



Support for Research Students

Royal Holloway
University of London





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Support for research students

Undertaking a research degree course is a truly life-changing experience that can open up new career paths as you gain specialized knowledge and skills. You will also develop the ability to confront and overcome the particular challenges that an extended research project can present - challenges that are entirely different from those you may have encountered at the Bachelors or Masters level. Being successful in your doctoral studies will be the result of a combination of your academic abilities, personal skills and coping strategies.

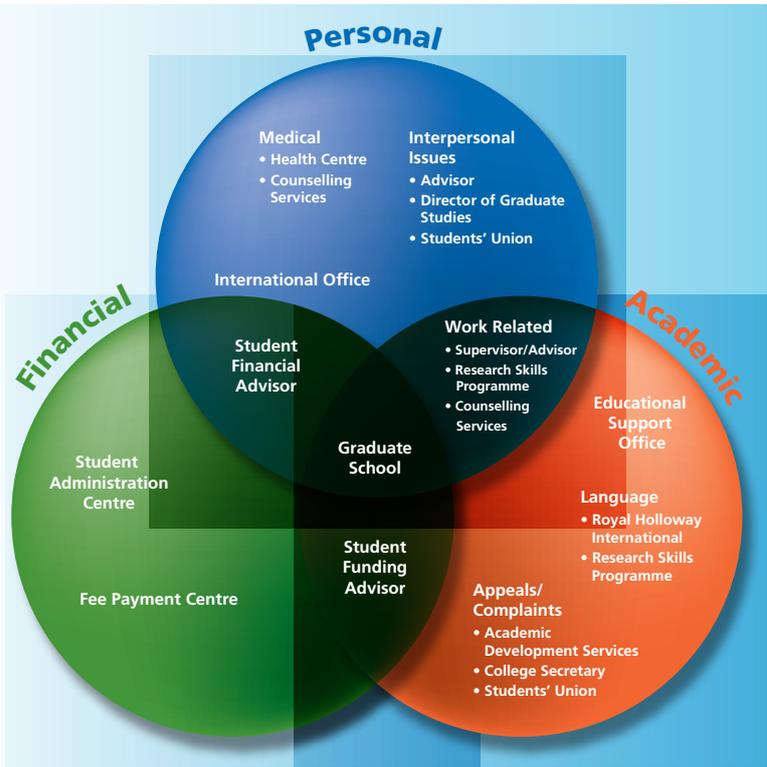
At any stage of your doctoral studies, should you feel that something is getting in the way of your academic work, help and advice is on hand. If you are someone who finds the prospect of negotiating through administrative mazes intimidating, this booklet will make it easier for you to find the relevant assistance quickly and effectively.

I hope that this publication will prove to be a useful companion during your time at Royal Holloway.

Dr. Francesca Chiarelli

Postgraduate Administrator, Graduate School





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In your department

Each of Royal Holloway's individual departments has faculty members who are assigned to mentor and assist our graduate students.

Supervisor

Please refer to the College's Code of Practice (in this leaflet) where the responsibilities of your supervisor are clarified. The supervisor is expected to be 'approachable and available' and therefore you should feel able to speak to him/her about any issue that might be compromising your academic progress.

Advisor

Each research student is allocated an advisor who is supposed to offer additional academic and pastoral support. If for any reason it is difficult to speak to your supervisor, you should contact your advisor on personal and non-work related issues.

Director of Graduate Studies

Each department has a Director of Graduate Studies, whose role is to deputize for the Head of Department on matters concerning postgraduate studies and students. Directors of Graduate Studies can be contacted to discuss difficulties you may have with individuals within your supervisory team.

Head of Department

As the highest authority in the department, it will always be possible to raise any concern you have with the Head of Department. This would particularly be the case if the Director of Graduate Studies happens to be part of your supervisory team.



In the Graduate School

All students in the taught and research degree courses across Royal Holloway's many faculties and departments are members of the Graduate School.

