School of Mathematical Sciences

Guide for Postgraduate Research Students and their Supervisors

2014-2015
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PDF versions of this handbook and further background information can be found at http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil
Welcome to the School of Mathematical Sciences (for new students)

Dear Postgraduate Research Student,

Welcome to Queen Mary University of London and the School of Mathematical Sciences. We are pleased you have chosen to become a part of our growing postgraduate research community, which in 2014-15 consists of more than 50 PhD students. We offer an exciting scientific environment at the forefront of research, designed to both challenge and inspire you.

The origins of our School can be traced back to 1948. Over the years it has acquired an international reputation in areas such as algebra, combinatorics, design of experiments, probability, dynamical systems and statistical physics. As a new member of the Russell Group we are proud to be one of Britain's top research institutions, with more than 50% of our research activity judged to be either world-leading or internationally excellent in the last Research Assessment Exercise (2008).

We look forward to your contribution to our vibrant research culture. With over 45 academic members of staff and regular visiting high profile scholars you will have the opportunity to interact with world leading mathematicians. We host a variety of research seminars in collaboration with other Schools within our College as well as other Colleges within the University of London which you are most welcome to attend.

This handbook is to provide you with the background information you will need to organise your PhD studies during the coming academic year. We publicise our events alongside useful information regarding your studies and the School on our website at: www.maths.qmul.ac.uk which you should familiarise yourself with.

With best wishes for the academic year 2014–15,
Dr. Rainer Klages, Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (September 2014)
Key Information

People

- The Director of Postgraduate Research Studies for 2014-2015 is Dr Rainer Klages (r.klages@qmul.ac.uk). Dr Klages has the overall responsibility for the School’s PhD programmes.

- The Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research Studies for 2014-15 is Dr Reto Müller (r.mueller@qmul.ac.uk). Dr Müller assists Dr Klages with the School’s PhD programmes. Especially, he is responsible for the PhD admission process.

- Each PhD student is associated with one of the School’s 7 Research Groups:
  - Algebra; Head of Group: Professor Robert A. Wilson
  - Combinatorics; Head of Group: Professor Bill Jackson
  - Complex Systems and Networks; Head of Group: Professor Vito Latora
  - Dynamical Systems and Statistical Physics; Head of Group: Professor Christian Beck
  - Geometry and Analysis; Head of Group: Professor Cho-Ho Chu
  - Probability and Applications; Head of Group: Professor Alexander Gnedin
  - Statistics and Data Analysis; Head of Group: Dr Heiko Grossmann

The Heads of Group monitor student progression and the quality of PhD supervision in their groups.

- The Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer is Emeline Reeves (e.b.a.reeves@qmul.ac.uk). She is based in the School Office, room 101 in the Mathematics Building. Emeline can help you with any general administrative queries during the course of your studies.

- The Education Manager is Norman McBreen (n.mcBreen@qmul.ac.uk). Norman’s role involves managing the teaching and learning strategy of the School of Mathematical Sciences, which includes postgraduate matters.

- The Student Support Officer is Zak Liddell (z.liddell@qmul.ac.uk). Zak’s role is to provide pastoral care to all students of Mathematical Sciences as well as being the link between students, the School and the College.

- Contact details and office hours for all staff can be found on the School of Mathematical Sciences website: www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/about-us/people
Location and Facilities

- The School of Mathematical Sciences is located in the Mathematical Sciences Building, which is the "tower" by the Mile End Road at the southwest corner of the Mile End campus.

  Our postal address is:
  School of Mathematical Sciences
  Queen Mary University of London
  Mile End Road
  London
  E1 4NS

  Tel: 020 7882 3170

- Campus maps are available online at: www.qmul.ac.uk/about/howtofindus/ (select the relevant campus to see maps). Please note that the Mathematical Sciences Building and all Queen Mary sites are non-smoking areas.

- The postgraduate section of the School of Mathematical Sciences website www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil should have most of the information you will need to know, but if you can’t find an answer there, please ask the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer who is based in the Maths Office. The Maths Office, your main point of contact for administrative matters, is located in room 101 on the east side of the first floor of the Mathematical Sciences Building. The Maths Office opening hours during term time are 9:00am–5:00pm (last admission 4:45pm) every weekday. The office is usually closed 9:30am–10:30am on Wednesdays due to staff meetings. More limited opening hours may apply during vacations so it is best to call ahead if you need to meet with a member of staff.

- Research students are usually allocated a desk in one of our open-plan offices.

- Photocopiers, pigeonholes and stationery can all be found in the Common Room (102), with another photocopier on the 4th floor (room 409). Please use these and other facilities such as telephones only for purposes associated with your studies.

- The postgraduate student notice boards are located on the third and second floors.
Enrolment and Induction

Enrolment

New research students will receive instructions from the central admissions on how to enrol for the programme and obtain a student card. In 2014 the main Queen Mary postgraduate research student enrolment will take place **Monday 22nd September, from 10am – 1pm**, in the Octagon, Queens’ Building.

Queen Mary enrolment is available for research students who are due to commence their programmes later in the year on the first working day of each month. You must enrol on the date closest to your agreed start date as indicated in your offer. You will be able to enrol by visiting the Research Degrees Office located in room E15, Ground Floor, Queens’ Building, Mile End Campus.

