/sussexsic](https://www.twitter.com/sussexsic) You may prefer to talk concerns through with another student in the first instance, and mentors can tell you whom you should contact within the University for further help if you need it. To find your mentor contact please refer to the LPS School web pages.

#### **University-wide support services**

Beyond the School and the support offered by Student Life Advisors, there are also a number of specialist services available to you. The Student Advice Centre run by the Students' Union and based in Falmer House offers confidential advice on welfare, legal and financial matters, including advice about loans, awards, immigration, childcare, state benefits, and housing. The Student Support Unit in Pevensey provides support for students with disabilities and learning difficulties, including dyslexia. There is also a Psychological and Counseling Service (PCS) available, based in the Health Centre. There

are also University chaplains, including Jewish, Quaker and a variety of Christian denominations on campus who can also offer general support and counselling and can be contacted via the Meeting House, as well as contacts with Islamic, Baha'i and Buddhist centres in Brighton. You do not have to be involved with an organised religion to take part in what is on offer.

### **3.5 Information and communication**

#### **Workspace**

There is workspace available for PhD students in Friston. Currently there are three rooms available, arranged by department: Politics, Sociology and Law. If one room is full, there may be availability in the other rooms. If you have any special requirements, please let us know. There are also facilities in the Library set aside for research students in the Research Hive area on the top floor.

When the School moves to its new home next year, there will be more dedicated space for research students.

#### **Email**

The LPS School, your supervisors and other people in the University will largely communicate with you via email, the most frequently used form of communication at the University. If there are any changes to your timetable, or meetings that you may be required to attend, we will send you an email to your University email account. Please ensure that you check your inbox on a daily basis. If you principally use a hotmail or any other email account, it is **imperative** you set up a forward facility to automatically send your Sussex emails to that account. For instructions on how to set this facility up, please consult the computing service's online help from the University's intranet home-page. LPS has its own mailing lists which are used to disseminate items of general and specific interest. Some programmes also have their own lists, which circulate material relevant to that particular programme such as seminar times and alterations, conferences etc. If you are not receiving email, contact the School Office, immediately.

#### **Notice boards**

The School general notice board is located outside of the School Office Friston 121. A lot of useful information appears there: notices of seminars, conferences, details of scholarships and grants; please check it regularly when you pass.

#### **Websites**

Each department and centre in the School has a website, and we encourage all departments and centres to include information about PhD students on their websites. However, to do this, we need your cooperation. Please consider giving to your research convenor a short description of your research and any photographs that can be used on the web. In addition, all LPS PhD students are expected to apply for their own University webpage. You can use this to keep people updated about your research; some students have gone further, creating interactive websites that are part of their research project.

## **University Bulletin**

The Bulletin appears every other Friday in term time. Copies are put in the foyer outside the LPS School office in Friston. It is also available electronically at the University's home page. It contains much useful information on such things as public lectures and seminars, as well as general University news. It also has a very useful accommodation and for sale column.

## **Mail and addresses**

Your mail will be sent to the LPS pigeonholes in Friston foyer. Please make sure that you check your pigeonhole at least twice weekly. Please ask people who send you mail to address the letter with your name, followed by: School of Law, Politics & Sociology, Friston Building, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9SP.

We may sometimes need to use your local home address. Please register any change of address and phone number with the Student Progress and Assessment Office (SPA) or update it yourself on Sussex Direct. If something important does not reach you because you have not done this, it will usually be regarded as your responsibility.

If you go on intermission, please arrange with the School Office for your mail to be forwarded to your home address, unless you intend to regularly visit the University pigeonholes to collect it. If you are away on fieldwork, you are expected to leave both the School, and your supervisors, with a forwarding address. This saves the pigeonholes from being blocked with mail you have not collected. When you leave the University, you **must** tell all your correspondents so that pigeonholes are not filled with uncollected mail.

## **3.6 Resources and facilities**

### **Computing**

IT Services (ITS) 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 the ITS directly. Computing facilities are available in various locations across campus. For more information see the online information <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/help/>

You should be automatically registered as a computer user at registration and allocated an email address. There are also group emails for LPS PhD students and for each Department. You are asked not to send advertisements for personal events, or personal emails to group emails.

