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## Information for supervisors and students undertaking MRes research projects 2018-19

This year, students and supervisors need to complete the online eLog. Please see instructions below.

This document provides a summary of the project planning, key dates and responsibilities that supervisors and students need to be aware of to ensure the smooth running of an MRes project and thesis submission.

We will provide you with a list of previous MRes and MSc student projects, and it is important to look at the Institute for Women's Health web site to see what each member of staff is working on. Discussions should take place with the MRes Director, Joyce Harper, and potential supervisors. It is important to us that you do a project you are really passionate about so we want to prepare for this.

Projects may take place in other Institutes besides UCL but in these cases, a UCL co-supervisor should be in place.

### **1. Project Timescales & Overview**

The projects run throughout your MRes, depending on the modules you are taking, until the date of thesis submission, which is **4 September 2019**. Supervisors are expected to supervise the project, read and suggest edits on the thesis (see separate guide to writing the thesis) and to mark the thesis (see separate marking instructions and criteria).

#### ***Project Planning***

After an **initial meeting** between the student and supervisor and agreement that the project has been allocated, supervisors should meet regularly with their students.

Before the project starts, supervisors need to take the lead on **project planning** to ensure that all the approvals, paperwork, and training that their student might require are set in process as soon as possible. It can take up to 6 months to get some approvals in place, which is why it is important for these discussions to start before you arrive. Given the tight timescales the MRes projects work to, any delays can have a detrimental effect on the progress and success of the project.

Depending on the nature of the project, the necessary approvals, paperwork and training may include:

- research and ethics approvals
- risk assessment/health and safety paperwork
- data protection paperwork and information governance training
- honorary contracts/research passports

Supervisors also need to ensure that:

- reagents and equipment are ordered for laboratory projects
- any IT access required for data-based projects has been put in place
- appropriate statistical advice is available to students before and during their project.

Students and supervisors should carefully plan out work for the duration of the project from the start, particularly taking clinical supervisors' schedules into account (especially when the supervisor is away such as holidays), to ensure that both are content with the plan for timescales for each phase of the project, for supervision meetings, review of draft work etc.

In term 1, students will need to prepare a 2000 word introduction, including hypothesis, aims and methods of the project. This should be submitted on **20<sup>th</sup> March 2019**. Students will give an oral presentation at the end of term 2 with the MSc students. The date for this is **19<sup>th</sup> March 2019** and supervisors are encouraged to attend. This ensures that the students have read up on the project and fully understand what they are doing.

- Joyce Harper will give a tutorial to all students on writing the thesis in **mid-July**.
- Students will be encouraged to have their introduction and methods written up and submitted to their supervisor ideally by **1 August 2019**. Supervisors may wish to approve this before submission of the results and discussion.
- Students should aim to finish lab work/data gathering by **mid-August**.
- A full copy of the dissertation should be submitted to the supervisor no later than **25 August 2019**, but supervisors and students need to accommodate supervisors' holidays and workload.
- Students submit their projects on **4 September 2019** and present a final seminar reporting their results **4 or 5 September 2019**. Supervisors are encouraged to attend these seminars and external examiners will be invited to attend too.
- Supervisors are asked to complete a pre-submission report on the student's project to the same deadline as the student's project submission (i.e. **by 4 September 2019**); this report will be shared with the other marker. This report summaries the student's input in the design of the study and the conduct, ability, independence and initiative that they demonstrated for the duration of the project.
- The dissertations are marked independently by two markers who then agree a final mark after independent marking. Marker 1 is an internal marker and Marker 2 is the supervisor. Both markers' marking forms and the final agreed mark must be submitted by **18 September 2019**.
- The feedback and mark will be given to the student within one month of submission.

### **To Note**

- It is recommended that students do not work away from UCL unless it is agreed beforehand with their supervisor that it is in their interest to do so. Students cannot take annual leave or study leave during their projects, except for exceptional circumstances. This should be agreed by the supervisor. If any student is absent for sickness or any other reason, details need to be sent to the Programme Director, Joyce Harper ([joyce.harper@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:joyce.harper@ucl.ac.uk)).