Further information regarding enrolment can be found at: [http://www.qmul.ac.uk/studentinduction/researchstudents/enrolment/index.html#Stagetwo:QueenMaryenrolment](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/studentinduction/researchstudents/enrolment/index.html#Stagetwo:QueenMaryenrolment)

Induction

It is obligatory that as a new student starting your studies this September, you attend the **Research Student Induction**, which will be held on **Wednesday 24th September 2014**.

At the induction you will be welcomed to the School of Mathematical Sciences and the Director of the Postgraduate Research Studies will explain the structure of the research studies. You will also find out useful information such as how to obtain a computer account, how to access the School of Mathematical Sciences’ network, details about marking and teaching, and about health and safety in the building.

If you are a new research student who is starting at a different point in the academic year and therefore unable to attend the above induction you should contact the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer, Emeline Reeves, to inform her of your start date and make an appointment to come and see her.

New postgraduate research students are expected to attend the following events:

- **A Postgraduate Drinks Reception** for new and existing graduate students and all staff involved in postgraduate studies and support will take place on **Wednesday 24th September** at 5pm in the School of Mathematical Sciences foyer area.

- **A Queen Mary Research Induction organised by the Centre for Academic and Professional Development (CAPD)** on **Thursday 2nd October 2014**. This event should be attended by all PhD students who are starting their degrees this autumn. It will be an opportunity to meet other students from all over Queen Mary, talk to existing staff and students, gather information about what Queen Mary has to offer, and find out what you need to know to be successful as a research student. For further information please visit: [http://www.qmul.ac.uk/studentinduction/researchstudents/research-induction/index.html](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/studentinduction/researchstudents/research-induction/index.html)

If you are a new research student starting at a different point in the academic year and are therefore unable to attend the October event you will be expected to attend at the next available opportunity (usually in April). Information regarding the Queen Mary induction event will be circulated to you by the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer once available.
Key Dates

For part-time students and those who start their programme at a time other than September, review dates will be altered accordingly (part-time students are expected to submit within seven years and to attempt first year progression within 12-18 months from registration). It is your responsibility to be proactive in ensuring that your review meetings happen.

FIRST YEAR
September          School of Mathematical Sciences Research Student Induction; Enrolment for research programmes; Postgraduate Drinks Reception; Register for LTCC/ QMUL MSc modules.
October            Queen Mary Postgraduate Research Induction (hosted by the CAPD)
April              LTCC module examinations
May                Submission of written reports by you and your supervisor to your appointed assessors
May/June           Examinations for taught courses; First-year review

SECOND YEAR
September          Re-enrolment; Postgraduate Drinks Reception
April              Submit Poster for Ann Cook Competition (part of the School of Mathematical Sciences Postgraduate Research Day)
Early May          School of Mathematical Sciences Postgraduate Research Day
August/September  Submission of written reports by you and your supervisor to your appointed assessors
Mid September      Second year review

Transfer to writing-up status can take place from now onwards (for further information please see Assessment & Progression ‘Transfer to writing-up status’).

THIRD YEAR
September          Re-enrolment; Postgraduate Drinks Reception
April              Prepare Research Talk (as part of the School of Mathematical Sciences Postgraduate Research Day)
Early May          School of Mathematical Sciences Postgraduate Research Day
Early September   Submission of written reports by you and your supervisor to your appointed assessors
Mid September     Third year review: timetable for completion agreed; transfer to writing up-status submitted

FOURTH YEAR
September          Re-enrolment; Postgraduate Drinks Reception
March              Beyond third year review – reviews will take place every 6 months until you have transferred to writing-up status
SUBMISSION

Three months prior to Thesis submission you must: Submit a PhD examination entry form (RD01)
Upon submission of your thesis you must: Submit a Research Degree Thesis Submission Form (RD02)
Thesis submission should be at least one month before any date set for the oral examination (viva) (For further information see Assessment & Progression ‘Examination Entry’)

Please note that the “mid-September” review meetings may be held any time from the start of July onwards by agreement between you, your supervisor and your appointed assessors.

IMPORTANT: You are expected to submit your PhD thesis strictly within 4 years after your registration. If you exceed this 4 year deadline, the College’s Research Degrees Office may deregister you any time after the deadline. If there are any extenuating circumstances that prevented you from finishing up in time you should request an extension of your submission deadline from the Research Degrees Office. A respective form is available on the Research Degrees Office website:

www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/index.html

Key Queen Mary dates are available online at: www.qmul.ac.uk/about/calendar
Assessment and Progression

Overview

Research is unlike other activities that most new students will have been involved with before. Even a brilliant history of passing examinations on taught programmes is not a guarantee of success in research. It is better for all concerned - not least you as the student - that we identify those few students who are not cut out for research earlier rather than later. Partly for this reason, we review your progress during your first year of study, and at the end of each subsequent year of your programme.

Throughout this section all timings are given for a full-time student on the degree in question. The timings will be modified appropriately for part-time students.

