MPhil / PhD
Student Handbook 2019-2020
(for Staff and Students)
Cover images

Top left: The adult *Drosophila melanogaster* optic lobe is topographically organized into four neuropils – lamina, medulla, lobula and lobula plate. Courtesy of Matthew Bostock, PhD Student, Dr Viliaiwan Fernandes’s Laboratory, CDB

Top right: MDCK RFP-H2B cells (magenta) with CNN segmentation overlaid (green). Courtesy of Nathan Day, PhD Student, Dr Alan Lowe’s Laboratory, SMB

Bottom left: Female Skywalker Hoolock Gibbon (*Hoolock tianxing*). Courtesy of Professor Fan Peng-Fei at Sun Yat-Sen University in China, who along with Carolyn Thompson (PhD Student, Professor Helen Chatterjee’s Laboratory, GEE) are studying the patterns and drivers of gibbon decline seen across China. Using interdisciplinary methods involving recording wild gibbon behaviour and interviewing local communities, they hope to improve conservation management efforts of some of the world’s rarest apes.

Bottom right: GFP-labelled neurons reveal the organised architecture of the mouse hippocampus. Courtesy of Johanna Buechler, Wellcome Trust Neuroscience PhD student, Professors Patricia Salinas and Alasdair Gibb’s Laboratories, CDB/NPP
# Division of Biosciences

## Information for MPhil/PhD Students

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This booklet provides critical information you will need to successfully navigate your MPhil/PhD programme in the Division of Biosciences and MUST BE READ AND KEPT FOR FUTURE REFERENCE. You should also read through the Doctoral School Handbook and the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees (both provided in your Faculty induction pack and also available at http://www.grad.ucl.ac.uk/essinfo/), as well as the UCL Academic Manual (available at https://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/).

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Crick Programme
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SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

PhD students joining UCL are either on 3 year or 4 year programmes. Some programmes have their own additional specific requirements. Part-time students are on a 5 year programme.

If you are on a 3 year programme you will already have selected your Principal Supervisor. You will also have a Second Supervisor, to be selected in agreement with your Principal Supervisor within two weeks of the start of your PhD and you should notify your Departmental Graduate Research Administrator of their details. All students will be appointed a Departmental Graduate Tutor – they exercise general academic and pastoral oversight of PhD students in the Department, including your induction, supervision, progression and examination.

All new students are given a form to complete with their Principal Supervisor at their first meeting – this form covers all aspects of the student/supervisor relationship and is returned to the Faculty Office after completion.

Progress of all students is monitored by a Thesis Committee, consisting of your Principal and Second Supervisors together with one of the Departmental Graduate Tutors or another academic member of staff (see additional information below for 4 year programme students). The Second Supervisor or DGT/other member of staff could act as the Chair of the Committee.

The student will meet with the Committee three times in their first year (at three months, six months and the upgrade from MPhil to PhD at twelve months) then at least once in each of the subsequent years. The student will normally be expected to submit a written report to the Thesis Committee beforehand and commence each meeting with a brief presentation. The meetings should last approx thirty minutes; the upgrade meeting should last a minimum of one hour. At each meeting the Committee will check that the student's Research Student Log is up-to-date.

All students doing lab rotations in their first year are required to write a report and/or give a presentation at the end of each rotation.

Wellcome Trust 4 Year PhD in Neuroscience: students' progress will be monitored throughout their PhD by the Wellcome 4 Year Steering Committee: Professor David Attwell, Professor Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, Professor Alasdair Gibb, Professor Patricia Salinas. In their first year students are supervised by their rotation supervisors and from the second year, when they move into their chosen lab to commence their PhD with a Principal Supervisor, progress will be monitored by their Thesis Committee, consisting of a Second Supervisor and a Graduate Tutor (a member of the Steering Committee).

Wellcome Trust 4 Year PhD in Structural, Computational and Chemical Biology: students will be monitored by their rotation supervisors in the first year together with the programme director Professor Finn Werner. From the second year, when they move into their chosen lab to commence their PhD with a Principal Supervisor, they will be monitored by their Thesis Committee.