Dean of the Graduate School – Professor Robin Walker
robin.walker@rhul.ac.uk

The Dean of the Graduate School is responsible for the policies and provisions put in place by the College for Postgraduate Research students. He can also be contacted for advice in dealing with more complex matters. The Graduate School also comprises two administrators.

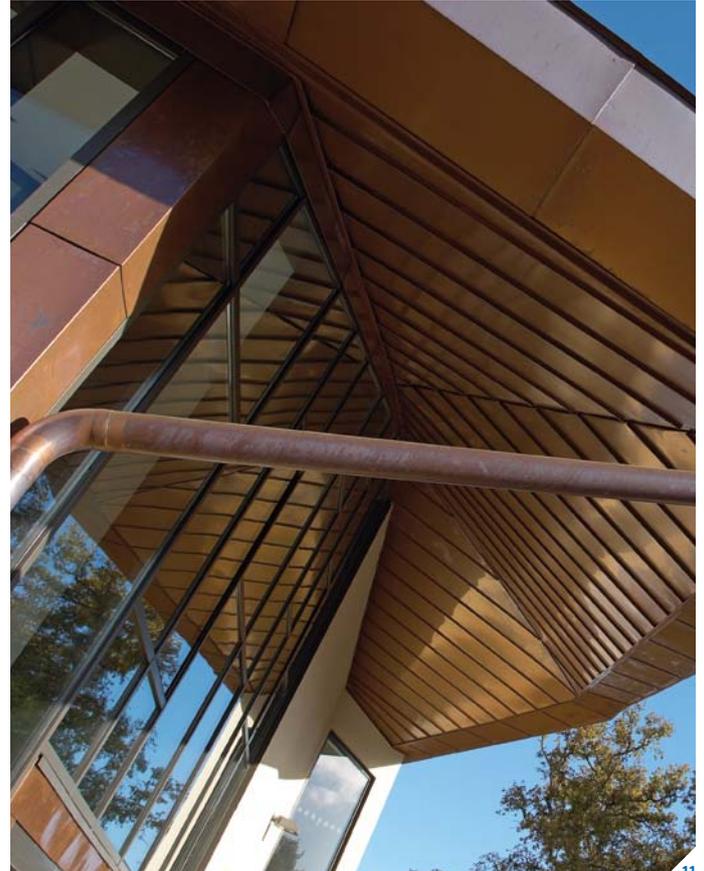
Postgraduate Administrator – Dr Francesca Chiarelli
francesca.chiarelli@rhul.ac.uk T: 01784 443352; Huntersdale 1-16
Web: **www.rhul.ac.uk/graduateschool/forstudents/home.aspx**

The main duties of the Postgraduate Administrator are:

- Advice on issues affecting academic progress and regulatory queries
- Changes to enrolment – interruption, withdrawal, sick leave, maternity leave
- Liaison Officer for Research Councils – administrator and advisor on policy issues

Postgraduate Officer – Mrs Marina Mohideen-Moore
marina.mohideen-moore@rhul.ac.uk;
T:01784 414699; International Building 144
Web: **www.rhul.ac.uk/graduateschool/forstudents/researchskillsprogramme/home.aspx**

The main duty of the Postgraduate Officer is to administer the Research Skills Programme, which provides generic training courses.



The College also has a number of offices that are responsible for specific areas of support, from enrolment to exams and international services.

Who: **Student Administration Centre**

What: Enrolment, Student Forms, Graduation Ceremonies, Tuition Fee Enquiries, CAS, Reference requests for current students; Accommodation enquiries.

Where: Crossland Bungalow (opposite Windsor Building)

Email: Student-Records@rhul.ac.uk; StudentHousing@rhul.ac.uk (accommodation)

Web: www.rhul.ac.uk/registry/sac

Who: **Exams & Research Degrees**

What: Upgrades; submission of MPhil and PhD thesis; examinations of research degrees.

Where: Huntersdale, 1-16

Email: researchdegrees@rhul.ac.uk

Web: www.rhul.ac.uk/registry/researchdegrees

Who: **International Office**

What: Applying for and renewing visa; registering with the Police; trips in the UK and Europe; the HOST programme.

