



Research Degrees Handbook

For Doctoral (PhD and DrPH) and MPhil Students

2023-2024

This Handbook is for research degree (MPhil, PhD and DrPH) students and supervisors, and the staff who support them. It is based on regulations, policies and procedures agreed by relevant London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) committees. This handbook is aligned to the expectations contained within the [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)

Document version: 1.12

Last updated: August 2023

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1. WELCOME

Welcome to the new academic year at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, which is known as 'the School' or 'LSHTM' by its community of staff and students.

This handbook gives comprehensive information on the School's Research Degree (RD) programmes for students, supervisors, and the staff who support them. It includes important information on policies and procedures, the support that RD students can expect to receive from supervisors and other staff, as well as facilities available for support at the School. It provides links to further information such as academic regulations, the code of practice for research degrees, and details on services and facilities.

The School has around 600 research degree students. Each student is a member of a Department within a Faculty. The School has three academic Faculties, each with 3-4 Departments. In addition, the School includes colleagues and students from the MRC units in [The Gambia](#) and [Uganda](#). Students can also be members of Academic Centres, which are School-wide networks focused on cross-cutting areas.

Faculties:

- Epidemiology and Public Health (EPH)
- Infectious and Tropical Diseases (ITD)
- Public Health and Policy (PHP)

Information about our Faculties and the MRC units can be found [here](#).

Academic Centres:

A list of School Academic Centres can be found [here](#).

We want to ensure all RD students have opportunities for broader interactions including through:

- Inductions, undertaken at Department, Faculty and School levels to facilitate networking with other students and staff both close to their subject area and more widely
- Research seminars and journal clubs, open to staff and RD students from across the School
- The Doctoral Transferable Skills Programme
- The Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network

We encourage you to explore and take advantage of these opportunities, be active in groups linked to your studies, and engage with all other opportunities available to enhance your experience at the School. With the advent of hybrid working since the COVID-19 pandemic, participation is particularly important to integrate you into the research culture of the School. We hope that your experience as members of the research community at the School will shape your thinking, your CV, and your future.

We wish you well in your studies.

Professor Liam Smeeth
Director of LSHTM

2. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSR	Capacity Strengthening Research Degrees scheme
DRDC	Department Research Degrees Coordinator
DrPH	Doctor of Public Health degree
D-TSP	Doctoral Transferable Skills Programme
EPH	(Faculty of) Epidemiology and Public Health
FRDA	Faculty Research Degrees Administrator
FRDD	Faculty Research Degrees Director
FRDM	Faculty Research Degrees Manager
FT	Full-time
FTE	Full-time equivalent
IoS	Interruption of studies
ITD	(Faculty of) Infectious and Tropical Diseases
MPhil	Master of Philosophy degree
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy degree
PHP	(Faculty of) Public Health and Policy
PT	Part-time
RD	Research Degrees
RGIO	Research Governance & Integrity Office
SSS	Student Support Services
SRDC	Senate Research Degrees Committee

3. INTRODUCTION – WHERE TO FIND WHAT

This handbook is specific to research degree (RD) students. Issues which are common to all students are covered in more detail at the [Virtual Student Hub](#), including general policies and procedures, conduct and behaviour, information on facilities, courses, student advice and counselling, careers, library resources, IT services, and safety and security. There is also lots of relevant information accessible via the [Staff Intranet](#).

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the [Research Degree Regulations](#) and the [Research Degree Code of Practice](#). The handbook gives links to many other sources of information on the website.

The key place for information is the [Doctoral College](#) on the LSHTM intranet. You can find this through the [Virtual Student Hub](#) (click on 'Doctoral College' in the top menu). Everything you need should be accessible through this site.