## **3.7 Support for research-related activities**

### **Conferences and Training**

We encourage students to offer papers at conferences. It is good experience and you receive feedback on your work and get to meet others with similar and related interests. Your supervisors should be able to advise on suitable conferences and they are frequently advertised on the department and School notice boards. 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 can offer financial support for conference attendance in 2013-14 to a maximum of £100 in the UK, or £200 overseas. For further details, please contact your Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator, Lindsey Cavell [laa29@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:laa29@sussex.ac.uk) There is an application form for these funds that must be completed and support must be obtained from your supervisor. A condition of receiving conference support is that you write a 1-2 page report on your paper presentation and reception to it at the conference. A summary of this will be included on the LPS website. The report should be forwarded to [laa29@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:laa29@sussex.ac.uk) within a month of the conference.

There are some valuable training courses funded by ESRC which are free or subsidised, often advertised on the School notice board. Some conferences, especially those run by larger learned societies, offer bursaries for students which are likely to require application well in advance. Despite what its information leaflet says, the British Academy overseas conference travel grants are sometimes available to advanced graduate students. The Social Research Association regularly runs one-day training sessions in London to which the first student to apply can get free admission on condition that s/he writes a report on it for the SRA newsletter. Look out for other such opportunities.

### **Learned societies**

You might also think about joining a learned society – a national or international association for your discipline or interdisciplinary area. A number of learned societies 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. For example, the Political Studies Association runs postgraduate sessions in conjunction with its annual conference; whilst the British Sociological Association has an annual summer school (which non-sociologists with relevant interests may be able to attend). In Law, the Socio-Legal Studies Association [www.kent.ac.uk/nsla](http://www.kent.ac.uk/nsla) provides support for postgraduate research students in a number of ways, including hosting an annual postgraduate conference and offers reduced subscription rates for students. The Society of Legal Scholars [www.legalscholars.ac.uk](http://www.legalscholars.ac.uk) also offers support and organises events for research students. Some societies also have facilities – generally in London – whilst some run a programme of regional events in the South East.

Check also whether your Department or Centre is an institutional member of a learned society – this may allow you access to conferences or facilities without having to pay a membership fee.

### **Additional research support**

If you have come to Sussex with a grant from a funding body, you may be eligible for additional research support. For example, ESRC students have access to a Research Training Support Grant, which can be claimed against expenses from the LPS School Office. However, each funding body has its own rules for studentships, so make sure you read carefully whatever they send you and take care to conform to their rules if you want to get maximum benefit from what they can offer.

### **3.8 Funding your studies**

If you are self-funding your research, or your grant is insufficient to cover your expenses, you will probably be looking for additional funding. Limited bursaries are available within the University, whilst there are important external sources of support that you may be eligible for. However, all of these sources of support are likely to take time to secure, and are also likely to be highly competitive. For this reason, we recommend that you make sure that you have sufficient funds in place to complete at least the current academic year before you start your studies. Possible sources of funding are listed below.

#### **ESRC Studentships**

The main external source of funding for PhD research in the UK is provided by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). A limited number of ESRC studentships are awarded by the School in conjunction with the ESRC Doctoral Training Centre based in the Doctoral School. These awards cover fees, and for students who meet the residence requirement, also a stipend for living expenses and a research training support grant. Where agreed in advance, ESRC also provides support for language training, fieldwork expenses, and advanced methodological training.

These are awarded to new PhD students on a competitive basis each year and self nominations are possible. In the past, one studentship has been offered in each of the departments within the School.

The relevant forms, and further information about ESRC awards, can be found on the Doctoral School website: [doctoralschool@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:doctoralschool@sussex.ac.uk). If you intend to apply for an ESRC award, you are strongly recommended to talk to your supervisor at the earliest opportunity, as their support will be crucial.

NB: these studentships cannot be used by students who have already commenced their registration.