Where: Founder's West 139

Email: Vicki.Li@rhul.ac.uk; Sue.Silk@rhul.ac.uk

Web: www.rhul.ac.uk/international/home.aspx

Who: **Educational Support Office**

What: Advice for special educational needs; assessment of support requirement; coordination of services for adequate support.

Where: Founder's West 151

Email: educational-support@rhul.ac.uk

Web: www.rhul.ac.uk/studentlife/supportthehealthandwelfare/eso.aspx

Who: **Royal Holloway International**

What: In-sessional English language courses; Study Abroad and Exchanges.

Where: International Building 008

Email: StudyAbroad@rhul.ac.uk (study abroad and exchanges)
RHI-Admissions@rhul.ac.uk (Language courses)

Web: www.rhul.ac.uk/international/home.aspx

Who: **Student Financial Advisor; Student Funding Advisor**

What: Advice and guidance on financial matters including student loans, budgeting, debt management and advice on benefits.

Where: Founder's West 150

Email: financialadvice@rhul.ac.uk

Web: www.rhul.ac.uk/studyhere/undergraduate/feesandfunding/financialsupport.aspx

Who: **Counselling Services**

What: Advice and support with unfamiliar or challenging situations; support is provided with workshops as well as one-to-one sessions.

Where: Founder's West 171

Email: counselling@rhul.ac.uk;

Tel: 01784 43128

Web: www.rhul.ac.uk/counselling

Should you face challenges whether of a personal or financial nature during your time at Royal Holloway, there are a number of services here to assist you.

Medical/Personal Issues

Supervisor/Advisor To assess the impact on your research and obtain personal advice.

Counselling Services / Health Centre For short-term assistance with health or emotional issues.

Graduate School To discuss matters confidentially and obtain advice on regulations and procedures.

Educational Support Office For assessment in case of additional learning needs (for example, dyslexia)

International Office For support specific to international students (for example, visa application).

Interpersonal Issues (for example, difficulty with supervisor)

Advisor The role has responsibility for your welfare and is available to discuss issues affecting you or your work.

Director of Graduate Studies Deputizes for the Head of Department on matters concerning research students and can provide advice in handling difficult situations within the Department.

Students' Union The Education and Welfare Office provides confidential advice; the Union is independent from College.

Graduate School Regulatory and pastoral advice; complex cases can be referred to the Dean.

Work-Related Issues

(for example: motivation, time management, procrastination)

Supervisor/Advisor To identify the issue and look at solutions.

Research Skills Programme To attend specific workshops which will help enhance your professional skills.

Counselling Services For workshops similar to those offered on the RSP, but with a focus on personal rather than professional development.

Language Issues (assistance with writing academic work)

Royal Holloway International RHI offers international students a variety of language courses, some of them specifically addressed to postgraduate students – such as 'Postgraduate Dissertation Writing'. RHI also offers up to three one-to-one sessions of 30 minutes.

Research Skills Programme As part of the Research Training Programme, the Graduate School offers a number of optional courses concentrating on written communication. There are also one compulsory and two optional courses on oral communication. These courses are not specifically addressed to non-native speakers.

Financial Issues

Student Administration Centre To enquire about tuition fee liability.

Fee Payment Centre To make payments in person or discuss outstanding payments. The Fee Payment Centre is located in Founder's West 141.

Student Financial Advisor For issues such as budget management, and to enquire on financial assistance available.

Student Funding Advisor To obtain information on available small funding sums from charities. For more information, please consult the website: www.rhul.ac.uk/graduateschool/forstudents/home.aspx click on the 'money' tab.

Support in practice

Appeals and complaints

Academic Development Services

To appeal against your upgrade or your degree classification, email Appeals@rhul.ac.uk, or call 01784 276250. For more information: www.rhul.ac.uk/forstudents/home.aspx and click on the 'studying' tab.