You will be allocated two supervisors. Your principal supervisor is allocated when you commence your studies and has responsibility for your academic progress during your research programme. Your second supervisor will be allocated within a month of your arrival and will normally act as a mentor, and as a deputy for when your principal supervisor is away. The second supervisor’s responsibility usually includes being an assessor for your annual reviews (see below) and may sometimes extend to joint academic supervision. Ideally you should meet with your principal supervisor on a weekly basis. It is your responsibility to be proactive in organising contact with your supervisor to discuss your research.

Throughout your research programme it will be important for you to be aware of Queen Mary’s current research degree programme regulations and policies, including policies on plagiarism. To view our policies and regulations please visit: www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/index.html

Annual Reviews

During the first three years your progress is reviewed annually. After three years your reviews will take place every six months until you transfer to writing-up status. Each review is centred on an interview between you and your two appointed assessors. One of the assessors (usually your second supervisor) is the principal assessor and is responsible for ensuring the review is carried out efficiently. Assessors are proposed by the supervisor during the first year of study, the choice being ratified by the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies. As far as possible, your assessors will remain unchanged over the entire period of your studies.

The common format for reviews is as follows. The specifics of the review vary from year to year.

1. At least one week in advance of the review meeting you and your supervisor send separate written reports to your assessors. Your report should also be supported by a print out of your Activities Record from the Skills Database (see page 14). Your supervisor’s report will always be a short (~1 page) overview of your progress. Your report will vary in length and content according to the year (see below).

2. The review meeting consists of an interview of up to one hour. You are asked to explain your research to your assessors and demonstrate this where necessary on a whiteboard. Your assessors will ask you questions about your research and in particular explore your background knowledge of your field.

3. Within one week of the review meeting, your assessors complete a report form on your progress and deposit this and the other reports with the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer.
4. **After the review meeting**, the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies will determine any actions that may be required. This might include transfers of registration, remedial action, or ad-hoc intermediate reviews. Following the approval of the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies, the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer will ensure copies of the assessors’ report are sent to you and your supervisor. This report will contain recommendations of registration status, e.g., transfer to writing up status, if appropriate.

Details of each annual review are as follows:

**First year review**

The review meeting must take place before the end of May. This requirement is to allow you time to take remedial action, if necessary, before progression to second year is decided at the end of August.

You should produce a short report (usually no more than six A4 pages) outlining the problem you wish to tackle, the background reading you have undertaken, progress made and plans for the future. You should also include submit a print out of your Activities Record from the Skills Database, demonstrating your participation in Professional Development activities to date.

Recommendations may include certain goals you should achieve before the second year review. In some cases, if inadequate progress has been made, your assessors might recommend a remedial course of action with the aim of getting you onto a more successful track. Another review should be scheduled to take place within three months of the first review meeting. The possible outcomes of a first progression panel are Progress or Refer; the outcomes of a second progression panel, which must be held within 3 months of the first, are Progress or Fail (deregister).

**Second year review**

In this review we are looking for evidence of all the qualities necessary for the production of a successful PhD thesis. In addition to adequate levels of scholarship and evidence of progress on the programme of research, you will be required to demonstrate ability in mathematical writing. Therefore, your written report should be more substantial for this review: at least 20 A4 pages.

This report should ideally be viewed as a step in the production of the thesis, and much of the text could find its way, in modified form, into the final production. For example, the report might consist of a projected table of contents, a draft chapter, and a programme of work for the coming year. Depending on progress, the draft chapter might describe a result already obtained, or it might describe the area of study and progress made so far. If you have published a paper or a preprint (say on ArXiv), it is perfectly acceptable to submit that, with a short description of how that result fits into the bigger picture, and conclude with a plan for completion within an absolute maximum of four years. You should also include submit a print out of your Activities Record from the Skills Database, demonstrating your participation in Professional Development activities to date.

This review meeting should take place before the start of your third year. The two assessors for the review will normally be the same two assessors as previous.

Depending on the outcome of your review the assessors may propose a remedial course of action followed by a review after a specified period of, say, three months; or they may suggest that a sensible course is for you to submit for an MPhil within the next few months, assuming that enough work has been completed for this to be feasible. At this stage an MPhil is a reasonable outcome for two years’ work, and allowing further years to pass with no strong evidence that a PhD will result from your research is generally not in your interest.
Third year review

Some students will be able to submit their thesis during the third year. For those who do not, the third year review provides a chance for all involved to assess progress and determine courses of action with respect to funding and payment of fees. The main concern is to ensure that a realistic plan exists for completing your thesis expeditiously, and certainly before the end of year four. Your report, usually no more than six A4 pages, should concentrate on describing the proposed structure of your thesis (i.e., table of contents), what has been done already, and what needs to be done. An important part of the report should be a realistic and robust timetable for completion of the thesis. Alongside your report you should also submit a print-out of your Activities Record from the Skills Database. You should be ready to transfer to writing up status (see below for details) at the end of your third year.

The review meeting should ideally take place before the start of the fourth year. The two assessors will comment on the viability of the proposed timetable, and if necessary suggest changes in scope if these seem necessary for timely completion. The assessors may, if it seems beneficial, suggest a review of progress after a specified period.

