INTRODUCTION

To help Students and Supervisors pace and progress a research degree, we use the on-line Doctoral School Graduate Research Student Log (https://researchlog.grad.ucl.ac.uk/)

Use of the Graduate Research Student Log (Log) is mandatory for all UCL Research Degree Students. The Student and Primary Supervisor are asked to document academic progression and skills development training in the Log and it is the responsibility of the Student to maintain the Log for her or his own long-term benefit. The Log reflects a dialogue between you and your Primary and Secondary Supervisors, and records a series of review meetings (including important milestones such as the MPhil to PhD Upgrade) and discussions on academic (subject discipline), generic and transferable skills training. The Log is designed to be used in a flexible manner, to allow for different research processes between disciplines.

The Faculty of Life Sciences (FLS) strongly recommends that Research Students follow the Log guidelines in this document. By following these guidelines Students will hopefully have at least a draft copy of some chapters of their Thesis (Introduction, Materials & Methods and Results) which can then be developed when the time comes to produce the final copy of the Thesis. However, depending on your type of research/department these guidelines may not be suitable. Please check with your Primary Supervisor if it is appropriate to your research to either follow these guidelines or use the Log in a more flexible manner.

Your Primary Supervisor/Departmental Graduate Tutor can explain its use to you. Induction sessions on the Log are also provided by the Doctoral School.

We expect that by following the guidelines here, PhD Students will complete their research degree in four years (seven years if part-time) and be able to enjoy the benefits, such as not incurring additional fees and being able to detail on a CV a PhD completed in a judicious amount of time.

Log Progress Points - due Dates

The Log has progress points (milestones), spread out at intervals over the duration of a PhD. These guidelines cover the milestones that Students should aim for at each stage.

Progress point due dates are measured from the PhD start date. This is usually the start date as recorded in Portico https://evision.ucl.ac.uk/urd/sits.urd/run/siw_lgn. However, if you are on a programme that in the first year includes rotations or is spent completing an MRes course then your Log start date may differ to your PhD start date. If necessary please amend your Log start date to your PhD start date.

If you plan to finish your PhD early, this is perfectly acceptable. Just keep following the progress points and when each one is completed amend your UCL Research Student Log ahead of the deadline. (NB: Students must be registered for at least 2 calendar years full-time, or 3 calendar years part-time, before they can submit a thesis for examination for the PhD or the MPhil degree. (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/chapters/chapter-5-research-degrees-framework Chapter 5 part A Section 2.6.)
INTRODUCTION

Thesis Committee

Once your choice of PhD project is confirmed your first responsibility will be to form a Research Degree Thesis Committee. This is composed of two or three academics depending on which department you are in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departmental Thesis Committee composition for Graduate Research Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMB:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary Supervisors/Graduate Tutors can assist you in forming your PhD Thesis Committee, but you will be expected to be the driving force behind its formation. Once the Thesis Committee is formed you will be responsible for communicating effectively with the Thesis Committee members, arranging Thesis Committee meetings and uploading to the Log reports from the Thesis Chair.

You have the option at any Thesis Committee meeting to ask for your Primary Supervisor not to attend should you wish to discuss anything with the Thesis Committee that might be difficult with the Primary present.

These Guidelines are in addition to the Academic Regulations and Guidelines for Research Degree Students [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/overview](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/overview). If you have any queries concerning these milestones please don’t hesitate to contact your Supervisor, Graduate Research Tutor or Graduate Research Administrator.
Progress Point Init: due within 1 month of PhD Start Date

You must log on to activate your Research Student Log (Log). Please add the working title for your PhD. The details of your Primary and, when known, Secondary Supervisor will automatically be populated by your Portico record. If they are not showing, please contact your Graduate Research Administrator. If appropriate, you can add your Thesis Chair. If your first year involves rotations please amend your PhD start date in the Log as appropriate.

