Notes for Chemistry MPhil/PhD Students on the Implementation of the Graduate School Research Student Electronic Log.

https://researchlog.grad.ucl.ac.uk/

The Graduate School Research Student Electronic Log (E-Log) is mandatory for all MPhil/PhD students starting at UCL. The E-Log is a record of your progress and formal supervision, primarily focusing on your self-analysis of your skills and development. **Maintenance of the e-Log is your responsibility.**

The Log also enables UCL to demonstrate (*e.g.* to funding bodies) that you are receiving professional supervision, with fair, *documented*, warnings of problems with your progress (hopefully, of course, there won't be any!). *Thus MPhil/PhD transfer, and PhD examination entry, requires a complete set of records of formal supervisory sessions.*

Below are some notes to guide you through the various stages of E-Log completion.

1 Personal Information and Supervisors.

You should begin completing the E-log by updating your personal information (add photos if you want) and find you Supervisors. Please see the webpage below for further help:
https://researchlog.grad.ucl.ac.uk/index.php

2 Initial Objectives and Skills (My Skills).

You should then begin completing the Academic and Key Transferable Skills Development Self Audit. I will give a short talk to all of the starting graduate students on the first day of term, at which I will suggest some key and academic skills that you might consider in your audit. One of the main purposes of the self audit is to inform the First Supervisory Session (see below).

3 First supervisory session (Initial Objectives and Skills).

Your first formal supervisory session should be as soon as possible after you start. Your supervisor should use this meeting to respond to your skills self-audit, and to establish the skills you will need for your PhD project. This may include sending you to some undergraduate lectures, specific postgraduate courses or generic Graduate School courses (http://www.grad.ucl.ac.uk/courses/list-dept-training.pht?dept_ID=7). Courses chosen should be documented in the E-log, as should a brief outline of the research plan for the next few months.

Once you are happy with the contents of this section, you should submit it for formal approval by your supervisor and second supervisor.

4 3 month supervisory session (3 months - Review).

Prior to the next formal supervisory session at 3 months, you must complete the following subsections of the ~3 month supervisory session: "3 month progress" and "Difficulties encountered".
At the 3 month supervisory session, you should discuss progress with your supervisor, and agree a further plan of research and activities. At this time your supervisor should check that you know

how to complete Risk Assessments and comply with Health and Safety requirements. The remainder of 3 month supervisory session should then be completed and, once you are happy with the contents of this section, you should submit it for formal approval by your supervisor and second supervisor.

5 6 month supervisory session.

This is very similar to the 3 month meeting, and the appropriate section of the E-log should be completed accordingly. You will give a presentation to the department ~ January of you 1t year. Don't forget to update any skill courses attended.

6 First year report and ~9–12 month supervisory session.

The deadline for completion of your first year report is the end of May/beginning of June (I will advise you nearer the time as to the exact date). The aim of this process is to check that you know what you are doing, how to do it and how to write it up, and to identify any improvements needed to reach PhD standard. This report has a strict page limit of 20 pages (data and references can be included in an appendix).

The assessor of the first year report should complete a report, which can be uploaded and attached to your E-log.

The 9–12 month supervisory session (with both your first and secondary supervisors) should take place as close as possible to the submission of your first year report, so that you receive a thorough evaluation of your progress and benefit from the advice of both supervisors. Your supervisor should write a formal letter detailing your progress to date.

As before, once you are happy with the contents of this section, you should submit it for formal approval by your supervisor and second supervisor.

It is worth discussing with your supervisor at this point when you wish to go on a residential NationalGRAD school (http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/15672/GRADschools.html) - applying early in your second year will give the best choice of times and locations. UCL runs a two-part alternative that the Research Councils accept as equivalent.

7 Upgrade Oral Presentation.

For Chemistry, the MPhil to PhD upgrade requires a report of 40 pages submitted end of January (or 16 months from start date). The report should include The upgrade report should include (not necessarily as discrete items) an introduction, a literature review, a research question and hypothesis, a section on methodology, a substantial piece of work towards the thesis objectives, a plan and timetable for the remainder of the work and, a bibliography.

This will be followed by an upgrade viva carried out by the upgrade panel (in February) who then report to Graduate Tutor. The upgrade panel will consist of your secondary supervisor plus another member of the academic staff (often the Head of Section). Your supervisor will submit a report on your progress to the panel prior to your viva.

The upgrade supervisory session should take place soon after the viva. The section "upgrade form" should be completed, including the supervisors' (and assessor's) joint decision on upgrade.

There is a section on "recommendations from upgrade sessions". I am happy for supervisors to put "see transfer report" in this space if they are happy with your plan for your final year.

An electronic copy of the transfer report should be attached to the E-log.

You will also present your work at the second year poster competition (typically in early June). You will be assessed at the poster competition, typically by your second supervisor, but not necessarily so.

8 Upgrade session.
This should be completed immediately after the upgrade.

9 *You must see the Graduate Tutor after the upgrade supervisory meeting, bringing your transfer report and MPhil to PhD transfer form (for signing). MPhil to PhD transfer must be completed before the end of the fee-paying three years, if you are to submit a thesis for a PhD degree.*

10 24 month supervisory session.
The process should be very familiar to you by now!

11 Supervisory session prior to application for examination of thesis (~30 month).
Ideally you should have completed your research work and begun to write up your thesis at least three months before the end of your funding. Assuming that you will be submitting approximately four months later, this is the appropriate time for your examiners to be appointed and the examination entry forms to be submitted.

12 Supervisory session ~36 months (Log Section B).
If you have not reached the point of thesis submission and preparation before the end of your 3 years, then this section of the E-Log must be completed, carefully documenting the planned progress towards submission during the one year's free registration as a Continuing Research Student.

Dr Wendy A Brown, Chemistry Graduate Tutor, September 2010