College Secretary

If you wish to complain against any of the College's services or facilities, the form can be obtained from the College Secretary (Founder's East 13) or from your Department. For more information:

www.rhul.ac.uk/forstudents/studying/complaintsprocedure.aspx

Students' Union

Independent advice and support on both appeals and complaint procedures is provided by the Students' Union:

www.su.rhul.ac.uk/support

Contact person: Tina Rayner (tina@su.rhul.ac.uk; 01784 486300)



During your time at Royal Holloway, you are encouraged to be aware of the rights and responsibilities pertaining to provisions that we have in place for all of our graduate students.

1) The Research Degree Regulations

www.rhul.ac.uk/graduateschool/forstudents/home.aspx
(click on the 'Regulations, Student Handbook and Code of Practice' tab)

These are the terms of your contract with the College, and they map the milestones of your academic progression. Key progression requirements set in the Regulations are:

- Upgrade to PhD by the end of the second year full-time equivalent – first attempt by 20 months of full-time enrolment
- Submission of thesis after three years of full-time equivalent and one year of writing up
- Completion of research skills training – this is required to upgrade; the minimum is the equivalent of five days per academic year for full-time students, and ten days if RCUK funded

Please note: If you are funded by the Research Councils, you will also be bound by their terms and conditions.

This is the table of contents for the Research Degree Regulations:

1. Programmes of study
2. Period of study
3. Admission to a Research Degree programme
4. Exemption from part of the programme of study
5. Interruption of studies
6. Registration with the College
7. Registration on Research Degree programmes
8. Annual enrolment with the College
9. Reviews of academic progress
10. Termination of registration
11. Entry or re-entry to the final examination
12. Appointment of examiners
13. Requirements of the thesis
14. Language of the thesis
15. Submission of the thesis
16. Conduct of the final examination
17. Outcome of the PhD examination
18. Outcome of the MPhil examination
19. Notification of results
20. Availability of theses
21. Appeals against the outcomes of formal review and the final examination
22. Appeals against termination of registration

2) The Code of Practice

www.rhul.ac.uk/graduateschool/forstudents/home.aspx

(click on the 'Regulations, Student Handbook and Code of Practice' tab)

Follows Government recommendations and should be considered alongside the Regulations. The Code clarifies:

- Responsibilities of student, supervisor, advisor, Director of Graduate Studies and Department
- Research Training Skills requirements
- Period of studies and leave entitlements
- Teaching duties while being a research student

3) Student Complaints

www.rhul.ac.uk/forstudents/studying/complaintsprocedure.aspx

The College has drafted procedures which should be followed by students who feel that as a result of their experience at College, they have a complaint to make against the provision of services and/or facilities.

4) Academic Appeals

www.rhul.ac.uk/forstudents/home.aspx and click on the 'studying' tab

Academic Regulations provide for students to appeal against, or request a review of, certain decisions made by the College. The process is administered by the Academic Development Services. The Education and Welfare Office in the Students' Union can provide support and advice.

5) Student Handbook

www.rhul.ac.uk/graduateschool/forstudents/home.aspx

The Handbook covers all regulations, policies and codes of practice applied to all students, regardless as to their programme of studies; it too clarifies rights and responsibilities of Royal Holloway students.

Vitae website for postgraduate researchers

www.vitae.ac.uk

Vitae is a national organization championing the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes. A specific section of the website is dedicated to postgraduate researchers (ie, research students) with information and advice on motivation for doing postgraduate research, including how to manage your research and yourself, how to develop your personal profile and your academic curriculum.