4. ROLES AND PEOPLE

The School provides support for research degree students through key contacts. These include:

Faculty-level		
Supervisory Team	All students have a supervisory team comprising a first and second supervisor (and often a third).	
Advisory Committee	Some students will have an advisory committee providing additional advice to support their progress.	
Department Research Degree Coordinators (DRDC)	Staff who oversee the progress of students in the Department	Listed on the Doctoral College Key Contacts page
Faculty Research Degree Managers (FRDM) and Administrators (FRDA)	Staff who provide support at Faculty level. They are the first point of contact for general enquiries or administrative matters.	<p>EPH: Jenny Fleming (FRDM) and Lauren Dalton (FRDA) Jenny.fleming@lshtm.ac.uk Lauren.dalton@lshtm.ac.uk</p> <p>ITD: Helen White (FRDM) Helen.white@lshtm.ac.uk</p> <p>PHP: Joanna Bending (FRDM) and Renee Olivel (FRDA) php.rdadministrator@lshtm.ac.uk</p>
Faculty Research Degree Directors (FRDD)	Academic staff who oversee all aspects of academic research degrees management in the Faculty.	<p>EPH: Suzanne Filteau and Punam Mangtani Suzanne.filteau@lshtm.ac.uk Punam.mangtani@lshtm.ac.uk</p> <p>ITD: Robert Dreibelbis Robert.dreibelbis@lshtm.ac.uk</p> <p>PHP: Mary Alison Durand Mary-alison.durand@lshtm.ac.uk</p>
DrPH Programme Directors	Academic staff responsible for the Professional Doctorate in Public Health.	<p>Joanna Schellenberg and Nicki Thorogood Joanna.schellenberg@lshtm.ac.uk Nicki.thorogood@lshtm.ac.uk</p>
Key contacts at School level		
Joint Head of the Doctoral College	Lead senior academics with overall responsibility for RD programmes.	<p>Alex Mold and Sam Alsford Alex.mold@lshtm.ac.uk Sam.alsford@lshtm.ac.uk</p>
Pro-Director (Education)	Senior academic with overall leadership responsibility for the strategic development and oversight of all School education programmes	<p>Craig Higgins Craig.higgins@lshtm.ac.uk</p>

	including Master's, RD programmes and short courses.	
Pro-Director (Research and Academic Development)	Senior academic with overall strategic leadership responsibility for research and researcher development.	Caroline Relton Caroline.relton@lshtm.ac.uk
Student & Academic Services	Teams in central services provide support for registration, fees, student advice & counselling, careers, and student records.	Registry Student Support Services Visa & Immigration Service Careers Service
Student Representatives	Students who liaise between School Management and the student body.	Each Department has RD student representatives (see Section 15) RD students may also sit on the Student Representative Council (School-wide, MSc and RD students)

5. MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The School's Research Degree (RD) programme is reviewed regularly to ensure high quality provision and enhancement to the environment for students. The RD Regulations, the RD Code of Practice and public information on the School website provide important information about governance, quality assurance and enhancement.

The Head of the Doctoral College is responsible for RD programmes and chairs the Senate Research Degrees Committee (**SRDC**). The SRDC reports to Senate, the School's senior academic committee. Faculty Research Degree Committees, run by Faculty Research Degree Directors (**FRDDs**), monitor activity at Faculty level, with the support of Departmental Research Degree Coordinators (**DRDCs**), the Faculty Research Degree Managers (**FRDMs**) and Administrators (**FRDAs**), and RD student representatives.

Further information can be found in the [Research Degree Regulations](#) (Academic Manual: chapter 9) and the [Research Degree Code of Practice](#).

6. APPLICATIONS

Information on applying to the School can be found on the School's [website](#). Applications are reviewed by each Faculty to ensure that students meet the entry requirements and that their research interests can be properly supported by the expertise of staff in faculties and departments.

7. REGISTRATION

The minimum and maximum periods of registration for research degrees are defined by the [Research Degree Regulations](#) (Academic Manual: chapter 9).

Students can register to study part-time and must ensure they have adequate time to dedicate to their research degree, averaging 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) over the course of their registration (full-time is 35 hours per week). Time allocated to study may vary over the course of a research degree, and should be negotiated between student, employer (if applicable), and the supervisory team. RD students combining study with employment (including at LSHTM) will be registered as part-time. They will be required to provide a letter from their employer confirming that time is available for them to study as well as continue to work. LSHTM staff wishing to register for a research degree can find information on the requirements and eligibility criteria on the [Staff Research Degrees page](#) on the Doctoral College website.

LSHTM staff RD students will normally be registered part-time, except for those whose fellowship requires them to hold a staff contract, including those funded by the Wellcome Trust and NIHR.

Students who wish to switch between full- and part-time modes of study must first speak to their supervisor and their FRDM. International students considering a change of study mode should consult with the Visas Team (visa-enquiries@lshtm.ac.uk), as this may have visa implications.