Beyond third year reviews

If you have not transferred to writing up status (see below for details) after three years, further reviews must take place on a regular basis. At the review meetings your Assessors should make recommendations which will support you in the timely completion of your research. The reviews will be scheduled every six months, i.e., by 31st of March for students who started 1st October, and so on. These reviews will keep taking place every six months until you have transferred to writing-up status.

The main concern is to ensure that a realistic plan exists for completing the thesis expeditiously within 6 months. Your report, usually no more than six A4 pages, should concentrate on describing the proposed structure of your thesis (e.g. a table of contents), what has been done already, and what needs to be done. An important part of the report should be a realistic and robust timetable for completion of the thesis. Your supervisor's report is a short (maximum of one page) overview of progress.

Preparing to Submit your Thesis

Writing-up status

Once you have completed the bulk of the work towards your thesis and you are within a year of completion, you will be in the process of “writing up” your results. At this time your supervisor will recommend you transfer to writing-up status. Your supervisor can only recommend this once your research is at a stage where you can realistically be expected to submit within one year.

Although students with writing-up status may continue to use Queen Mary and School of Mathematical Sciences facilities, they are not charged fees. Transfer should normally be considered towards the end of your third year of study (and, where applicable, before your studentship funding expires). Failure to make this application may mean that you are liable to pay full fees for the period of time you are writing up your thesis.

Writing-up status lasts for one year only, whether a student is full or part time, and a student can transfer to writing-up status at any point after completion of the minimum registration period (2 years full-time, 4 years part-time). For further information, guidance and to download a copy of the transfer to writing-up form please visit: www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/writing-up/index.html

The form must be signed by the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies, who will only do so if you and
your supervisor can provide a plan for completion of the thesis during the writing up period, with realistic timelines. A renewal of writing up status is only granted in exceptional circumstances and will incur a fee (for information please see: [www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/extension/index.html](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/extension/index.html)

**MPhil/PhD Examination entry**

The important thing to note is that the official procedures for examination entry, including the appointment of PhD (or MPhil) Examiners, take a considerable time. Therefore, students and supervisors must prepare in advance. A minimum of three to four months before you expect to submit your PhD thesis you and your supervisor must nominate examiners to read the thesis and conduct the viva voce examination. There are two examiners, one who is external to the University of London and one who is internal to the University of London. The examiners must not have personal or professional connections with you or your supervisor.

To nominate your chosen examiners and enter yourself for examination you must complete and submit a PhD examination entry form (RD01). To download a copy of the form and for guidance on its completion and submission please visit: [www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/examiner-nomination-and-exam-entry/94447.html](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/examiner-nomination-and-exam-entry/94447.html)

Your supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies must countersign your examination entry form before forwarding it to the Research Degrees Office. It will then be considered on behalf of the Academic Board by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board. The board meets monthly to consider paperwork received in the preceding month. The Research Degrees Office will contact your supervisor with the Board’s decision after the meeting.

**Submitting your Thesis**

Once the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board has approved your examiners, the Research Degrees Office will formally invite your examiners to act. Please be aware that your thesis should be submitted at least one month before any date set for the oral examination (viva voce).

The specifics relating to thesis submission can be found on the Research Degree Office website at: [www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/thesis-submission/index.html](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/thesis-submission/index.html). It is important that you check the website as this will contain the most up to date information regarding forms and submission processes.

The submission process requires you to submit a Research Degree Thesis Submission Form (RD02). To ensure the records we hold for you are correct, please supply a copy of this form to the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer (based in the Maths Office, room 101, Mathematical Sciences Building) along with notification of the actual date of your thesis submission.
Developing Your Skills

As part of your assessment and progression during your time in the School of Mathematical Sciences we require you to:

- Give several research seminars in the School of Mathematical Sciences.
- Give a talk or present a poster at a national conference (e.g. a postgraduate conference).
- Attend at least one international conference.
- Spend the equivalent of 70 hours per year undertaking professional development or academic training. This should be detailed in your Activities Record from the Skills Database at the end of each year.
- Undertake up to six hours of tutoring and marking per week during term time.

Seminars and Research Related Activities

All research students in mathematics and statistics are required to attend the regular seminars and discussion or study groups run by relevant research groups. Information regarding upcoming seminars can be found on the School of Mathematical Sciences website at: [www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/research/seminars](http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/research/seminars). There are numerous seminar series held jointly with other London institutions. Talk to your supervisor and others in your research area to investigate seminars and conferences of interest to you. Please note that most seminars held in the School of Mathematical Sciences are preceded by tea and coffee available in the Common Room (102) and/or by refreshments afterwards.

In particular you should attend the Queen Mary Internal Postgraduate Seminar (QuIPS) which is a series of talks organised and given by postgraduate students at the School of Mathematical Sciences. As part of your professional development you will be expected to deliver a talk to the Seminar group during your studies. For further details please see: [www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/seminar-series/queen-mary-internal-postgraduate-seminar](http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/seminar-series/queen-mary-internal-postgraduate-seminar).