- Supervisors and students must be aware that the dissertation must not be submitted late unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as illness and a UCL form must be submitted as soon as possible (certainly before the date of submission). See UCL's Academic Regulations on Extenuating Circumstances for more information: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/chapters/chapter-4-assessment-framework-taught-programmes/section-6-extenuating-circumstances>
- Late projects incur severe penalties as outlined in UCL Academic Regulations on Assessment Penalties. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/chapters/chapter-4-assessment-framework-taught-programmes/section-3-module-assessment#3.12>  
All students must ensure they have allowed adequate time for writing up the dissertation, backed up several copies in different places, ensured that printers are working, images are downloaded, etc.

## **2. Elog**

MRes students and supervisors need to complete the UCL eLog.

Ideally, all MRes students should attend one of the “[Introduction to Skills Development and the Log](#)” training sessions running in October/November as part of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme. Supervisors and administrators are welcome to attend too.

The [Student Quick Reference Guide](#) and the [Supervisor Quick Reference Guide](#) in the Log have been updated to provide guidance on using the MRes Log, but in summary:

MRes students should set up their Logs at the beginning of the year (setting them to “MRes” mode) and then use the Personal Training and Development Planning Tool in the Log to analyse and track the required skills for their project and ongoing career aspirations. The expectation is, as with MPhil/PhD students, students and supervisors will use this analysis as the basis for conversations about future plans and development, and as an aid to selecting the courses from the [Doctoral Skills Development Programme](#) (also open to MRes students) and other training opportunities that will be of use to them as they progress. Once they begin their substantive research, students will complete the Research Summary section of the Log with the working title of their research project(s), the main research goals, and whether or not they require ethics approval. MRes students then complete two subsequent reviews - the same for all MRes students - on: 25th of May (1st Review); and 25th of August (2nd Review).

For students going on to the MPhil/PhD (the +3 element of a 1+3) the content of their MRes Logs will remain accessible when they switch to using the doctorate Research Log in year two. This will aid continuity of their development.

Please refer to the Administrator of the Log with any queries: [researchlog@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:researchlog@ucl.ac.uk)

The Research Student Log can be found at the following address: <https://researchlog.grad.ucl.ac.uk/>

There is also a direct link from the [Doctoral School](#) home page.

## **3. Expectations of Supervisors**

**Laboratory Work:** Most students who undertake an experimental project as part of their MRes course will never have done original laboratory-based research. Therefore, either the supervisor or a responsible person within the supervisor's group needs to ensure that the student works

correctly in the laboratory while carrying out the project. If the supervisor has any problems with the students, please contact the relevant Programme Director at the earliest possible moment.

**Literature reviews:** UCL Library staff may be able to provide some advice. Please contact [joyce.harper@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:joyce.harper@ucl.ac.uk) for further information.

### **Clinical/applied health research:**

Most students who undertake clinical or applied research projects as part of their MRes course will never have done research in clinical settings. The supervisor and relevant NHS clinical lead needs to ensure that the student's conduct in the clinical area is professional and adheres to appropriate governance with respect to patient confidentiality, sensitivity to patients and the day-to-day work of the clinical team.

**Written Work:** The students will be novices in writing up their results in an appropriate way and will need the supervisors help. They will have written essays for the MRes, but will not have experience of writing a dissertation. The supervisors report gives you the opportunity to report how much you edited the thesis. This can be taken into consideration when the final mark is discussed with marker 1.

- The supervisor will read and edit one version in full and maybe be prepared to read a second version, but no more than this. Students should only submit versions that they consider to be complete versions (including references, full text, graphs, etc).
- Not re-write any of the thesis but give the students advice on how to improve their writing.
- Provide constructive feedback on any work submitted by the student and advice on technical matters related to the project, including statistical analysis.
- Advise students on the length of each section of the written dissertation and the level of detail required.
- Help the students decide on the best way to present the results.
- Check the Results section to ensure that all Figures and Tables are complete, with indications of significant differences where appropriate. The reader should be able to understand the figure/table and legend without needing to refer to the text.
- Where error bars are shown, the legend must state whether these indicate SD or SEM; the number of replicates also needs to be given in the legend.
- If micrographs are used, scale bars indicating magnification need to be included.
- Ensure that students make the most of the data they did obtain. Sometimes unexpected difficulties mean that students obtain relatively little data within the time allowed.
- Read the draft dissertation and if the English is not up to a good standard, give the student sufficient guidance so that the final dissertation is presented in good English.