#### **School partial fee waivers**

A small number of partial fee waivers may be offered each year to promising applicants. These are £2,500 (for home/EU students) or £5,000 (overseas students) and are used to offset PhD registration fees. Applications from full time students are welcome from all departments within the School and inter-disciplinary proposals are encouraged where appropriate.

NB: these studentships cannot be used by students who have already commenced their registration.

#### **Access to Learning Fund**

The University has an Access to Learning Fund, which UK and EU students can apply to if you encounter financial difficulty during your programme of study. For further information

and an application form, please contact the Student Advisors, or the Student Services Coordinators. The Student Advice Centre, located in Falmer House, is also a good source of information and advice if you are in financial difficulties. They can also help you complete the Access to Learning Fund application form.

### **3.9 Employment**

#### **Working whilst you study**

The University has a student employment office – the Careers and Employability Centre (CEC) – which offers a range of jobs both internal and external to the University. CEC offers a careers advisory service, and is located on the first floor of the Library. Visit the website for details: [www.sussex.ac.uk/cdec](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/cdec)

It is a University rule that no full-time graduate student should undertake paid work which interferes with his or her studies. If you are thinking of working, it would be wise to consult your supervisors. Deadlines, or the total time allowed to complete your academic obligations, cannot be varied to take this into account while you remain registered full-time. You should also check the conditions of your funding body, which may also have its own rules on this.

#### **Teaching opportunities**

Opportunities to teach undergraduates do not normally arise until the second year of research and are not guaranteed. There is a formal system of application for Associate Tutors via Sussex Direct. If you are interested in other teaching opportunities, you should give a copy of your CV to your research student convenor or supervisors, the person in charge of the relevant course, or your Head of Department.

If you are a native speaker of a foreign language, and are trained to teach it, enquire at the Sussex Centre for Language Studies about language teaching opportunities.

## Annex I

### Research Outline Approval Process

The research outline approval is perhaps the most important aspect of a PhD student's first year at Sussex. It involves a four stage process:

1. Completion and submission of the research outline and obtaining ethical clearance for those conducting empirical research with (or affecting) humans (end of the spring term; see table below for variations).
2. Consideration of the draft outline by a review panel (early in term following the stage 1 deadline).
3. Completion of any necessary revisions to the research outline.
4. Formal approval of outline by School Director of Doctoral Studies (end of the term following stage 1 deadline).

The process also includes an oral presentation of the research outline, the format and timing of which varies according to Department/research centre. Students must secure approval of their research outlines in order to proceed to the second year of their studies. Part-time students submit their research outlines according to the same timetable as set out below but in the year after their initial registration.

For PhD students, the four stages work as follows:

#### Stage 1: Students submit the research outline

Supervisors have a primary responsibility to advise the student about the readiness of their outline for presentation to the research review panel. With this in mind, it is never too early for students and supervisors to discuss the research outline, and drafts should be shared well ahead of the deadline. Students also need to apply online for ethical clearance in order (via Sussex Direct) for the outline to be formally approved. Guidelines about research ethics are available on the LPS School website:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/lps/research/ethicalresearchprocedures/ethicalguidelinesresearchgovernance>

Submission deadlines for the research outline are as follows:

Full Time Students first registered in:		
September 2013	January 2014	May 2014
End of spring term 2014	End of summer term 2014	End of autumn term 2014
Part Time Students first registered in:		
September 2013	January 2014	May 2014
Start of autumn term 2014	Start of spring term 2015	Start of summer term 2015



A research outline presentation seminar should also be held. This can occur either before or after submission of the research outline depending on the practice in the student's Department/research centre.

The student should forward all documentation to the departmental or programme research convenor for the following stage.

### **Stage 2: Consideration of draft research outline by a review panel**

The composition of the panel shall be determined by the departmental or programme research convenor and will comprise faculty who are not the student's supervisors. They should read the draft research outline and then forward agreed comments to both the student and supervisors, indicating any revisions that are necessary before the outline can be agreed.