The School of Mathematical Sciences holds a Postgraduate Research Day each year in early May. All third year research students give short talks on their research and all second year research students enter a poster in the Ann Cook Poster Competition ([www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil/background-information/ann-cook-prize](http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil/background-information/ann-cook-prize)). Both activities have been found to be very useful training opportunities by those who have taken part – whatever their intended careers. Second and Third year students will be contacted in late March/ early April regarding the event and advised of the deadlines for submission of posters and abstracts respectively.

Training

The Centre for Academic and Professional Development (formerly known as the Learning Institute) provides postgraduate research students with information regarding training and development opportunities held within and outside of Queen Mary. The Centre for Academic and Professional Development also provides resources for students with teaching responsibilities, as well as information and documents to help you with your Personal Development Planning.

QMUL Post Graduate Research Student Development Programme

The PGR student development programme is delivered by The Researcher Development Team (RDT) at QMUL. The RDT is part of the Centre for Academic and Professional Development (CAPD), located in the Bancroft Building on the Mile End Site. All its training is aligned to the Researcher Development
Framework, which has been developed by Vitae in collaboration with the UK Research Councils [www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk). RDT provides specific development programmes for research students. The programme has 3 levels addressing the needs for each of the years 1 to 3 of your PhD studies. RDT also manages the PhD Points System and maintains the database for recording points for engagement with this university-wide programme and for any training you undertake within your school and/or institute.

To find out more about Post Graduate Research Student Development Programme and how it can help to support your studies and professional development please visit: [http://capd.qmul.ac.uk/whats-available-for-you/phd-students/](http://capd.qmul.ac.uk/whats-available-for-you/phd-students/)

**Professional Development Activities**

During the course of your PhD programme you are expected to take part in approximately 210 hours (70 hours per year) of professional development activities. This is advised by the UK Research Councils and is roughly equal to two weeks training and development for each full-time year of study. Selection of the appropriate activities and courses should form part of a normal supervisory process and can include computer skills, mathematical typesetting, language skills, communication skills and many other areas.

This academic year (2014-15) Queen Mary is continuing to pilot a new scheme to monitor and record the developmental activities undertaken by research students (those starting their PhD in or after September 2011). The scheme will capture generic and discipline-specific developmental activities that you are involved in, through the allocation of points. Points will be given for courses or workshops you attend that are run by the Centre for Academic and Professional Development, Faculties, Schools and external organisations, and also for other activities such as conference attendance, teaching and attending seminars. To see a list of the courses and workshops on offer please visit: [http://capd.qmul.ac.uk/what-we-offer/researcher-development/postgraduate-research-students/development-programme/](http://capd.qmul.ac.uk/what-we-offer/researcher-development/postgraduate-research-students/development-programme/)

You are expected to gain 70 points by the time you complete your first year review and a total of 210 points by the time you submit your thesis. The training and development you complete must be balanced and the points you accrue must reflect this. For information regarding the different areas in which you must accrue points, how points are allocated to activities and a list of the activities that are allocated points you are strongly advised to visit: [http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page_id=55](http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page_id=55).

In order to keep track of the points you have accrued you and your supervisor will need to record these using the PhD Skills Database. To log in to the Skills Database please visit: [https://webapps2.is.qmul.ac.uk/sps/](https://webapps2.is.qmul.ac.uk/sps/). You will need your Queen Mary log in details (these are the same as you use to access your enrolment records on MySIS). You should include a print out of your Activities Record from the Skills Database with your report for each annual review meeting so that your assessors can check you are on track.

If you are unsure about any aspect of this system or the database, please visit: [http://www.learninginstitute.qmul.ac.uk/resdev/pg/points-based-training/faqs/](http://www.learninginstitute.qmul.ac.uk/resdev/pg/points-based-training/faqs/). If after looking over the FAQs your query has not been resolved, for questions regarding your training record or the way your points have been calculated please contact the Researcher Development Advisor for PhDs, Dr Janice Cheddie on [j.cheddie@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:j.cheddie@qmul.ac.uk), or if you are having problems accessing or using the database, please contact [resdev@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:resdev@qmul.ac.uk).

**Taught Academic Modules**

In conjunction with your research and academic development you will be expected to attend Mathematical
Science modules which are provided by the School of Mathematical Sciences and/or the London Taught Course Centre (LTCC) for PhD students in the Mathematical Sciences.

All first year research students must attend, and be examined on, postgraduate modules to a total of 30 academic credits. To meet this requirement, most first year students will register for and complete a minimum of four LTCC modules, which are worth 7.5 credits each. However, with the agreement of the student’s supervisor and the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies, MSc modules may be taken and counted towards the requirement of 30 academic credits. MSc modules run within the School of Mathematical Sciences are worth 15 academic credits each. Your supervisor may decide it is beneficial for you to take more than the minimum quota of postgraduate modules; students are able to attend up to a maximum of 60 credits. You should discuss with your supervisor which modules you should attend – your module registrations will be checked by your supervisor as part of your first year review.

Please be aware that where an examination or assessment for a module is set, we expect students to complete these; you should include your module assessment results in your first year report to be viewed by your assessors during your annual review. If you are taking an MSc module provided by SMS, how you complete the examination or assessment will be at the discretion of the module convener. PhD students are not expected to attend formal MSc examinations. Your assessment may be in the form of a written, take-home or oral examination. The assessment will be marked by the module convener, reviewed by the Director of PGR Studies and returned to you by your supervisor.

