

Information for IRDR Graduate Students

General

The IRDR aims to cultivate an inclusive, stimulating and sustainable environment to support outstanding research in risk and disaster reduction. Research students are central to this aim. We will support outstanding early career researchers who have the potential to become leaders in their field.

Research in the IRDR aspires to be cross-disciplinary, international and have real societal impact. Research students need to contribute to the intellectual life of the IRDR and actively engage with UCL as a community of scholars. Full-time students should centre their research on the IRDR (and be based in an IRDR Research Room) but also actively engage with the academic life of their partner departments or institutions.

IRDR funded or part-funded studentships should be held in the IRDR, which at this stage means that students must be admitted through Earth Sciences. The designation of your degree (e.g., statistics) is not affected by this administrative arrangement. (Presently the IRDR cannot admit its own students.)

Supervisors and Supervisory Panels

Research training is provided primarily by a Principal Supervisor and a Subsidiary Supervisor. Supervisors must be members of the IRDR supervisory pool. Progress is monitored by a Supervisory Panel of researchers who can provide a cross-disciplinary base for providing advice and monitoring progress. To provide breadth to supervision in the IRDR, supervisors would normally be appointed from different disciplines, with the third member of the supervisory panel being from outside UCL and often outside the UK.

Part-time students are expected to ensure that they have adequate face-to-face and electronic communication with their supervisors and to attend UCL whenever they can.

Research students should bear in mind that their Principal Supervisor will help clarify any uncertainties and guide the student in planning how to fulfil the expectations of UCL and the IRDR in the best possible manner.

UCL's graduate research students are required to keep a Graduate School Log Book: <https://researchlog.grad.ucl.ac.uk>

IRDR Research Environment

The IRDR aims to build a thriving environment for research and for research impact. Participation in research in the IRDR requires that students participate in the wider intellectual community, and that they also communicate their research ideas and results to a wide audience. IRDR organises a two-day annual summer school retreat for the purposes of discussing research and consolidating the intellectual community, an annual conference for engaging and leading in the broader risk and disaster reduction community and regular high-profile public events.

All research students are expected to attend:

- The annual IRDR Student Forum to present their research
- The annual IRDR Summer School
- The IRDR Annual Conference
- IRDR public events

Full-time research students are expected to be regular attendees at our two series of seminars with internal and external speakers and to engage in the informal life of the Institute by joining IRDR Coffee on a regular basis and social events.

All research students in the IRDR are required to make presentations about their work each academic year:

- all students: short presentations (5-10 minutes each) at the IRDR Student Forum in January aimed at giving all students an overview of research in the IRDR.
- all students: a poster display outlining the progress made on the research project; held as part of the IRDR Annual Conference. (also to be entered into the Graduate School poster competition).
- third-year presentation: a 20 minute lecture in the summer term as part of the research seminar series.

Research students should submit annually in May, in time for the preparation of the IRDR Annual Report, a 1-page research report, written in an accessible way, which includes their main findings and publications/presentations arising.

Teaching

Teaching is an integral part of the IRDR. Full-time research students are expected to contribute to teaching in the IRDR, within reasonable limits. Teaching outside the IRDR must be with the agreement of the IRDR Director.

Knowledge Exchange and Public Engagement

Knowledge exchange and public engagement are important aspects of our work, which differentiates the IRDR from UCL academic departments.

Research students are expected to contribute, where appropriate, to IRDR reports.

Full-time research students are normally expected to attend IRDR knowledge exchange and public events.

Skills Training

All graduate students in the IRDR are automatically members of the **UCL Graduate School**. The Graduate School requires that attendance is mandatory at courses organized by the School or the IRDR to develop generic skills and that over the three years of study for the PhD, full-time students must accumulate 6 weeks of generic training, which includes attending taught modules, teaching, attendance at conferences and seminars, fieldwork, summer schools etc.

We expect all our research students to acquire some competence in a foreign language, which should be one that is relevant to their research (for example, by being the language of communication in a field area). During the course of their research degree, we also expect all our research students to:

- gain experience in teaching, by taking charge of the classes in the IRDR or on associated modules
- submit at least one paper for publication in a high impact journal
- present their research at an international conference
- apply for small / travel grants, in order to gain experience of proposal writing
- communicate their research findings to the wider disaster risk reduction community.

Consultancy

Providing consultancy services can be a valuable part of a PhD training. Such consultancy should be done with the agreement of the supervisor and under the auspices of UCLi. Care should be taken that UCL intellectual property is not compromised.

Support from the IRDR

Students can expect from the IRDR:

- Excellent supervision
- A stimulating intellectual environment
- Skills training
- Support in preparation of the thesis
- Support with career development
- Support from the IRDR Graduate Advisor and IRDR Administrator
- A desk in an IRDR Research Room (hot desks for part-time students)
- £1,000 per annum research expenses for 3 years
- Access to additional funding for fieldwork, conferences, lab consumables etc. from the IRDR and the UCL Graduate School. (A case for support must be made through the supervisor.)
- Computing facilities (see below)

IRDR Computing Policy

The IRDR operates an Apple OS-X and UNIX policy. Other platforms (e.g., Windows) are only supported for operation in the field and in the laboratory where Macs are not an option. The preferred scientific computing software are Matlab and R. Microsoft Office and Apple iWorks are supported. Latex is not supported. A Mac number cruncher is available for batch jobs. High performance requests to UCL will be supported.

All students must back up their work at least weekly.

Completion of Thesis

A full-time programme of study is normally 3 or 3½ years. Students who have not submitted their thesis within this time can progress to Completing Research Student (CRS) status. A programme of part-time study is normally 5 years. Students have an obligation to UCL and to the IRDR to be diligent in their work and to complete their thesis on time.

Both a digital and hardcopy thesis (paid for by us) should be lodged with the IRDR. Programs and techniques developed during the course of supported research should be made available to IRDR researchers. (Full acknowledgement will be given.)

Publications and Presentations

In all publications, students must use the IRDR as their primary address. Financial support from the IRDR should be acknowledged. Publications and presentations should be made available as pdfs to upload to the IRDR website. Students should write a blog of fieldwork and related activities.

UCL / IRDR templates should be used for presentations.

Graduate Student Information & Progression

The Graduate School has a *UCL Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees*, which sets out best practice for the supervision of PhD students, who are encouraged to read it closely. UCL's procedures relating to Risk Assessment, Health & Safety and Ethics must be followed. All UCL procedures and policies on and equal opportunities must be followed.

For details of rules and regulations, see **the UCL Registry**.

Essential Information - codes/regulations/guidelines, see **the UCL Graduate School**.

Peter Sammonds January 2014