Progress Point 3: due 3 months after PhD start date [5 months if part-time]

Thesis Committee meeting, Project Outline & Professional training and development plans

- The first Thesis Committee meeting you need to organise is to discuss the Project Outline.
- A Project Outline should be up to 4-6 pages double-spaced and focus on what you will work on, why it is important and how you will do it. Also include a few lines on your objectives for the next three months and the skills required to complete these objectives. Please ensure your Thesis Committee has time to read and consider your Project Outline before the meeting.
- Discuss professional and development needs and agree with your Primary Supervisor. Your Committee can advise on the suitability of the agreed professional training and development needs.
- Please upload your Project Outline to the Log.
- After the meeting the Thesis Chair will email you their comments. If in agreement with these, you should upload them to the Log. The Log system will then contact the Thesis Committee for them to electronically approve the documents you have uploaded.

Progress Point 6: due 6 months after PhD start date [10 months if part-time]

Thesis Committee meeting & Progress Report

- Arrange a Thesis Committee meeting to discuss your Progress Report.
- The Progress Report should be a maximum of 12 pages double-spaced and include research questions and hypothesis. An extensive literature review is not needed at this stage. A “Materials and Methods” may be included in the Progress Report, if deemed relevant by your Primary Supervisor. Also include a few lines on your objectives for the next 6 months and the skills required to complete these objectives.
- Give a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation to your Thesis Committee on your Progress Report.
- Please upload your Progress Report to the Log.
- After the meeting the Thesis Chair will email you their comments. If in agreement with these, you should upload them to the Log. The Log system will then contact the Thesis Committee for them to electronically approve the document you have uploaded.

If the 6 month Progress Report is NOT satisfactory, there is another opportunity to present a Progress Report in the ninth month from your start date.

Progress Point: [Not recorded in the Log – complete within the first year if full time/second year if part-time]

Short PowerPoint presentation

Presentation skills that not only support your research, professional development and employability but are also transferable are part of all our PhD programmes. Each department provides opportunities for PhD Students to practise their presentation skills at either Departmental Symposia or other events. Some departments have mandatory events – others are arranged on an ad-hoc basis. (If your PhD start date month is between March and August then you may have the option to give your presentation in the following year.)

UCL PowerPoint templates see: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cam/brand/brand-resources/templates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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Faculty of Life Sciences – Graduate Research Student Log Progress Point Guidelines

Year 1 - Full-time: months 10-12

**Progress Point 12:** due 12 months after PhD start date [Year 2: 20 months if part-time]

NB for full-time students: The 12th month progress point is often combined with the Upgrade Progress point (Upgr) below and just one Thesis Committee meeting is arranged. However – if you will not be upgrading around the 12th month, arrange a separate Thesis Committee meeting to discuss your introduction:

**Thesis Committee meeting & Introduction to Thesis**

At this point a Thesis Committee meeting should be arranged. Students should prepare:

- The *Introduction to Thesis* - this should be no more than 24 pages double-spaced.
- A progress report of the work that has been carried out in the lab (no more than 6 pages double-spaced).
- A 20 min PowerPoint presentation where the student introduces the subject and presents the work.
- Please upload your *Introduction to Thesis* and progress report to Log
- After the meeting the Thesis Chair will email you their comments. If in agreement with these, you should upload them to the Log. The Log system will then contact the Thesis Committee for them to electronically approve the document you have uploaded.

**Progress Point Upgr:** Recommended: 12 months after PhD start date [Year 2: 24 months if part-time]

**Upgrade from MPhil to PhD**

All Research Students are registered for an MPhil in the first instance. Upgrading from MPhil to PhD implies the Upgrade Panel is confident that, based on your research progress, acquired technical skills and knowledge of the relevant literature, you are on the right track towards obtaining a PhD degree. The Upgrade Panel and the Primary Supervisor must agree unanimously for the Upgrade to proceed.

Full-time Students should be looking to Upgrade at about 12 months (not less than 9 months and not later than 18 months), part-time Students at about 24 months (not less than 15 months and not later than 30 months).

The Upgrade Panel is often formed from members of your Thesis Committee – it might comprise of the Secondary Supervisor and the Thesis Chair or Departmental Graduate Tutor. The Primary Supervisor should not attend this meeting. Instead a report from the Primary Supervisor on the Research Student’s work must be submitted to the Upgrade Panel before the Upgrade meeting takes place. The Supervisor’s Report should contain an assessment of the Student’s performance and the Supervisor’s recommendation regarding the Upgrade.