### **Stage 3: Completion of revisions to the research outline**

The student should complete any revisions required by the review panel, as well as addressing any further comments they think necessary. Once this is complete, the research outline should be signed off by

- the supervisors
- the research convenor

The outline should then be sent to the LPS School office (Lindsey Cavell, Friston 121) for signing off by the Director of Doctoral Studies. In addition to the research outline, the following documents should also be submitted:

- a form requesting permission to proceed to fieldwork (if appropriate);
- a form requesting insurance cover for travel outside the UK (if appropriate)

### **Stage 4: Formal approval by the Director of Doctoral Studies**

The Director of Doctoral Studies will consider the documentation forwarded and, if appropriate, approve the research outline. If the documentation is incomplete or inadequate, it may be necessary for the student to be referred back to a previous stage of the process. Otherwise, a formal letter will be sent to the student indicating that the process is complete within two weeks of submission of the research outline.

Students are expected to complete the research outline approval process within one calendar year (or as indicated above for part time students) of commencing their degree.

### **MSc/1+3 students**

For MSc/1+3 students (except for those in Law), the process is different. These students will submit a dissertation at the end of their MSc year (end of year 2 for PT students) and this can be in the form of a research outline. If it is in this format, then students need a grade of 60% or more in the dissertation to proceed to the next stage. The student then needs to attach the dissertation to the documentation required in Stage 3 and forward it to the School Office for approval. Students who receive a mark below this grade should discuss progression with their supervisors and revise the research outline according to the timetable listed above for PhD students starting from Stage 2. Students who do not submit a dissertation in the form of a research outline will be deemed to be starting Year 1 of the PhD from the beginning. Law MSc/1+3 students should consult their doctoral programme convenor for further specific guidance.

## Annex II

### Research outline: notes for guidance for Politics and Contemporary European Studies

These notes are intended to help Politics and Contemporary European Studies PhD students and guide you in the preparation of your research outline. The arrangements for those taking the Law, Sociology and Gender Studies programmes are different and you will be advised of these by your departmental/programme convenor. Clearly you will interpret them in accordance with the specific demands of your own project and thesis.

The research outline has two functions and two audiences. For you, the research student, it is a **clear statement of intent**. In it you define your research topic in such a way as to give you confidence that you do indeed have a topic worth pursuing. You also create an intellectual framework and define a practical course of action. For others (your supervisors, the Director of Doctoral Studies) it is evidence of your capacity both to undertake academic research at the appropriate level and to complete a thesis on time. Your research outline therefore must be a clear statement of **what** you intend to do, **why** you intend to do it, how you will **locate** the research, **how** you intend to do it, the **shape** of the thesis, and **when** you intend to complete it. In short, it should be a clear and authoritative plan of action, incorporating your topic, its rationale, your theoretical framework, your methodology, the structure of the thesis, and your timetable.

The research outline should normally be approximately 20-30 pages in **length**, and should contain the following sections:

- 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 supervisors' approval, through LPS Office to the SPA Office, so that records can be updated);
- a brief discussion of the **rationale** for pursuing such a topic, its aims and scope. This involves locating your proposed research within a given field, discourse or set of theoretical debates; it will demonstrate that what you propose is both original and relevant in the context you have defined. (This may well be a more detailed and more fully considered version of the original proposal submitted with your application, but 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 contribution to knowledge or understanding' (PhD);
- an exposition of the **theoretical framework** within which your research is located;
- a brief discussion of how you propose to pursue your topic: this is a discussion about **methodology**; you will have to show that the material that will support the main elements of the argument has been properly selected and that the procedures you are adopting to advance your argument are appropriate to your enquiry;
- an outline of the **structure** or main elements of the argument of the thesis. (This can take the form of a table of contents or chapter headings);
- a **timetable for completion**. This must attempt to be realistic, showing, term by term, how you expect to complete all the phases of the work within the period of registration (maximum four years full-time, maximum six years part-time). Your timetable should allow for the final stage before submission, which entails submitting a complete draft, allowing sufficient time for your supervisors to read and give comments, as well as revising, checking and if necessary pruning the final version;

- a specimen **bibliography** formally arranged and presented according to the required format. Care should be taken here, as in the text of the thesis proper when it is finally submitted, to guard against even minor inconsistencies or inaccuracies (including spelling mistakes).