PhD in Developmental and Stem Cell Biology: students will be monitored by their rotation supervisors in the first year together with the Steering Committee: Professor Claudio Stern, Professor Roberto Mayor. From the second year, when they move into their chosen lab to commence their PhD with a Principal Supervisor, they will be monitored by their Thesis Committee, consisting of Principal and Second Supervisors together with a Graduate Tutor (a member of the Steering Committee).

London Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme: students will be monitored by their rotation supervisors in the first year together with the Management Committee. From the second year, when they move into their chosen lab to commence their PhD with a Principal Supervisor, they will be monitored by their Thesis Committee, consisting of Second Supervisor (one of the supervisors on the Programme) and Graduate Tutor (a member of the Committee). For those students who select a PhD project in a partner institution other than UCL, their registration will be transferred to the host institution at the start of year two of the PhD programme.

UCL Birkbeck Medical Research Council: students will be monitored by their rotation supervisors in the first year together with the Management Committee. From the second year, when they move into
their chosen lab to commence their PhD with a Principal Supervisor, they will be monitored by their Thesis Committee, consisting of Second Supervisor (one of the supervisors on the Programme) and Graduate Tutor (a member of the Committee). For those students who select a PhD project in a partner institution other than UCL, their registration will be transferred to the host institution at the start of year two of the PhD programme.

**RESEARCH STUDENT LOG**

Each student's progress is recorded using the mandatory Research Student Log managed by the UCL Doctoral School: [http://www.grad.ucl.ac.uk/](http://www.grad.ucl.ac.uk/)

Access to this, as well as e-mail and other electronic information at UCL, is via your UCL userid and password. Skills development training is linked to this Log through approved courses taken. This is an extremely valuable document, providing critical information for your CV when managed correctly.

You need to log on to activate your Log. The details of your Principal and, when known, Second Supervisor will automatically be populated by your Portico record. If they are not showing, please contact your Departmental Graduate Research Administrator.

Your milestones, reports and objectives are guided by the Log, your Supervisors and Graduate Tutor. Failure to meet the target dates for the Log will automatically generate reminders to you. Your Principal and Second Supervisors will receive notification of all the entries you submit to the Log and be asked to approve them.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your Log is kept up-to-date and that progress points (milestones) are completed and signed off by your Supervisors. Upgrade to PhD and exam entry/appointment of examiners is conditional on appropriate completion.

For students who are on 4 year programmes with rotations in the first year, the Log progress will commence with your year 2 when you select the laboratory for your PhD.

**WORK, ATTENDANCE AND ILLNESS**

As with normal working practices, you are expected to be in attendance for at least 37 hours per week, and in general all students occasionally find they need to work far longer hours. UCL has Christmas and Easter closure (dates can be found on [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/term-dates](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/term-dates)) and if you wish to work during those periods you will need to make special arrangements with both your Supervisor and the Divisional Operations team.

UCL has a duty to keep the attendance, conduct and progress of students under continuous review. As with members of staff, annual leave is 27 days per year, to be taken following agreement with your Principal Supervisor. A maximum of 5 days can be carried over from one year to the next.

If you are ill, you should contact your Principal Supervisor immediately and keep him/her informed of progress for longer term illness. A medical certificate is required in cases of illness lasting more than one week.

**KEEPING IN TOUCH**

Information from the Graduate Research Administrator, Graduate Tutors, etc, is sent to UCL e-mail addresses. Please make sure you check this regularly. It is possible to put an auto-forward onto your UCL e-mail if you don’t wish to use this as your default e-mail address. For further information see: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/)
UCL Communications

myUCL (weekly term-time e-newsletter to all students which covers key internal announcements, events and opportunities): https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/student-news/what-myucl

UCL Instagram: (UCL’s official Instagram channel, featuring news, events, competitions and images from across the UCL community): https://www.instagram.com/ucl/

@ucl Twitter channel: (sharing highlights of life at UCL from across UCL’s diverse community): https://twitter.com/ucl

PORTICO – THE UCL STUDENT INFORMATION SERVICE

Access to Portico is from: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/portico using your UCL userid and password. If you have forgotten your password or need any further information about access please contact the IS Helpdesk at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/

It is your responsibility to keep your Portico record up-to-date. Please ensure that you enter any change of address or telephone number so that your Supervisor, the Graduate Research Administrator or Graduate Tutor can contact you in an emergency.