If the 12 month meeting and upgrade are combined, the Primary Supervisor may attend the 20 minute presentation, but should then leave the meeting.

In order to Upgrade:

- Research Students need to prepare an Upgrade Report of approximately 5,000 words (excluding display items, references, figure legends) in consultation with the Primary Supervisor. The Upgrade Report should primarily consist of background material to the project including a review of the relevant literature, summary of results if available and future directions. 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.
- The Research Student and the Primary Supervisor need to arrange an Upgrade Panel meeting at which, together with the above Upgrade Report, it will be determined if the Research Student will be upgraded from MPhil to PhD Student status.
- Please upload your Upgrade Report to the Log. The Departmental Graduate Tutor, who monitors the Log, will need to see that your log is up to date before your upgrade is authorised.
- After the meeting an Upgrade Panel assessment and recommendation will be sent to the Student, the Primary Supervisor, the Graduate Tutor and the Graduate Research Administrator. Please upload your Upgrade Panel Report form to the Log.

In some cases, before a Student is upgraded, a second Upgrade meeting may be requested. The second Upgrade meeting should be no more than 6 months (10 months part-time) after the first. The Student will be given a series of goals to be achieved during this additional time. A Student who fails the second Upgrade will be informed that they have to submit their work as an MPhil or withdraw from the programme.

Further information: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/status/research-students/upgrade](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/status/research-students/upgrade)

Upgrade Form – to be completed by Thesis Chair: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/sites/students/files/upgrade_panel_report.doc](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/sites/students/files/upgrade_panel_report.doc)
Year 2 – Full-time

Progress Point [Not recorded in the Log]: due 21 months after PhD start date [Year 3: 33 months if part-time]

Poster Presentation
Each department provides opportunities for PhD Students to practise their presentation skills at either Departmental Symposia or other events. Some departments have mandatory events – others are arranged on an ad-hoc basis.

(If your PhD start date month is between March and August then you may have the option to give your presentation in the following year.)

Mandatory Symposium attendance

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UCL Poster templates: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cam/brand/brand-resources/templates](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cam/brand/brand-resources/templates)
UCL Poster printing: [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/services/creative-media/printing](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/services/creative-media/printing)

Year 3 – Full-time

Progress Point 24: due 24 months after PhD start date [Year 4: 40 months if part-time]

Thesis Committee meeting & Materials and Methods
24 months after the PhD start date a Thesis Committee meeting should be arranged. Students should prepare:

- The Materials and Methods - this should be no more than 24 pages double-spaced.
- A Progress Report of the work that has been carried out in the lab (no more than 6 pages double-spaced).
- A 20 minute PowerPoint presentation detailing progress.
- Please upload your Materials and Methods section and Progress Report to the Log.
- After the meeting the Thesis Chair will email you their comments. If in agreement with these, you should upload them to the Log. The Log system will then contact the Thesis Committee for them to electronically approve the document you have uploaded.

Progress Point 30: due 30 months after PhD start date [Year 5: 50 months if part-time]

Thesis Committee meeting & Thesis Results Chapter
A Thesis Committee meeting should be arranged which includes a timetable for the remainder of the work, planned and published papers. Students should prepare:

- Complete Thesis Results section (24 page max double-spaced).
- Complete a Progress Report (6 page max double-spaced).
- Schedule a Thesis Committee meeting.
- Give a 20 minute PowerPoint presentation at the Thesis Committee meeting.
- Please upload your Thesis Results section and Progress Report to the Log.
- After the meeting the Thesis Chair will email you their comments. If in agreement with these comments, you should upload them to the Log. The Log system will then contact the Thesis Committee for them to electronically approve the document you have uploaded.

Progress Point: [Not recorded in the Log] due 33 months after PhD start date [Year 4: 45 months if part-time]

PowerPoint presentation
Each department provides opportunities for PhD Students to practise their presentation skills at either Departmental Symposia or other events. Some departments have mandatory events – others are arranged on an ad-hoc basis. (If your PhD start date month is between March and August then you may have the option to give your presentation in the following year.)