The above formalises what research students will be doing in the early stages of their work by way of reading around and defining and refining their subject. It should highlight any particular difficulties in the proposed project at an early stage, allowing plenty of time for discussion, reconsideration and refocusing if necessary. Revised portions of the research outline may eventually feed into the Introduction and Bibliography of the thesis proper.

Two copies of your research outline, together with the accompanying registration form, and the research ethics form (in electronic format) and risk assessment (if applicable) duly completed, must be submitted to your supervisor in advance of the above-stated deadline in order for your supervisor to submit a copy to your Research Convenor or Head of Department by the due date. All the information you need for regarding research outline ethics can be found here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/res/1-6-12-2.html> You should discuss with your supervisor an agreed date of submission that allows your supervisor sufficient time for reading and commenting and for possible revisions.

You are reminded that any subsequent changes to your research topic or the title of your thesis must be formally approved and you must obtain the relevant forms for this purpose from the SPA Office.

If your research is to involve fieldwork, either in this country or abroad, you **must** obtain formal approval for the period of fieldwork **in advance**. A form for this purpose can be obtained from the School Office.

Approval of the research outline both by your supervisor and the Research Convenor or Chair of the Research Outline Approval Panel, and by the Director of Doctoral Studies, is a precondition for your continued registration.

## Annex III

### Research outline: notes for guidance for Law

These notes are intended to help and guide you in the preparation of your research outline. They are relevant to research students in the **Department of Law only**. Clearly you will interpret them in accordance with the specific demands of your own project and thesis.

The research outline has two functions: First, it is a **clear statement of intent**. In it you define your research topic in such a way as to give you confidence that you do indeed have a topic worth pursuing. You also create an intellectual framework and define a practical course of action. Second, it is a **demonstration of your ability** to write a substantial piece of work at the doctoral level of study. It is evidence of your capacity both to undertake academic research at the appropriate level and to complete a thesis on time.

There are two parts to the outline, Parts A and B.

#### Part A

In Part A of your research outline you must provide a clear statement of **what** you intend to do, **why** you intend to do it, how you will **locate** the research, **how** you intend to do it, the **shape** of the thesis, and **when** you intend to complete it. In short, it should be a clear and authoritative plan of action, incorporating your topic, its rationale, your theoretical framework, your methodology, the structure of the thesis, and your timetable.

Part A has a **maximum length of 2,000 words**, and should contain the following sections:

- 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 supervisors' approval, through LPS Office to the SPA Office, so that records can be updated).
- A brief discussion of the **rationale** for pursuing such a topic, its aims and scope. This involves locating your proposed research within a given field, discourse or set of theoretical debates; it will demonstrate that what you propose is both original and relevant in the context you have defined. (This may well be a more detailed and more fully considered version of the original proposal submitted with your application, but 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 contribution to knowledge or understanding' (DPhil).
- An short summary of the **theoretical framework** within which your research is located.

- A brief discussion of how you propose to pursue your topic: this is a discussion about **methodology**; you will have to show that the material that will support the main elements of the argument has been properly selected and that the procedures you are adopting to advance your argument are appropriate to your enquiry.
- An outline of the **structure** or main elements of the argument of the thesis. (This can take the form of a table of contents or chapter headings).
- A **timetable for completion**. This must attempt to be realistic, showing, term by term, how you expect to complete all the phases of the work within the period of registration (maximum four years full-time, maximum six years part-time). Your timetable should allow for the final stage before submission, which entails submitting a complete draft, allowing sufficient time for your supervisors to read and give comments, as well as revising, checking and if necessary pruning the final version.
- A specimen **bibliography** (this is not included in the word count) formally arranged and presented according to the required format. Care should be taken here, as in the text of the thesis proper when it is finally submitted, to guard against even minor inconsistencies or inaccuracies (including spelling mistakes).

## Part B

Part B of your research outline requires students to demonstrate that they are capable of writing a substantial piece of written work which has reached the standard required of doctoral students.