If you choose to take a module outside of QMUL, e.g., at another College within the University of London, please note that registration costs will not be covered by the School of Mathematical Sciences. Assessment arrangements should be made in discussion with the respective module convener. If it is not possible for an assessment to be arranged for the external module, you should refer your case to the Director of PGR Studies, who will explore whether alternative assessment arrangements are possible.

LTCC and School of Mathematical Sciences modules start from mid-September onwards so it is important to discuss which modules will benefit your academic progression soon after you start your studies. For further information regarding the LTCC and to view available modules please visit their website at: www.ltcc.ac.uk/. If you are planning to register for an MSc module please liaise with the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer to organise this. For details of MSc Mathematics modules running in the 2014-15 academic year, please visit: www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/msc-maths-stats/modules, a full timetable can be found at: http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/sites/default/files/msc_mathematics_timetable_2014-15_0.pdf.

Teaching and Marking

By default, in the first three years of your research studies, you will be allocated four to six hours of tutoring and marking per week during the teaching semesters. Please note that taking on over six hours of teaching and/or marking per week will require the agreement of your supervisor and (where applicable) your grant awarding body. You will be paid for this work at an hourly rate – in 2014/5 this will be £12.32 per hour for marking and £22.03 per hour for tutoring.

We require a high standard in both marking and tutoring, and it is an important part of professional training for those considering an academic career, as well as being extremely good experience for many other professional careers. You will be expected to provide feedback about your to give the School of Mathematical Sciences feedback about your tutoring and marking. The allocation of markers and tutors is carried out at the start of each academic year by the Education Manager (Norman McBreen).
Careers and Professional Bodies

Careers

Throughout your studies, you will have access to a wide range of events and support offered by the QM Careers and Enterprise Centre.

Examples of events and activities happening throughout the year are given below. You will benefit from content and insights targeted to meet your needs as a postgraduate student, with regular input from experienced industry professionals.

- CV workshops
- Winning Interview workshops
- Linked In workshops
- Individual careers support is available year-round to help with career decisions, making great applications, mock interviews and any other career-related topics. To book an appointment contact Careers on 020 7882 8553.

Resources relating to the above and more can be found on the Queen Mary Careers and Enterprise Centre website at: http://www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/

The main ways we will keep you informed of what’s going on are:

- Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/qmcareers
- Follow Careers on Twitter: @qmcareers
- Find out about other events organised by QM Careers: www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/events/

Internships and work experience

The Queen Mary Careers and Enterprise Centre Team are here to support and encourage you with gaining internships and work experience. Look at this link for opportunities co-ordinated by Careers: http://www.careers.qmul.ac.uk/qrecruit

International students

These two resources are among those that are useful for international postgraduate students.

- https://www.facebook.com/qmcareersinternationalstudents
- http://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/international/ - for advice on extending your stay in the UK and Tier 1 (Post Study Work)
Professional Bodies

The School of Mathematical Sciences have close relationships with the two major UK professional societies for mathematics, The London Mathematical Society and The Institute for Mathematics and its Applications. Many of our staff are members of one or both societies.

The London Mathematical Society was founded in 1865 and has a national and international membership of around 2,300 professional mathematicians for further information please visit: [http://www.lms.ac.uk/](http://www.lms.ac.uk/).

The Institute for Mathematics and its Applications was founded in 1964 and awards the Chartered Mathematician, Chartered Scientist and Chartered Mathematics Teacher designations, visit their website to find out more: [http://www ima.org.uk/](http://www ima.org.uk/).

Both of the above societies support mathematics in many ways, such as producing journals, organising conferences, engaging with government and promoting public engagement.
What are my responsibilities as a student?

Absence

All postgraduate research students wishing to be absent from the College must fill out a leave of absence form (available in the Maths Office). The form should be completed in order to request annual leave and for leave to attend conferences etc. The form must be signed by your Supervisor and the Head of Group. Once completed your form should be handed into a member of the Professional Services team in the Maths Office.

Communication

Queen Mary will communicate with you in a variety of ways. Formal correspondence will be sent to you by letter, and it is important that you keep Queen Mary up to date with your personal details and address. However, it is most common for the School of Mathematical Sciences, Queen Mary and the Students Union to contact you by email. You are assigned a university email address upon enrolment and you are responsible for checking this on a daily basis. **All major notifications and updates will be sent to your QM email account, you are expected to use this account when contacting our staff and our staff will use this address to contact you.** You can access your email account by logging onto a QM computer, or if you are not on campus, at: [http://my.qmul.ac.uk/](http://my.qmul.ac.uk/).

Updating Personal Details

It is essential that Queen Mary holds up to date personal details for all students. Please ensure if your details change that you update us, you are able to update your address and contact details online via your MySIS profile ([http://mysis.qmul.ac.uk](http://mysis.qmul.ac.uk)). If you have changed your name, the update of your name details must be done in person at the Research Degrees Office in room E15 of the Queens’ Building with accompanying identification. Please also ensure you notify the Maths Office (via email) so that we can update our School records.