Students are normally expected to spend at least the initial and final parts of their research degree at the School so they can fully engage with the academic research environment. Students will need to attend regular supervision meetings, training sessions and progress monitoring meetings. This is described in the [Student Engagement Policy](#) and in **Section 9** of this handbook.

Students based in London normally spend the first 9-12 months of their degree at the School, after which they may conduct research away from LSHTM. Students based overseas and students registered under the Capacity Strengthening Research Degrees (CSRDC) scheme may have supervision and training/progress monitoring arranged differently. This should be discussed in the initial supervision meeting and in progress monitoring meetings with the DRDC (see **Section 10**).

Students who plan to spend time away from the School ('offsite'), whether in the UK or abroad, for any reason connected to their studies must submit a request via the School's iTravel system to ensure planned travel is appropriately risk assessed and approved and is compliant with visa regulations (see **Section 11**). This includes all instances of fieldwork, pilot studies and meetings with collaborators. This also applies to overseas and CSRDC students, and those based at other organisations within the UK, such as DrPH students undertaking their Organisation or Policy Analysis (OPA).

If you do not maintain satisfactory academic engagement as per your registration and agreed mode of study, your registration status on your programme may be affected. Students may take annual leave of up to six weeks in addition to School closure days. This must be agreed with your supervisory team and Faculty staff.

Registration status will change as students move through the different stages of the degree, or if specific requests are made (e.g. to move from full-time to part-time study). Registry will contact you to inform you of changes to registration as you move through the milestones of your research

degree programme. The maximum periods of registration will be noted by Registry when reminding you about changes to your registration status. Fees due will vary according to your registration status. More information can be found on the School's Tuition Fees web pages [here](#).

8. SUPPORT SERVICES

In their Faculties, students will normally have access to the following.

- A workstation, computing facilities and secure data storage
- Lab space for lab-based students
- Telephone (or an equivalent service) for research use
- Access to multiuser scanning, copying and printing facilities
- Audio Visual and IT support

Your FRDM will be able to advise regarding these arrangements.

Some limited financial support is available for conference attendance for non-staff students. In exceptional circumstances, there may be financial support available for supervisory visits for non-staff students undertaking field work for continuous periods of 6 months or more. In both cases, please consult with the FRDM before making any arrangements.

Student Support Services

[Student Support Services](#) provide confidential and impartial advice and support to the School's London-based students, as well as guidance to applicants to the School. The primary aim of the service is to assist students in resolving practical and/or personal concerns, enabling them to concentrate on their studies and achieve their potential during their time at the School. The main areas of support are:

- Student disability support
- Guidance on accommodation options in London
- Mental Health support and one-to-one counselling
- Financial hardship
- Guidance for international students about certain aspects of 'life in the UK' (e.g. opening a bank account, healthcare, council tax)
- Careers

Student Disability Support

The [Student Advice team](#) within Student Support Services can advise disabled students and their Faculty/Department on specific reasonable adjustments to studies and general disability support. This may include:

- Special arrangements for assessments
- Non-medical helper support, such as specialist one-to-one study skills tuition (for students with Specific Learning Difficulties) and mentoring support (for students with mental health conditions or autistic spectrum conditions)
- Library support
- IT support

- In-course support
- Advice on accessing Disabled Students' Allowances, for eligible students
- Advice for students who suspect they may have dyslexia/a Specific Learning Difficulty, including a screening service and referral for a full diagnostic assessment, where indicated

Detailed information about disability support provision for students registered on face-to-face programmes of study can be found in the [Student Disability Handbook](#)

Mental Health Support

The LSHTM [Mental Health Adviser](#) provides holistic guidance on mental health and general wellbeing. The Mental Health Adviser can also support students in accessing other Student Support Services or NHS services when required.

Who can contact the Mental Health Adviser?

Any student – including Current full-time or part-time research degree students with concerns for their mental health.

What the Mental Health Adviser can offer?

- In-person appointments at LSHTM
- Online appointments via Zoom
- Support via email
- Online resources on mental health and wellbeing
- Support with accessing NHS services

When can I meet with the Mental Health Adviser?

The Mental Health Adviser keeps the following working hours

- Mondays 9am-5pm
- Tuesdays 9am-5pm
- Wednesdays 9am-12pm

You will be offered the earliest available appointment that matches your availability.