Continuing registration is also via Portico including payment of fees as appropriate. You must re-enrol at the start of each academic session – you will be prompted to do this via e-mails from the Student Centre.

PROGRESS OF PROGRAMME

Students will be expected to participate fully in the activities of the research group to which they belong. This will include participating in meetings of the group and presenting data to the group as required.

The milestones for students on the London Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme and in the Department of Structural and Molecular Biology differ slightly from those below and you will receive an additional document in this respect at the start of term.

Major Milestones and Guidance Notes

Major milestones for the PhD, monitored by the Principal Supervisor and/or the Thesis Committee, are as below (where Departments have different milestones, these will be advised):

- 6 weeks – prepare a written project description and identify objectives for the first 3 months, upload to Log
- 6 month report
- 9-10 months – each student presents to the Department at an annual symposium a 15 minute overview of their project and any data produced since they started
- Transfer from MPhil to PhD – approx 12 months (24 months part-time) after initial registration
- Mid-year 3 – meet with Principal and Second Supervisors to evaluate progress and plan calendar for thesis submission
- Seminar presentation – all final year students (and non-finalists in some Departments) will give a thirty minute seminar to the Department at an annual symposium

If there are circumstances, e.g. ill health, that prevent the standard milestones from being met, these may be dealt with by interruptions to study. If you are having any problems at all you should discuss these with your Principal Supervisor in the first instance and do not hesitate to contact your Graduate Tutor for help and advice.

Below are some specific guidelines for the major milestones:
6 Month Report

Please prepare a report following the guidelines below, discuss and revise it with your Supervisor and upload to your Log:

[1] Summary of proposed research including key goals
   - For scientifically qualified assessors (no more than 200 words)
   - For lay readers (no more than 200 words)
   - What is your research question? (no more than 100 words)

[2] Research - no more than 1,000 words including:
   - Work which has led up to the project
   - Experimental design and methods to be used in investigating this problem
   - Results to date if any
   - Key references (no more than 10)

Maximum total word length 1,500 (excluding references)
(No more than 2 pages in arial 11)

To upload under objectives:

[3] Work plan for next 6 months (no more than 200 words)
[4] Please ensure that the following has been completed in your Log:
   - Project Outline and Initial Objectives
   - 3 month progress
   - 3-6 month objectives

Transfer from MPhil to PhD Registration

We have a formalized system of progress assessment in order to decide whether you should be upgraded to continue with study for a PhD or be advised to withdraw.

The transfer should be completed at these time points after initial registration:
   - full-time students - approx 12 months (not less than 9 months and not later than 18 months)
   - part-time students - approx 24 months (not less than 15 months and not later than 30 months)

It is important that the transfer is carried out sufficiently early in the project as it gives an opportunity to assess progress and make appropriate adjustments to the direction of the project if necessary.

The written report should be approx 5,000 words (excluding display items, references, figure legends) and primarily consist of background material to the project including a review of the relevant literature, summary of results if available and future directions. Departments may have additional guidelines on this. It should give a clear indication of how time has been spent and what has been done, even if negative. Full-time students should, on average, spend between 2-3 weeks preparing the report. It is not considered appropriate for the student to prepare a mini thesis and as a result be away from their research for an extended period.

Please note that NPP has different rules for the upgrade process which are sent to students and uploaded to the NPP website.

Functions of the transfer report and viva
1. Writing the report helps the students to focus on what they have achieved, to see clearly what is still needed and to formulate plans for the future.
2. This is an important exercise in scientific writing, a skill which must be developed during the PhD.
3. The viva gives students practice at handling a viva setting, provides an opportunity to ensure that they have a good grasp of basic principles and that they are thoroughly in command of their project.
4. It also gives an opportunity to discuss the progress of the thesis, to ensure that the work is on track for completion, and that levels of work by the student and supervision by Supervisor are appropriate and adequate.