### **Plagiarism**

All dissertations will be checked using the plagiarism software, Turnitin. All students have to sign a form to confirm that the project is their own work and also that the supervisors lab has intellectual property rights.

## **4. Research Project Costs**

A project fund of £1800 is available to facilitate each student project. Supervisors should contact the Graduate Administrator, Angela Poulter ([a.poulter@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:a.poulter@ucl.ac.uk)) to arrange for this money to be transferred before the **21 June 2019**. If you do not claim by this date, we will not be able to pay.

Please note, if supervisors or their research group are unable to provide required statistical support and that support is arranged with our stats consultant via the Graduate Administrator instead, a proportion of the £1800 will be reclaimed from the supervisor in order to cover the

statistician's invoice. We do not envisage that MSc students will require more than 1-2 hours of statistical support in the course of their project at c.£100 per hour.

## **5. Research and Ethics Approvals**

All supervisors must ensure that applications for relevant research and ethics approvals are in process in good time before the student starts the project. This process **can take up to six months** ( four months for IRAS and two months for Site Specific approval) and seriously delay the project if not begun in sufficiently good time. Students need to be aware of this when discussing their timeline with their supervisor, but it is the supervisor's responsibility to obtain research approvals, not the student.

### **NHS projects**

For guidance on applying for these approvals for studies classified as research involving NHS patients or premises, see the guidance documents for UCL students on the sponsorship review process & the NHS Research Ethics Committee (REC) approval via the online Integrated Research Approval System (IRAS) application: How to Fill in the Form document.

If a study is classified as a service evaluation or an audit in an NHS setting, research and ethical approval will not be required.

See here for more information on the Health Research Authority (HRA) approval process:

<http://www.hra.nhs.uk/about-the-hra/our-plans-and-projects/assessment-approval/#WhatIsHRApproval>

These tools can be used to help to clarify which category the project falls into and to ascertain if ethical approval is required:

<https://www.hra.nhs.uk/planning-and-improving-research/research-planning/access-study-support-advice-services/>

<http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/>

<http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/ethics/>

- **Contact:** for further advice, please contact the Joint Research Office at Maple House: [rand.d@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:rand.d@uclh.nhs.uk); for Royal Free projects, you may also be directed to the Research and Development Office at the Royal Free: [rf.randd@nhs.net](mailto:rf.randd@nhs.net)

If a study requires full REC and HRA approval allow up to 6 months for this process. Studies that require an amendment to an existing approved project, allow 1-2 months.

### **Non-NHS projects**

For guidance on the ethical review process for Non-NHS studies at UCL see:

<http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/>

- **Contact:** for further advice, see contact details for UCL REC here: <https://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/contact.php>

## **6. Research Passport/Honorary Contracts**

Supervisors should allow **2 months** for processing of research passport/honorary contracts (assuming all the other research approvals are in place). The process can take longer if a security card is required.

### **NHS Research Project**

If the study is classified as research, the student will need to complete the Research Passport process for projects in an NHS setting.

The Research Passport is a mechanism by which researchers obtain an Honorary Research Contract (HRC) or a Letter of Access (LoA) when they propose to carry out research in an NHS organisation and where they do not have an employment (substantive or honorary) relationship.

For further details see:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/passport.php>

[https://www.nihr.ac.uk/02-documents/policy-and-standards/Faster-easier-clinical-research/Research-passports/Instructions-for-Completing-the-Research-Passport-Form\\_V1.1.pdf](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/02-documents/policy-and-standards/Faster-easier-clinical-research/Research-passports/Instructions-for-Completing-the-Research-Passport-Form_V1.1.pdf)

- **Contact for UCLH:** Katie Osborn [katie.osborn@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:katie.osborn@uclh.nhs.uk) or Tel: 020 3447 5557. Research Passport applications should be sent to [jro.communications@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:jro.communications@uclh.nhs.uk).
- **Contact for Royal Free:** Lucia Possas [lucia.possas@nhs.net](mailto:lucia.possas@nhs.net) Tel: 020 7317 7558 Applications should be submitted to the R&D Office there at: [rf.randd@nhs.net](mailto:rf.randd@nhs.net).