Counselling

A short-term counselling service is provided for students experiencing low mood, anxiety or stress, study-related or otherwise. Counselling provides an opportunity for students to discuss any difficulties that are affecting their emotional well-being. This might be following a difficult event, such as a bereavement, but many people also seek counselling due to feeling down, anxious or depressed without knowing exactly why.

A counsellor will not try to solve your problems for you but will listen to you in an open and non-judgmental way, giving you a chance to understand your feelings and how they impact on your life.

Counselling sessions are limited to **a maximum of 6 sessions per student**, but students can also book in for a one-off session.

Further information about the Student Advice & Counselling Service and how to book an appointment can be found [here](#).

Careers

The LSHTM [Careers Service](#) provides careers information, advice and guidance as a part of The Careers Group, University of London.

Who can use the LSHTM Careers Service?

Any student – including Current full-time or part-time research degree students.

What we offer

- Employability talks and workshops
- One-to-one career guidance, CV and application advice
- Practice interviews - experience a real interview situation, receive feedback and tips for improvement
- Access to career events, including employer and alumni talks and panel discussions
- Access to vacancies listings
- Online resources giving information on career options, further study, job-seeking and application skills.

Please see Section-11 for details about support for students away from usual support networks during data collection.

9. SUPERVISION

Supervisory team

A supervisory team consists of two to three supervisors (exceptionally a fourth may be involved).

First Supervisor – the first point of contact for administrative processes. Usually the main supervisor. The first supervisor must hold an academic contract with the School that (explicitly, or via the School's academic expectations) includes the role of research degree supervisor. Honorary and Visiting Academic staff will not normally be appointed as first supervisor.

Second Supervisor – the second point of contact for administrative processes. The second supervisor is likely to play a major role in supervision and is expected to provide additional support if the first supervisor has a planned or unexpected absence. Unlike the first supervisor, the second supervisor does not have to be an LSHTM staff member, though most are.

Experienced Supervisors – academics who have supervised at least one research degree student through to successful completion – should normally be first supervisor for no more than three Research Degree students at any one time but can be members of up to six supervisory teams.

New Supervisors – academics who have yet to supervise an RD student through to completion should normally be first or second supervisor to no more than two RD students at any one time. Before they start supervising students, staff are required to attend a staff development workshop on RD student supervision and should have a mentor (who may be one of the other supervisors). It is recommended (though not essential) that staff who have not supervised before, start by joining advisory committees and have experience as a second supervisor before being a first supervisor.

The supervision team must possess at least two successful research degree completions at doctoral level, at least one of which must be a UK doctorate. A third supervisor may be appointed to fulfil this requirement, if the first and second supervisors cannot jointly fulfil this requirement.

For all students, including those at MRC Uganda, MRC Gambia, and CSRD scheme institutions, at least one member of the supervisory team or advisory committee (see below) should be London-based, to support the student during their time in London.

Advisory committee

A student may have an Advisory Committee comprising 2-3 members who extend the academic input and feedback provided by the supervisory team. For example, advisory committee members may be School or external academics with additional expertise specific to a student's line of enquiry, or non-academics with key industry, policy or civil society expertise that can benefit the research. Students and their supervisory teams are jointly responsible for identifying and approaching potential members of the advisory committee. We recommend that the committee meet at least once before the MPhil/PhD upgrading or DrPH Review and once before final thesis submission, but the frequency and content of meetings should be decided by the student, the supervisory team and the advisory committee itself.

Research Degrees Code of Practice

The School's [Research Degrees Code of Practice](#) details the responsibilities of students and supervisors and is in line with the [QAA Quality Code](#) expectations. Both staff and students need to approach the supervisor/student relationship with awareness and respect.

Supervisory meetings

These should be held regularly as agreed by students and supervisors. The objectives of the meetings should be agreed, so that all parties are clear about purpose and progress. A timeframe for submission and review of written work should be agreed. This allows students to have clear deadlines to work to and supervisors to support timely progression. MPhil and MPhil/PhD students will be working towards the MPhil Review or MPhil/PhD Upgrading, respectively, during the 1st year of registration (first two years for part-time students). DrPH students should complete their DrPH Review within a similar timeframe, though this is more flexible depending on whether they opt to complete their OPA first (or Research Study 1, RS1). The Upgrading/Review process is described in detail in **Section 10**. Full-time students should meet with their supervisors at least monthly, and part-time students at least once every two months. All meetings must be recorded by the student and approved by supervisors on the Research Degree Record (**RDR**) system.