Staying Safe

You should familiarise yourself with the emergency procedures for all areas in which you work, noting the location of emergency exits, assembly points and equipment. In case of a fire, immediately leave the building by the nearest exit point. Do not use the lifts. Fire action notices are displayed in corridors and by fire escapes.

If required to evacuate the Mathematical Sciences Building, use the exit accessible from the stairwell nearest to you. For those using the front stairwell this will be the main entrance; for those using the rear this will be the rear doors in the basement. Students/staff in the Maths lecture theatre should leave by all three exits (two leading to the front, one to the rear). You should then congregate outside the Drapers Bar until allowed to return.

In an emergency, dial **3333** from any internal phone and clearly state the nature and location of the problem, your name, and the number you are calling from (if known). If no internal phone is available, call 999 and follow the normal procedure. We all have a duty of care towards fellow students and staff. You should ensure that corridors and doorways are not obstructed and that fire-fighting equipment is not removed from its station.

For minor accidents, you can obtain first aid assistance by dialling **3333** from an internal phone or 020 7882 3333 from any other phone. For general enquiries, you can contact Queen Mary Security by dialling 5000
from an internal phone or 020 7882 5000 from any other phone.

PhD Desk Usage Policy

All PhD students whose ‘home’ school is the School of Mathematical Sciences are guaranteed use of a desk space up to your anticipated thesis submission date. Please note: the School of Mathematical Sciences expects you to submit your thesis strictly within 4 years (as is in line with QMUL regulations).

If you require desk space beyond your official anticipated submission date, you should put an extension request in writing (this can be sent via email) to the Director of Postgraduate Studies and the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer. The request must include the date to which you will require usage of the desk. In the first instance you may only request a maximum extension of 6 months.

If you require access to a desk after 4.5 years of registration, this may be granted at the discretion of the School of Mathematical Sciences on an individual basis, which will normally be in relation to the space available within the School at that time.

If at any point during your studies or following the submission of your thesis, you no longer require the use of a desk, please notify the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer to ensure that there are no unused desks within the School.

Issue and Return of School of Mathematical Sciences Keys

At the start of your studies you will be issued with a general building key, which will allow you access to certain meeting rooms and offices within the School of Mathematical Sciences. You may also be issued with a key to your PhD office and/or a key to the pedestal of drawers under your desk. Please ensure that you look after these keys and that they are returned to the Postgraduate Research Programmes Officer on completion of your studies.

Your Queen Mary ID Card

You will receive a Queen Mary photo-ID card upon enrolment. This card is very important and you must carry it at all times on campus. If you do not produce this card upon request and satisfy staff that it is your card through comparison of your face and the photograph, College security staff may remove you from the building or from campus. The card shows your student number, which you will need for various purposes. The card also serves as your library card and as an access card for certain buildings and rooms. Many buildings have security points at which you must show your card and others require you to touch your card on a reader (as with an Oyster card) to release the doors.

It is vital that you keep your card safe and with you at all times on campus. If you lose your card, or if your card is stolen, you should contact the Student Enquiry Centre (http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/sec/student-card/index.html), who will be able to help you. A fee is charged to replace lost ID Cards.

Conduct

The Queen Mary Charter contains a list of expectations for both staff and students to help create a community which is mutually supportive and works to further knowledge creation and dissemination, to view our Charter please visit: http://www.qmul.ac.uk/ourcommunity/

As a Queen Mary student you are expected to conduct yourself appropriately whilst on our campuses, to
view the Code of Student Discipline please visit: http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/complaints/index.html

Support

If you have a problem, the most important thing to do is to talk to someone about it. This someone could be your first or second supervisor, the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies or the Student Support Officer, any other member of staff, your student representative or another research student. If the problem is one you prefer not to discuss with a member of the School, you can obtain help and advice directly from the College’s Advice and Counselling Service.

The Student Support Officer’s Role

The Student Support Officer is there to help you with any difficulties that are not primarily academic, and to provide an additional layer of support between the Maths Office and the academic staff. The Student Support Officer is an expert on the technical and bureaucratic aspects of student life. The Student Support Officer will direct you to the appropriate Queen Mary support services such as Advice and Counselling (see following information).

Advice and Counselling

The Advice and Counselling Service offers free and confidential professional services to students. International students with visa related queries may find this service particularly helpful. The service is located on the ground floor of the Geography Building at Mile End, and is open on weekdays throughout the year, including most vacations. Detailed information and advice is available at: www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk
Student Representation, Feedback and the Postgraduate Research Committee

Student Representation

Your views are important to the School of Mathematical Sciences and Queen Mary. There are a variety of ways in which you can tell us what you think and share your ideas for improvements. Student representatives, who are elected by students, also speak on behalf of the student body at School, Faculty and QM-wide level via various committees, groups and meetings. More information can be found at: http://www.qmul.ac.uk/youssaidwedid/howtotellus/index.html

Our PhD Student Representatives within the School of Mathematical Sciences give you a voice as far as PhD matters are concerned. In 2014-15 the PhD Student Representatives are:

Andre Nock (a.nock@qmul.ac.uk)
Trevor Pinto (t.a.a.pinto@qmul.ac.uk)
Tom Coyne (t.w.coyne@qmul.ac.uk)

Please contact one or all of the above Student Representatives if you have any issues that you want to be addressed. It is in your own interest that your needs are represented within our School, such that we learn about the things affecting your studies and what you think can be further improved. The School of Mathematical Sciences believe it is very important to ensure that there is a good flux of information between our PhD cohort and the staff responsible for PhD matters within the School.