This document must be attached to your Log
The report will be discussed with the student and their Thesis Committee at an oral examination. The Principal Supervisor should not attend, but should submit in advance of the upgrade viva a report to the Thesis Committee and the student. It is generally a good idea that the student is prepared to give a 10 minute informal introductory talk on their work to aid with the subsequent discussion. The Thesis Committee will then question the student on their report. At the end of the meeting the student should have the opportunity to speak confidentially to the Graduate Tutor about any areas of concern. We remind students that the principal purposes of the transfer process are for the Thesis Committee to ascertain whether the student is:
1. Able to communicate their research both in writing and orally and also to defend it
2. Aware of their subject area and related fields

It is the responsibility of the student and Supervisor to arrange this meeting. The report should be sent to the Thesis Committee two weeks before the date of the meeting. The outcome together with the report will determine if the student is to be upgraded. A written report and recommendation by the Committee will be communicated to the student, Principal Supervisor, Graduate Tutor and Graduate Research Administrator. If a consensus is not reached, another Departmental Graduate Tutor or the Faculty Graduate Tutor will be consulted. In some cases before making a final decision a second meeting may be requested, no more than 6 months (10 months part-time) later, during which time the student will be given a series of goals to be achieved. A student who fails the second upgrade will be informed that they will have to submit their work as an MPhil or withdraw from the programme.

It should be remembered that without upgrading students will not be able to claim completing research student (CRS) status which allows for a 1 year (2 year part-time) exemption from fees whilst writing up beyond the 3 year (5 year part-time) study period.

It is also your responsibility to ensure that all sections of your Log have been completed before upgrade will be approved.

If you do not have a 6 month report, please upload your abstract for your upgrade report in this location.

Preparation and Submission of Thesis

Students are strongly encouraged to complete laboratory work, write up and submit within the 3 year (5 year part-time) research period of their PhD programme, although for some programmes this may vary. UCL recognises that this is not always possible and offers a 1 year (2 years for part-time students) CRS status which is non-fee paying. During CRS you are not expected to be receiving supervision and use of CRS status should be a fall-back position as without a stipend this can be very difficult to manage. Please note that on some funded programmes you are expected to submit within the funding period and therefore not entitled to CRS.

Students who come to the end of their authorised period of CRS status but have not submitted a thesis will no longer be registered as students nor have access to UCL facilities.

3 year programme
(Self-funded, some Research Councils, most other funded programmes)
Submission is expected to be within 4 years of start date.

London Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme
As defined by the Research Council, submission is expected to be within 4 years of start date. The 4 year duration of this programme includes the writing up period. Given the strict time limits for completion, the rotation projects should be linked to the eventual PhD project, although this is not compulsory.

Specific 3 + 1 year programmes, e.g. Wellcome Trust
For these programmes, the PhD registration period is taken to be from the move into your laboratory of choice at the beginning of your second year, at which point a standard 3 year programme begins.

Part-time programmes
Registration for part-time programmes is for 5 years; however you are able to submit your thesis after 3 years and this will stop fees from date of submission. Students who are employed as research assistants, effectively working on their PhD full-time, will be expected to submit at or soon after this 3 year period has passed.
It is important to note that you need to submit your exam entry form and work with your Supervisor to complete the examiner nomination form three-four months BEFORE you submit your thesis. These forms require your Graduate Tutor’s signature. **Please ensure that you pass these forms to your Graduate Research Administrator who will check them before forwarding to the Registry.**

The Registry website provides all the information that you need for preparation and submission of your dissertation:

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/research-assessments

**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

All Research Council funded students are required to complete two weeks of skills training in each year of their funded studentship. The Division expects that **ALL** students should follow this stipulation and take advantage of the Departmental and Doctoral School/HR Organisational Development opportunities.

In addition to formal courses, other important areas of skills training that need to be logged include participation in laboratory meetings, attendance at conferences, preparation and presentation of posters and talks at conferences, demonstrating, attendance at Departmental seminar series and retreats.