Guidance for supervisors

The School expects supervisors to:

1. Meet with their students regularly (at minimum monthly for FT students and every two months for PT students). Meetings can be in person or via Zoom/Skype/phone, but details *must* be recorded in RDR.

2. Help their students define their research question(s) and identify appropriate methods to answer these. Help them plan their work, prepare for the Upgrade/Review, read drafts of the thesis and prepare them for the viva.
3. Communicate clearly with students about what is expected of them and when they will receive feedback (guidance: within one week for short 1-5 page documents, more for longer ones, e.g. chapters).
4. Ensure their students have necessary ethical and other approvals to conduct their research before ANY data are collected and/or analysed.
5. Plan for timely Upgrade or Review, including arranging the panel (in consultation with the DRDC), providing critical review of the draft document, and rehearsing the presentation.
6. Respond to any issues raised in progress monitoring.
7. Provide pastoral support and refer to student counselling, careers services or other services as necessary.
8. Flag opportunities for career development, including conferences, courses, publication and teaching opportunities.
9. Nominate examiners and arrange the viva examination (see [exam guidelines](#)).
10. In addition, supervisors of DrPH students are expected to support and advise during the Term-1 compulsory Taught Modules and their assessment, and help their students plan and carry out the appropriate research for their OPA/RS1 (see [DrPH guidelines](#)).

Key information for supervisors is available on the [Supervisors' page](#) on the [Doctoral College intranet](#).

Training

All *New Supervisors* must take part in a 'New supervisor' training session before taking on a research degree student. These are organised once a term by the TED team.

Experienced Supervisors must take part in mandatory refresher training every three years. This provides key updates on changes to regulations and new resources and offers a forum to discuss ongoing challenges with your peer group, and your FRDD or the Head of the Doctoral College.

Change of supervisor

Supervision needs may change during a student's time at LSHTM. This can be due to a major shift in the project's focus, or if it is agreed that another member of staff can provide better support. If students have concerns or issues relating to their supervision, they must feel able to raise these with an appropriate member of staff. The initial step is for students to approach another member of their Supervisory Team to discuss any concerns. If the student feels unable to speak to another member of the Supervisory Team, they can approach their DRDC, FRDM, FRDD or, for DrPH students, the DrPH Programme Director. If the student feels unable to approach these members of staff, they can speak with the Head of the Doctoral College.

If the student/supervisor relationship cannot be restored, the student and supervisory team can request a change of supervisor. A request to change supervisory arrangements must first be discussed with the DRDC and approved by the FRDD. The DRDC and FRDD will need to consider any sponsorship or programme requirements before a decision is made, consulting with the relevant programme lead or the Head of Doctoral College as necessary.

Supervisor leaving LSHTM – if a supervisor leaves LSHTM, the supervisory team should discuss options with the student in advance of the supervisor's departure. There are three preferred options:

- Identify a new supervisor with the appropriate academic background and supervisory experience; this may be the original second supervisor.
- It may be possible for the supervisor who is leaving the School to continue to supervise the student at a distance but not as the first supervisor.
- It may be possible for the student to transfer to the supervisor's new institution.

The supervisory team, DRDC and FRDD are jointly responsible for helping the student to identify the best option.

Note: *It may not always be possible to change the supervisory arrangements where a student is funded on a studentship awarded through a research grant to a named supervisor. In exceptional circumstances, when good supervision cannot be restored and alternative supervisory arrangements may not be available, a student may be advised to change research programmes (if possible) or withdraw from LSHTM.*

Temporary absence of a supervisor (planned or unexpected) – if a first or second supervisor will be absent for more than four weeks, they should make alternative arrangements for someone familiar with the student's research to supervise them during the period of absence. Supervisors are responsible for making such interim arrangements and informing the FRDM. Temporary supervisory arrangements should not normally exceed three months unless there are exceptional circumstances. Where such arrangements are likely to exceed three months, a new permanent supervisor should be appointed. If it is agreed the original supervisor will return to the role after this period, the usual procedure for change of supervisory team should be followed.