Students are encouraged to submit their first **full chapter**. However, students may instead wish to submit a literature review or any other piece of work which has been written for inclusion in their thesis.

Part B has a maximum word limit of **10,000 words**.

There is no specified format for this part of the outline. Decisions about what content to include in Part B should be discussed with the student's supervisor.

**Two copies** of your research outline, together with the accompanying registration form, and the **research ethics** application duly submitted via Sussex Direct, must be submitted to your supervisor **in advance** of the above-stated deadline in order for your supervisor to submit a copy to your Research Convenor or Head of Department by the due date. All the information you need for regarding research outline ethics can be found here:

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=student-research-ethics-applications-lps-dec-2011.pdf&site=21>

You should discuss your outline with your supervisor well before the date of submission in order to allow your him or her sufficient time for reading and commenting and for possible revisions.

You are reminded that any subsequent changes to your research topic or the title of your thesis must be formally approved and you must obtain the relevant forms for this purpose from the SPA Office.

If your research is to involve fieldwork, either in this country or abroad, you **must** obtain formal approval for the period of fieldwork **in advance**. A form for this purpose can be obtained from the School Office.

### **The review process**

Once the outline is submitted two independent reviewers will read and assess the student's work. A formal meeting is then arranged between the two reviewers and the student to discuss their outline. This meeting is an opportunity for students to explain their work to members of the Faculty, outside of those who are supervising them. The reviewers will provide verbal feedback on Parts A and B during this meeting, while students may also wish to ask the reviewers general questions about their progress.

After the meeting, the two reviewers will provide a report which is returned to the PhD convenor for law. As part of this report the two reviewers will make one of the following recommendations:

1. Pass
2. Pass with minor corrections
3. Revisions required

Recommendations 1 & 2 require no further formal action from the student. Minor corrections should be discussed with the student's supervisor. Recommendation 3 will require the student to make the recommended amendments to either or both Part A and B. The outline must be resubmitted within 4 weeks from when the student receives a copy of their written report. The original reviewers will then check the required amendments before making a final recommendation.

The above formalises what research students will be doing in the early stages of their work by way of reading around and defining and refining their subject. It should highlight any particular difficulties in the proposed project at an early stage, allowing plenty of time for discussion, reconsideration and refocusing if necessary.

Approval of the research outline both by your supervisor and the Research Convenor or Chair of the Research Outline Approval Panel, and by the Director of Doctoral Studies, is a precondition for your continued registration.

## **University term dates**

Autumn term Starts	19 September 2013	Ends 11 December 2013
Spring term Starts	20 January 2014	Ends 11 April 2014
Summer term Starts	12 May 2014	Ends 13 June 2014

## **Annex IV**

### **Research Outline: notes for guidance for Sociology and Gender Studies**

The purpose of the research outline is to ensure that you clarify your topic and plan your time sensibly, and that what you propose to do is intellectually appropriate and practically feasible with the time and other resources available. You are required to pass outline approval (and ethics approval) before you can be cleared to progress to your second year of PhD study and commence your fieldwork

There are two parts to the outline:

#### **Part A**

##### **A research proposal. (max 2,000 words)**

This should include:

- Title of the thesis
- Rationale for topic, including aims and research questions
- A summary of the theoretical framework and/or bodies of literature within which your research is located
- A discussion of the proposed methodology, including any ethical issues relevant to the research (ethics approval must also be applied for separately)
- An outline of the structure of the thesis, with a breakdown of proposed chapters
- A timetable for completion
- Bibliography

#### **Part B**

##### **A piece of written work (10,000 words max)**

This may be:

- A literature review covering which bodies of literature will be relevant to your work, and identifying unanswered questions or gaps your research will answer or fill
- A piece of writing setting out the theoretical framework for your thesis, indicating key concepts and theorists and exploring how you will put them together to facilitate your analysis