Appropriate courses **MUST** be agreed with your Principal Supervisor before signing up for them. Doctoral School courses are free to students and a full listing of the courses available can be found on the Doctoral School website:

https://doctoral-skills.ucl.ac.uk/

**GRADUATE CONFERENCE AND EXTERNAL TRAINING COURSES FUND**

SLMS Academic Careers Office administers these funds to support students to attend conferences and courses. Please see the following website for details of deadlines and how to apply:

http://www.ucl.ac.uk/slms/aco/gc-etcf

**DEMONSTRATING/TEACHING**

The opportunity is available for PhD students to be employed as a Postgraduate Teaching Assistant (PGTA) to assist in the running of undergraduate student tutorials and practical demonstrations. This not only counts towards your skills development, but is a valuable addition to your CV. These posts are suitable for students with degrees in biosciences-related subjects and a good knowledge of the subject matter of each particular module. Previous experience with teaching (particularly running undergraduate seminars/tutorials) is an advantage. Tutors are required to prepare and supervise hour long tutorials, as well as mark the work from them. Demonstrators are required to attend practical sessions to supervise laboratory classes and may be required to mark practical write-ups at the end of the practical.

PhD students are invited to apply to become a PGTA and to submit a CV. Details of modules requiring demonstrators/tutors are sent to prospective PGTA and those interested are considered by the relevant module organisers. Recruitment is reconfirmed annually, with supervisor approval to continue as a PGTA. There is the opportunity of participating in other subject areas each year. Please note that final year students may be restricted from demonstrating as they should be focusing on finishing and submitting their thesis.

Any relevant training will be provided by the Division. In addition, UCL now facilitates a suite of developmental opportunities for all who teach at UCL, known as **UCL Arena**. Provision for PGTA is delivered through **UCL Arena One** and includes a mandatory introductory three hour Gateway
workshop for all students who are assigned teaching for the first time. New PGTAs will not be able to take on any teaching/assessment activities without having completed this training. Please follow the Arena One link for further information and to register for training. There are only a certain number of workshops each year and these fill up quickly so prospective PGTAs are encouraged to sign up as early as possible.

Prospective PGTAs will receive an ‘As and When’ contract from the Biosciences Staffing Team and are appointed at point 17 of grade 5 of UCL salary scales. Payment is for contact hours plus hours for preparation/training as directed by the module organiser/Head of Teaching. Payment is made at least twice a year and PGTAs are also entitled to pro-rata payment in lieu of holiday.

Please note that PGTAs cannot undertake any paid or unpaid work until they have submitted the requested documents to finalise their contract with HR, including evidence of Right to Work. Please do not agree to any work until this process has been followed.

It is the responsibility of international students on a Tier 4 visa to make sure they do NOT exceed a total of 20 hours work per week across and outside UCL (10 hours per week for some students). Such students will be required to complete weekly time sheets for any work done.

Please also note that we are not able to pay salaried staff who may be asked to undertake some teaching activities as part of their normal duties.

Before applying, it is the responsibility of the PhD student to obtain the approval of their supervisors to undertake demonstrating/tutorial work. Final teaching loads must also be checked with supervisors. Please note that being provided with an offer of work does not guarantee any hours, nor is the worker required to accept the hours offered.

PGTAs should honour their commitments once organised and give as much notice as possible if they find that they are unable to carry out any duties.

Those interested in PGTA work should submit a CV to the relevant staff listed below, noting that they are a new applicant. This will be sent to module organisers/leaders of practicals for consideration.

Kuldip Chana k.chana@ucl.ac.uk – for Biology modules.
Polly Thompson polly.thompson@ucl.ac.uk – for Medical, Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience modules.
Rani Jandoo r.jandoo@ucl.ac.uk - for Biochemistry, Cell and Anatomy modules.

General policies, procedures and FAQs can be found on the Biosciences PGTA Moodle website.

SUPERVISING MASTERS STUDENTS

You may be asked to supervise Masters students, which is good for your CV but you can decline.