If a supervisor is unexpectedly absent (e.g. through illness) and the second supervisor is unable to provide adequate support, the DRDC and FRDD should make alternative arrangements for someone familiar with the student's research to supervise them during the period of absence. This person does not take the place of the supervisor but can offer support and guidance while the supervisor is away. If the temporary period of absence turns into a longer period of absence, then a more permanent arrangement may need to be implemented. The DRDC should discuss this with the Supervisory Team and the FRDD.

10. PROGRESS MONITORING, MILESTONES AND UPGRADING / REVIEW

All research degree students undergo progress monitoring during their degree, in addition to supervisory and advisory committee meetings. You will be reminded when a progress monitoring meeting is due. However, it is the student's responsibility to arrange a meeting with the relevant member of staff and record the content of progress monitoring meetings in RDR. The following timeline describes milestones for full-time and part-time PhD students.

Note: Students on the [PhD by Publication programme](#) register for a minimum of six and a maximum of 18 months. They should meet with their DRDC at **three months** to review their submission plan and the required pre-submission documents, and again at **6 months** to review progress, if not planning to submit imminently. These students are not subject to the upgrading process.

Progress monitoring and milestones for PhD students

Time	Event(s)	Documentation
FT & PT: 1m	<p>Induction</p> <p>All students should receive a School-wide induction and a Faculty-specific induction.</p> <p>Students meet with their supervisory team.</p>	<p>Student and supervisors complete the initial meeting form on RDR, discuss the D-TSP, and review the ethics research approvals checklist (available here).</p>
FT & PT: 3m	<p>Progress monitoring 1</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project title/area • Contact with supervisor • Training needs • Funding • Opportunities to teach • Any problems 	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR.</p>
<p>FT: 6m</p> <p>PT: 6-12m</p>	<p>Progress monitoring 2</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether project has been identified • the student's understanding of the project design and background reading • progress with forming the Advisory Committee • whether funding is in place (Plan B if not) • Timetable for progress • Planned date of upgrading 	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR, including funding details, project design and planned timetable to submission.</p> <p>Student completes the ethics research approvals checklist (available here).</p>

Time	Event(s)	Documentation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferable Skills Programme training completed and required • Opportunities to teach • Any concerns 	
FT: 6-9m PT: 6-18m	<p>Pre-upgrade meeting</p> <p>Student and Advisory Committee meet to check all is on course for Upgrading. Further meetings with the Advisory Committee are organised as required by the student, supervisory team and committee members.</p>	<p>Advisory committee provides recommendations on project design, upgrading document and presentation.</p>
FT: 7-11m PT: 7-22m	<p>Upgrading</p> <p>Student presents Upgrading report (abstract, literature review, report of aims, preliminary data, timetable for research, data management plan, research tools and confirmation of funding), an open seminar, and attends a closed panel discussion.</p> <p>All Upgrading requirements (including any resubmissions must be completed by 18 months (maximum) for FT students and 36 months (maximum) for PT students.</p>	<p>Supervisor writes an Upgrading Assessment Outcome Report on behalf of the Panel to add to the DrPH Review Decision Report form.</p> <p>Student submits RD amendment form (available here).</p>
FT & PT: Annually (from date of registration) until submission	<p>Annual progress monitoring</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any delays or challenges • Funding issues • Transferable Skills Programme courses required and completed • Opportunities to teach • Thesis progress update and planned timetable to submission. <p><i>Note: it's recommended to schedule a progress meeting six months before the thesis submission deadline to ensure the student is on track for on-time submission.</i></p>	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR, including details of training planned/attended, issues encountered and plans to address them, and progress towards thesis submission.</p> <p>Thesis discussions should evolve through planning, execution and submission across progress meetings.</p> <p>Issues should be raised and addressed as early as possible to ensure on-time thesis submission.</p>

Time	Event(s)	Documentation
FT: 36m PT: 72m	Submission of PhD thesis for normal registration period. Students who have not submitted are automatically moved to writing-up status by Registry.	Supervisor submits nomination of examiners form 3-6 months ahead of the planned thesis submission date
FT: 48m PT: 96m	End of maximum registration period and final deadline for submission of PhD thesis to Registry.	Student must have submitted thesis.