Your representatives participate at the PGR Research Committee meetings, which take place twice per year. Outside the committee, the representatives are responsible for liaising directly with the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies to inform the School whenever there is a problem with PhD studies that needs to be addressed.

Feedback

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is conducted every year. The PRES is your chance to feedback to us in the School of Mathematical Sciences about your time as a postgraduate research student at Queen Mary. It is always helpful to hear of suggested improvements or initiatives that we can make to enhance the experience of postgraduate research students.

The Postgraduate Research Committee

The Postgraduate Research Committee meets formally twice a year. It is chaired by the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and attended by the Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research Studies, Director of Research, Heads of Groups, the Education Manager, and the elected postgraduate research Student Representatives. The remit of the Committee covers every aspect of the teaching and training of postgraduate research students, from office accommodation to annual assessment procedures. Decisions concerning the progression of individual students are delegated to the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies.
Studentships and Funding Information

Studentships

This information applies to those students who are the recipient of a studentship from the School of Mathematical Sciences.

Important information regarding the payment of your studentship can be found on the Research Degrees Office website: [http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/studentships/index.html](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/studentships/index.html)

Please remember that if you change your bank details you need to let us know so your stipend payments will still reach you on time, for this and other changes of information please complete and submit a ‘Studentship Change of Details Form’. A copy of the form can be downloaded from the above web page.

Please note that most studentships entitle recipients to 36 months of funding as standard. The School of Mathematical Sciences will assess your academic progress at the end of the 36 months as part of your third year annual review and if you are in good academic standing it is likely that your stipend will be extended for a further six months. The six month extension of your stipend should coincide with your transfer to writing up status (for details see pg.12).

Funding

You are strongly encouraged to participate in national and international research meetings. In order to help fund your research the School of Mathematical Sciences have allocated you an annual budget of £250.00 for three years which will allow you to apply for funding for travel, conference registration and subsistence. Any funds that you do not use in one year are rolled forward and will be available to you in the following academic year. In practice this will mean that the maximum amount of money you can accumulate is £750.00.

To claim your funds you will need to complete a form (available from the Maths Office and online at: [http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil/forms](http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil/forms)) to be submitted to your Head of Group. Once your claim has the approval of your Head of Group please ensure that you follow current School of Mathematical Sciences and Queen Mary procedures for purchasing tickets, insurance arrangements, and claiming expenses.

Please speak to a member of staff in the Maths Office for further details.

The QM Postgraduate Research Fund (PGRF)

The QM Postgraduate Research Fund is open to all Postgraduate Research students at Queen Mary who seek funding between £400.00 and £2000.00. The Fund is designed to support travel and other expenses (although not consumables and equipment) related to your doctoral studies. Applications are accepted on three deadlines each year. Applications to the Fund will be assessed by a Panel of senior colleagues from across the College (two per Faculty). The Panel will normally assess applications a couple of weeks after the deadline, and both you and the School of Mathematical Sciences will be informed of the outcome. Funds will then be released to School of Mathematical Sciences for reimbursing students. Enquiries regarding the Fund should be sent to: qmpgrf@qmul.ac.uk
For more information regarding the application procedure and deadlines please see: http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page%20id=59

**The Doctoral College Initiative Fund (DCIF)**

Queen Mary's Doctoral College has announced a new fund, the Doctoral College Initiative Fund (DCIF), for students applying to organise student-led initiatives. The Doctoral College Initiative Fund (DCIF) is designed to support and promote creative and imaginative activities organised by postgraduate research students which will enhance your research experience, intellectual and/or professional development. The Doctoral College anticipates supporting a wide range of activities or events ranging from, but not limited to, seminars, conferences, debates and specialist training activities.

For more information regarding the application procedure and deadlines please see: http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page%20id=59

**Alternative Funding Sources**

Further information regarding available sources of funding for research students can be found at http://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/money/postgraduates/index.html

**Prizes**

The **Eileen Eliza Colyer Prize** of £1,000 is offered each autumn for a research student in the School of Mathematical Sciences to study at another institution for an extended period with an expert in his or her research area. For further information please see: http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil/background-information/eileen-colyer-prize

The **Ann Cook Prize** is awarded annually to the postgraduate student who submits the best poster at the Postgraduate Research Day. The prize is named after, and was inaugurated by, Mrs Ann Cook, who for many years until her retirement was secretary to the Head of School and ensured the smooth and effective running of many aspects of the School. For further information please see: http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil/background-information/ann-cook-prize

For further information regarding prizes awarded by the School of Mathematical Sciences please see: http://www.maths.qmul.ac.uk/postgraduate/phd-mphil/background-information