VOLUNTEERING SERVICE

This is one of the biggest volunteering departments in the UK with over 500 different opportunities to choose from. Volunteering is a great way to get involved in local projects and apply your diverse skills for the benefit of the community. You’ll get loads of support and advice from both the Volunteering Service and the student-run Volunteering Society. For more information please have a look at their website: http://studentsunionucl.org/volunteering
EVENTS

Seminars
The Division of Biosciences runs a regular series of seminars during term time: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/biosciences/biosciences-events?collection=drupal-life-sciences-events&meta_UclOrgUnit=%22Biosciences%22&ge_DateFilter=20190806
Your name will be added to the seminar mailing list so that you receive e-mail reminders. If you are not receiving this information, please contact your Graduate Research Administrator. You are expected to attend those seminars that are relevant to your research.

Scientific Society Meetings
All students are encouraged to take advantage of subject-specific National or International Society meetings every year to show-case their work and to meet and discuss their work with their peers working in related areas. Graduate Student Societies may arrange specific symposia associated with their subject area. These meetings provide a valuable way to make contacts for future career opportunities.

Retreats and Symposia
CDB Retreat: Held every two-three years and all costs for the retreat are covered by the Department.

ISMB Retreat: The ISMB Retreat takes place biennially over two days in June/July with an overnight stay. The last three Retreats have taken place at Robinson College, Cambridge. The free event is attended by a limited number of people from within the joint Institute of Structural and Molecular Biology. The aim of each Retreat is to explore links within biology, to build connections between ISMB members and to encourage collaboration. The strongest voice is given to students and postdocs, with a number presenting talks and all given the opportunity to present posters in the evening session on the first day. Each Retreat also features three keynote talks by visiting speakers and a lively activity that involves all attendees.

CDB Annual Graduate Symposium: A one day event held every year with PhD students giving either a presentation or a poster – depending on their year of study. Prizes are awarded for the best posters.

SMB Annual Graduate Symposium: A two day event held every year with PhD students giving either a presentation or a poster – depending on their year of study. Prizes are awarded for the best posters/presentations.

GEE Annual Graduate Symposium: A two day event held every year with PhD students giving either a presentation or a poster – depending on their year of study. Prizes are awarded for the best posters/presentations.

London Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme Events: A two day academic retreat held each September. The programme is planned by the students and the cost is met by the LIDo programme. The students also have a two day end of rotation presentation event in February and June.

Divisional Events: The student reps on the Staff-Student Consultative Committee organise four events a year.

Attendance at Taught Courses
If you feel that there is any area of your knowledge that may be refreshed or supported by attendance at one of the undergraduate or postgraduate taught modules, please obtain your Supervisor’s agreement then contact the relevant module tutor to agree attendance. The timetables for these can be found via: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lifesciences-faculty-php/courses/search.php
STUDENT FACILITIES

Student Hubs
The Biosciences PhD Student Hub is located in the Medical Sciences Building, rooms LG40/41, accessed via the passageway between the Medical Sciences and Andrew Huxley Buildings, entrance with 'Pharmacology' carved in stone above the doorway. Please ask your Graduate Research Administrator for the access code to the room. There is a kitchen area, social area and a bank of computers.

The UCL Graduate Student Hub is located in the South Wing basement behind the Print Room Café. It is open 24-7 and comprises a seminar room for group discussion and presentations, a breakout space with integrated kitchenette, a common room and a suite of individual study carrels.

The new Senate House Hub, located on the third floor, South Block, Senate House, is a dedicated space for PhD students. It provides a variety of study spaces for individual and group/project working.

Students’ Union UCL
www.studentsunionucl.org

As the student representative body, the Union is run by students for students. It is independent of UCL and a registered charity, providing a range of services to support students and help them develop skills and interests while at UCL. Students automatically become a member during enrolment (but can opt out).

Ridgmount Practice (UCL Health Centre)
http://www.gowerplacepractice.nhs.uk

A National Health Service (NHS) practice providing healthcare for students living within its catchment area (ie near the main UCL campus). Students can also choose to register with a practice closer to where they live if they prefer. The Ridgmount Practice also runs a Walk-in Surgery which any UCL student can attend, even if they are not registered with the practice.