### **NHS Service Evaluation/Audit**

If the study is a service evaluation or an audit in an NHS setting, it is not necessary to complete a Research Passport. The supervisor will need to ensure that:

- the relevant clinical director is notified of the service evaluation, or that the audit is registered with the relevant clinical audit lead.
- students conducting an audit have Clinical Audit Report approval if the project is a required UCLH audit (allow 2-3 weeks for approval)
- an honorary contract should also be arranged for the student via the relevant hospital HR team. Please note that every contract must be signed off by someone with an NHS contract who acts as sponsor. You should leave **2 months** to get this arranged. The process can take longer if a security card is required.
- **Contact for UCLH:** honorary contract requests to HR can currently be co-ordinated via: [Shellyann.Young@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:Shellyann.Young@uclh.nhs.uk).
- **Contact for Royal Free:** please contact Angela Poulter, Graduate Administrator in the first instance.

## **7. Insurance & Risk Assessment**

If the project is a research project approved via the JRO/Royal Free R&D Office, or the UCL REC, you should be advised on insurance and risk assessment as part of that process.

For all other projects, students are automatically covered by UCL's insurance policy for supervised activities which they undertake as part of their course at UCL, but supervisors should ensure that

local risk assessment/health and safety procedures are completed. e.g. all students should be made aware of the laboratory/hospital health and safety regulations, fire drill, accident book, first aid box, etc. Any students doing a laboratory project need to discuss their specific risk assessment with their supervisor, and read and sign off any laboratory safety documents.

### ***Useful Information:***

- **Risk assessment:**  
[http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/risk\\_assessment/index.htm](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/risk_assessment/index.htm): this guidance includes information on how to record the assessment which must be authorised by the manager of the work and retained for record. Please e-mail [safety@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:safety@ucl.ac.uk) if you require further advice.
- **Travel Insurance:** If students are conducting research outside the UK, or travelling by air within the UK, they must also apply to UCL for travel insurance cover. Students are covered by a business travel insurance policy which covers UCL trips normally undertaken from the UK. The form can be downloaded from: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/finance/insurance>

## **8. Information Governance**

Supervisors must ensure that students are meeting legal requirements in using and managing sensitive, person identifiable data (PID) as part of the research project.

All students will take the NHS Digital Data Security Awareness Level 1 course provided by e-Learning for Health: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/it-for-slms/research-ig/information-governance-training-awareness-service>

**Contact:** Access will be arranged for students via the Institute but the direct contact address is: [itforslms-training@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:itforslms-training@ucl.ac.uk)

- For any **UCLH project** that requires the student to work on patient data at UCLH e.g. patient electronic databases (such as CDR, Medway etc.), case notes they will need to complete the UCLH Information Governance Training.

In the first instance, students will require an IT UCLH Log in username and password (allow **2-4 weeks** for this from UCLH IT department).

**Contact** Shelly Ann Young [Shellyann.Young@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:Shellyann.Young@uclh.nhs.uk), who can also assist with Windows/CDR logins and ID badges.

When contacting the Learning & Development Team ([LearningDevelopment@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:LearningDevelopment@uclh.nhs.uk) or [learningportal@uclh.nhs.uk](mailto:learningportal@uclh.nhs.uk)) supervisors should include the student's name, job title and department. Learning and Development will forward the details to complete the e-learning course available on Insight (allow 1 week for supervisor to contact UCLH Learning & Development team to set up student profile page; module completion only takes 30-45 mins).

**Students pursuing their projects at the Royal Free** should seek their supervisor's advice on any equivalent information governance training required there.

- Finally, it is recommended that students pursuing a project in an NHS setting complete the Introduction to GCP eLearning (Secondary care). This can be found at: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/our-faculty/clinical-research-staff/learning-and-development/national-directory/good-clinical-practice/our-courses/introduction.htm>  
Students will need to email [crncc.training@nihr.ac.uk](mailto:crncc.training@nihr.ac.uk) to get a key to enter

## **9. Projects involving an outside partner**

If a student's project work is dependent on the existence of an outside partner, there may need to be a formal agreement in place between UCL and the partner for quality assurance purposes. See more in the UCL Academic Manual on this: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/chapters/chapter-8-academic-partnerships-framework> and please contact the Graduate Administrator ([a.poulter@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:a.poulter@ucl.ac.uk)). if project work falls into this category.

If during their project students are travelling to conduct research/write their projects away from UCL, they must complete a **request to travel away from London form**. This is available to students on Moodle, or can be supplied by the Graduate Administrator ([a.poulter@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:a.poulter@ucl.ac.uk)).