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UCL PowerPoint templates see: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cam/brand/brand-resources/templates](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cam/brand/brand-resources/templates)
Faculty of Life Sciences – Graduate Research Student Log Progress Point Guidelines

Years 3 & 4 Full-time: Submission of Thesis

**Progress Point 36:** due 36 - 42 months after PhD start date [Year 5: 60 - 78 months if part-time]

**Prepare to Submit**
Research Students may submit for examination at any point after 36 months of full-time study. 60 months part-time. Research Students should hopefully have at least draft copies of the Introduction, Materials & Methods and Results sections of a thesis.

- It is suggested PhD Students should allow at least 3 months to complete the remaining sections (Methods, Conclusion, etc) and produce all figures, drawings, etc, that are needed for a complete thesis.
- **At this point PhD Students should stop working in the lab.**

PhD Students need to complete:

- Draft updated thesis chapters (Introduction, Materials and Methods, and Results chapters).
- Complete a Progress Report (6 page max double-spaced).
- Schedule a Thesis Committee meeting.
- Give a 20 minute PowerPoint presentation at a Thesis Committee meeting.
- Please upload your Introduction, Materials and Methods, and Results sections and your Progress Report to the Log.
- After the meeting, the Thesis Chair will email you their comments. If in agreement with these, you should upload them to the Log. The Log system will then contact the Thesis Committee for them to electronically approve the document you have uploaded.

The remaining six months of your PhD should be used to prepare the final draft of your thesis.

**Progress Point Pri: o** Due 44 months after start date [Year 7: 80 months if part-time]

- Update the Graduate Research Log with Proposed Date of Thesis Submission.
- Work with your Primary Supervisor to complete your Exam Entry and Nomination of Examiners forms. These require your Departmental Graduate Tutor’s approval and confirmation that your Log has been satisfactorily completed. Examination forms should be submitted at least four months before you plan to submit

Full-time Students must submit by the end of the fourth year at the latest (seventh year if part-time)

Examination forms and info: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/research-assessments/examination-entry](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/research-assessments/examination-entry)

(Congratulations! Nearly there!)

**Progress Point: [Not recorded in the Log]**

**Submit thesis to UCL Registry**
The deadline to submit theses for:
- Full time PhD Students: within 4 years – 48 months from date of registration at UCL
- Part-time PhD Students: within 7 years – 84 months from date of registration at UCL

These Guidelines are in addition to the Academic Regulations and Guidelines for Research Degree Students [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/overview](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/overview). If you have any queries concerning these milestones please don’t hesitate to contact your supervisor.
## RESEARCH LOG PROGRESS POINTS – FULL-TIME PHD STUDENTS ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Log Progress Point</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Full-Time: Progress Point Due Date: No. months from PhD start date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Init</td>
<td>As a minimum: enter working title of PhD, names of Primary and Secondary Supervisors and, if different, Thesis Chair</td>
<td>Within 4 weeks of enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Thesis Committee meeting - Project Outline</td>
<td>Before end of 3rd month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thesis Committee meeting &amp; Progress Report</td>
<td>6th month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short PowerPoint presentation (no progress point in Log)</td>
<td>9th month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade/12 months</td>
<td>Thesis Committee meeting, Draft Introduction &amp; Upgrade from MPhil to PhD</td>
<td>12th month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Poster Presentation (no progress point in Log)</td>
<td>21st month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Thesis Committee meeting &amp; Draft Materials and Methods chapter</td>
<td>24th month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Thesis Committee meeting &amp; Draft Thesis Results chapter</td>
<td>30th month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Long PowerPoint presentation (no progress point in Log)</td>
<td>33rd month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Thesis Committee meeting - Prepare to Submit</td>
<td>36th – 42nd month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prio</td>
<td>Complete <em>Nomination of Examiners</em> and <em>Exam Entry</em> forms</td>
<td>44th month (Latest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Submit thesis to UCL Registry (no progress point in Log)</td>
<td>Before end of 4 years – 48 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All full-time PhD Students must submit by the end of fourth year at the latest.*