Libraries
http://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/students

Information and assistance for students using the library and details of services offered.

The UCL biology and medical sciences collections are in the Science Library (DMS Watson Building, Malet Place). Another useful Library is in the Cruciform Building, across Gower Street.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Division of Biosciences Health and Safety site has all the essential information relating to Health and Safety at UCL and the Division of Biosciences in particular: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/biosciences/division-biosciences-health-and-safety

It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with this information and it is mandatory that you attend a UCL Safety Induction.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Your first port of call if you have a problem is your Principal Supervisor.
**UCL Support Services and Websites**

**Student Enquiries Centre:** based on the first floor of the new Student Centre building in Gordon Square, provides students with information and support related to their registration and student record [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/life-ucl/student-enquiries-centre](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/life-ucl/student-enquiries-centre)

**askUCL:** new student enquiry system to search for answers and raise enquiries [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/)

**Student Support and Wellbeing:** offers a wide range of support services for students [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/student-support-and-wellbeing](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/student-support-and-wellbeing)

**Student Mediator:** helps students troubleshoot problems that are unable to be resolved through informal means [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/student-mediator/](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/student-mediator/)

**Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing Team:** provides a safe, confidential and non-judgemental space in which students can discuss any wellbeing, mental health and/or disability concerns that may be affecting their ability to study [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/disability-support](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/disability-support)

**International Student Support Team:** provides specialist support and advice for all non-UK students, helping them settle into life in the UK and make the most of their time at UCL and in London; this includes practical guidance on healthcare, banking, transport and safety [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/international-students](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/international-students)

**Student Psychological and Counselling Services:** dedicated to helping students with personal, emotional and psychological concerns [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/student-psychological-and-counselling-services](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/student-psychological-and-counselling-services)

**Student Financial Support:** [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding)

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion)

**Religion and Faith:** [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/specialist-information-and-support/religion-and-faith](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/specialist-information-and-support/religion-and-faith)

**LGBT+ Students:** [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/information-specific-groups/lgbt-students](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/information-specific-groups/lgbt-students)

**Students' Union UCL Advice Service:** information and advice on employment, housing, academic issues and legal matters [http://studentsunionucl.org/help-and-advice/advice-service](http://studentsunionucl.org/help-and-advice/advice-service)

There is also:

**The Samaritans:** to talk to someone at any time, day or night, tel: 116 123 [https://www.samaritans.org/](https://www.samaritans.org/)

**Nightline:** a confidential listening, support and practical information service available overnight and run by student volunteers, tel: 020 7631 0101 [www.nightline.org.uk](http://www.nightline.org.uk)

**Care First:** UCL works in partnership with Care First to provide an out-of-hours support and information helpline which is free of charge and includes access to specialists and counsellors who can help students with a range of emotional and psychological difficulties [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/evening-and-weekend-support](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/evening-and-weekend-support)

**Staff-Student Consultative Committee (SSCC)**

The SSCC meets once per term to discuss management of studies to improve and enhance academic and social life in the Division and any issues arising. The SSCC provides an opportunity for Graduate Tutors/Supervisors to discuss prospective changes with PhD student representatives and for the students to propose changes to be considered by the staff. PhD students from each Department in the Division elect a student to represent them. In addition, the Division elects a student to be the lead representative who will be responsible for co-chairing and agenda setting for SSCC meetings alongside a staff member and will also become a member of the Division of Biosciences Strategy Committee.

The current student reps are:

- **Lead Rep** Valentina Spiteri (also Faculty Student Rep)
- **LMCB** Harry Horsnell and Lucas von Chamier
- **CDB** Cato Hastings and Matthew Bostock
- **GEE** Jessica Williams and Mislav Acman
- **NPP** Kjara Pilch
Mentoring Scheme
The SSCC Student Reps proposed this scheme which pairs each new student with a second or third year student with the following aims:

- to provide new graduate students in the Division with senior student mentors to help them settle into the Division and into life in London
- to offer moral support if needed
- to encourage networking of students across the year groups and across the Division

There is an initial meeting at the start of term then mentors and mentees are encouraged to contact each other and meet up throughout the year.