Total word limit for Parts A and B: 12,000 words

#### **The Submission Process**

1. Before you submit your outline, your supervisor needs to approve Parts A and B
2. Alongside submitting your outline, you MUST:
  - a. Submit an outline approval form (which can be obtained from Lindsey Allen-Cavell and should be submitted to her with Parts A and B of the outline)
  - b. Submit your application for ethics approval via Sussex Direct (you will need to discuss this carefully with your supervisor)



## **The Review Process**

Your outline will be read by an independent reviewer and their comments will be considered by a research review panel (early in the term following the deadline for submission). You may be sent amendments to complete before you can progress to fieldwork. You will be invited to an annual review meeting where you can discuss your outline and any other issues with your PhD. Once your revised outline has been completed and approved by the research convener and School Director of Doctoral Studies, you will be cleared to proceed to fieldwork.

You will also need ethics approval before fieldwork can commence. All the information you need for regarding research outline ethics can be found here:

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=student-research-ethics-applications-lps-dec-2011.pdf&site=21>

## Annex V

### Useful Forms

For a list of useful forms and links please visit the Student Progress and Assessment Office webpage:

[http://www.sussex.ac.uk/spa/researchstudentprogress/research\\_forms](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/spa/researchstudentprogress/research_forms)

Application for permission to proceed on fieldwork or to study away

Application for Permission to Remain on Fieldwork

Application for Entry to the Research Degree Examination

Application for Change of Postgraduate Registration Status from Part-Time to Full-Time or Full-Time to Part-Time for Research Students

Application to Proceed to Continuation Status

Approval of Intermission

Change of school or programme

Notes for research degree registration extension

***These forms need be to be progressed and logged by your School Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator before they are sent to the Student Progress and Assessment Office.***

## Annex VI

Extract from the *Handbook for Research and Professional Doctorate Students\**

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/academicoffice/resources/researchdegreematters/handbooks>

\*Please also refer to link as updates are expected for 2013/14

### Responsibilities of research students and their supervisors

- 3.1 All research students should be provided at a 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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 degree students

- 3.4 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) for the safety of themselves and others, students working in a potentially hazardous research environment must take the initiative to ensure that they are competent in any relevant research techniques to be used;
  - (5) preparation of a research outline 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.
- 3.5 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**

- 3.6 The **main** supervisor is directly responsible in their role as supervisor to the Director of Doctoral Studies and, through that officer, to the Vice-Chancellor.
- 3.7 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 and/or department'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 local school and/or departmental level procedures;
  - (3) if working in a potentially hazardous research environment, ensuring and monitoring that the student possess adequate technical competence in any relevant research techniques, so that he or she presents no undue risk to themselves, others, and/or University facilities;
  - (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.
- 3.8 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 departmental or 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 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 Sussex Postgraduate Skills programme;
  - (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)

## Who to contact

### Administration



Lindsey Allen-Cavell  
Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator  
Room Fr121  
**T** 3256  
**E** [lindsey.cavell@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:lindsey.cavell@sussex.ac.uk)



Professor Aleks Szczerbiak  
Director of Doctoral Studies  
Room Fr222  
**T** 8443  
**E** [a.a.szczerbiak@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:a.a.szczerbiak@sussex.ac.uk)

### Research Convenors



**Sociology**  
Dr Lizzie Seal  
Room Fr260  
**T** 3470  
**E** [e.c.seal@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:e.c.seal@sussex.ac.uk)



**CES/Politics/SEI**  
Dr James Hampshire  
Room Fr226  
**T** 6806  
**E** [j.a.hampshire@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.a.hampshire@sussex.ac.uk)



**Gender Studies**  
Dr Alison Phipps  
Room Fr262  
**T** 7689  
**E** [a.e.phipps@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:a.e.phipps@sussex.ac.uk)



**Law**  
Dr Mark Walters  
Room Fr242  
**T** 6553  
**E** [mark.walters@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:mark.walters@sussex.ac.uk)



**Gender Studies**  
Dr Tamsin Hinton-Smith  
Room Fr253  
**T** 7546  
**E** [j.t.hinton-smith@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.t.hinton-smith@sussex.ac.uk)



University of Sussex  
Law, Politics & Sociology