Other topics include:

[Why do postgraduate research?](#)

[Developing as a researcher](#)

[Supervision and key relationships](#)

[Raising your profile](#)

[Developing your career](#)

[Managing your research project](#)

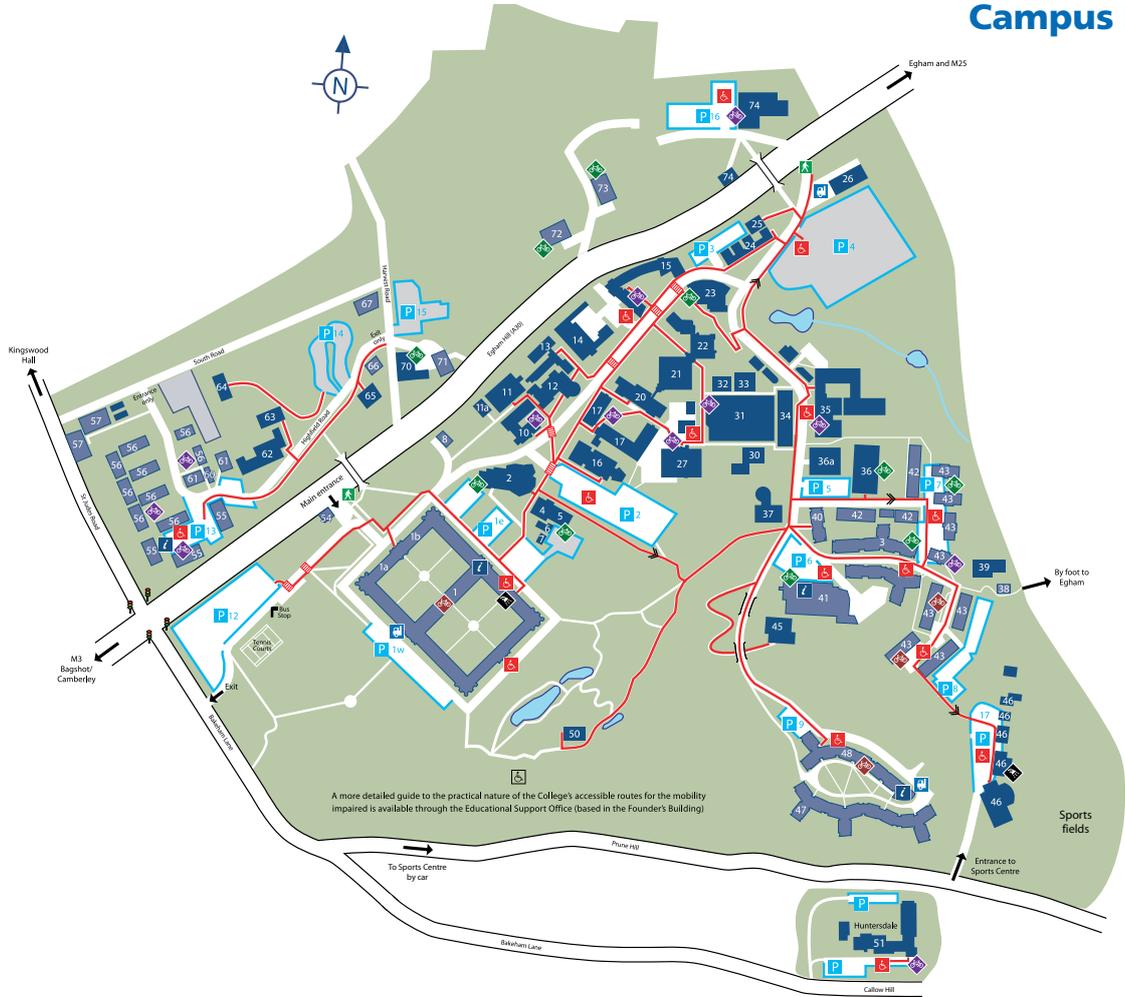
[Managing yourself](#)

[Completing your doctorate](#)

[Rights and responsibilities](#)

Key

-  Campus buildings
-  Residences
-  Car parks (1-17)
-  Gravel car parks
-  Accessible route
-  Gradient direction
-  Zebra crossing
-  Accessible parking space
-  Deliveries
-  Pedestrian access only
-  Bike rack - internal
-  Bike rack - covered
-  Bike rack - uncovered
-  Showers available to cyclists



A more detailed guide to the practical nature of the College's accessible routes for the mobility impaired is available through the Educational Support Office (based in the Founder's Building)



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