Student Grievances and Difficulties
If you have any concerns about your supervision, progression, etc, please discuss these with your Graduate Tutor at the earliest possible opportunity.

If you feel that a member of staff has unfairly treated you in any way, please raise it first with that member of staff. If that is inappropriate, then see your Graduate Tutor who can also advise on any difficulties (personal, financial, medical or academic) affecting your studies.

The Division of Biosciences has two Diversity and Equal Opportunities Liaison Officers (DEOLOs) who provide support and assistance for students and staff about any issues they have at UCL regarding equality, bullying or sexual harassment:
Tabitha Owen
Stavroula Lialiou

The Wellbeing Champions for the Faculty are:
Rachel Hamilton - MRC/UCL Lab for Molecular Cell Biology
Heather Badru - School of Pharmacy

Career Development
The Graduate Skills programme includes a number of Career Development courses. Please take advantage of relevant courses, particularly as you reach the period when you will be looking to progress your career. Career advice can be found on the UCL Careers website:
http://www.ucl.ac.uk/careers

ETHICS
It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they have ethical permission in place before performing research where this is required. For more information please see:
http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk

RESEARCH INTEGRITY
Being a researcher involves a high level of ethical standards and integrity in one’s work and interactions with others. UCL takes integrity very seriously and misconduct in research can be very damaging for individuals and the institution as a whole. There is currently an increasing emphasis on research integrity training in UCL and in 2016 we began to run the https://www.eur.nl/en/about-eur/strategy-and-policy/integrity/scientific-integrity/dilemma-game, an interactive game which makes groups of players think about and discuss practical dilemmas and ethical issues in an engaging, educational setting. You will receive e-mail notifications of when these sessions are run and you will be required to take part in at least one during your degree.
For more information on research integrity and training courses, please see:
http://www.ucl.ac.uk/research/integrity

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of another person’s thoughts or words or artefacts or software as though they were your own. Any quotation from the published or unpublished works of other persons must, therefore, be clearly identified as such by being placed inside quotation marks, and you should identify your sources as accurately and fully as possible. A series of short quotations from several different sources, if not clearly identified as such, constitutes plagiarism just as much as does a single unacknowledged long quotation from a single source. If you summarise another person’s ideas, judgements, figures, software or diagrams, a reference to that person in the text must be made and the work referred to must be included in the bibliography.

Using ‘ghost-writing’ agencies or getting someone else to write your essays or reports, or use of outside word-processing agencies which offer correction or improvement of English is strictly forbidden, and anyone who makes use of these services is liable for an academic penalty.

Use of unacknowledged information downloaded from the internet also constitutes plagiarism.

It is also forbidden to reproduce material which you have used in other work/assessment for the course or programmes concerned. Students should be aware of this ‘self-plagiarism’.

Failure to observe any of the provisions of this policy or of approved departmental guidelines constitutes an examination offence under UCL and University Regulations. Examination offences will normally be treated as cheating or irregularities under the Regulations in respect of Examination Irregularities. Under these Regulations students found to have committed an offence may be excluded from all further examinations of the University.

The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file).

More information on plagiarism can be found at:
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/plagiarism

DATA OWNERSHIP

Laboratory notebooks and recording of research data

Laboratory notebooks need to contain clear evidence of the research carried out and, most importantly, must include the dates on which the results were achieved. Here are some guidelines and advice:

- Laboratory notebooks containing the research data obtained whilst working at UCL are the property of the Division of Biosciences, UCL, as well as the investigators. All laboratory notebooks generated by the students are to be retained by the Division of Biosciences. A student is, however, permitted to make and retain photocopies of the notebooks.
- Laboratory notebooks should be hardbound, with photomicrographs and images of gels or other raw data generated, permanently attached to the pages of the notebooks.
- If you hold your data electronically then this should be authenticated by the supervisor and a copy provided to be retained by the Division of Biosciences.

Your Departmental Graduate Research Administrator will send you a Data Ownership form to be completed and returned.