MPhil to PhD Upgrading guidance

PhD students at the School, except those registered on the LSHTM-Nagasaki joint programme or the PhD by Publication, are first registered for an MPhil and must 'upgrade' to PhD status.

There is extensive guidance on the Upgrading process and the roles and responsibilities of participants on the Doctoral College [Progress/Exams page](#).

The Upgrading has two **main objectives**:

1. To provide students with feedback from two independent assessors and the seminar audience to improve the design of their research. Much of the benefit of the Upgrading process to students comes from presenting their ideas and plans to people unfamiliar with the project who can provide input into the thesis from a range of perspectives.
2. To identify students who are struggling with progress and unlikely to complete a PhD successfully. It is beneficial for both the student and the School if such students withdraw within their first year of registration or work towards an MPhil instead.

Timeframes are defined in the Research Degree Regulations [Academic Manual \(Chapter 9\)](#).

- Full-time MPhil/PhD students should submit their Upgrading report at least **7 months but no later than 11 months** after registration (**22 months** for part-time students). The seminar and panel discussion should take place within **two weeks** of Upgrading report submission. The deadline for successfully completing all upgrade requirements, including any required revisions or Upgrading report resubmission, is 18 months (36 months for part-time students).
- All students are entitled to two attempts at Upgrading.
- Any variation to these timeframes requires approval from your Faculty no later than 9 months (or 18 months for part-time) after registration.
- Registration may be terminated if timeframes are not adhered to. The Termination of Studies Policy is described in the [Academic Manual \(Chapter 7\)](#).
- Early Upgrading (i.e. less than 7 months after registration) requests require FRDD approval.
 - The student provides a one-page document detailing the rationale for Upgrading early, the benefits of doing so, and a summary of work done so far and their research plans.

- The FRDD ensures that the student understands the requirements and purpose of the Upgrading process, its challenges and the range of outcomes, including the potentially enhanced risk of failing if the upgrading is undertaken too early.
- Final approval for early entry to the Upgrading process is dependent on agreement from the student's DRDC and supervisory team, ensuring that the latter can provide the necessary support.

Note: approval to enter the process early does not prejudice the outcome of the Upgrading; this remains to be determined by the DRDC in consultation with the independent assessors following receipt of the upgrading report, and the student's performance during the seminar and panel discussion.

Upgrading Preparation

Supervisors must ensure that the student prepares for the Upgrading. Dates for the Upgrading seminar need to be fixed well ahead of time to ensure that the appropriate people can attend.

The supervisor should discuss and agree the membership of the Upgrading Assessment Panel with the DRDC (who will chair the upgrading) *at least 4 weeks before the date of the upgrading* (see the [upgrading checklist](#)).

It is the first supervisor's responsibility to:

- Identify independent assessors and consult with the Chair (DRDC) regarding their suitability, including consideration of any conflicts of interest
- Check the availability of the DRDC *before* agreeing a date with the student and assessors
- Complete and submit the [upgrading checklist](#)
- Inform the FRDM when the date is agreed
- Ensure that rooms are booked for the seminar and panel discussion
- Help prepare the student for the oral presentation (including listening to a run-through)
- Explain to the student what to expect from the Upgrading process
- Take notes during the post-seminar panel meeting and draft the Upgrading Assessment Outcome report for review and approval by the Upgrading Assessment Panel

The Upgrading Assessment Panel should be small (4-5 members) but broad-based. The panel should be able to give an independent assessment of the student and project. It should include two independent assessors, at least one of whom is from outside the Department(s) in which the student and first supervisor are based. At least one assessor should be internal to LSHTM. Membership of the panel should be discussed and agreed with the DRDC, including consideration of any conflicts of interest. See the [upgrading checklist](#).

Note: MPhil/PhD Upgrading assessors are not paid a fee or expenses.

Note: members of the Upgrading Assessment Panel cannot be examiners at the final viva examination.

The following members must *always* be on the Upgrading Assessment Panel:

- Chair (DRDC), who gives final approval for the outcome
- First Independent Assessor: an academic within the same discipline or subject area who is external to the project
- Second Independent Assessor: an academic within the same discipline or subject area who is external to the project and to the student's department

- At least one supervisor: The first supervisor plays a role in providing informed advice on the feasibility of proposed implementation plans for the research project and preparing the formal record. The first supervisor (or the second supervisor if the first is absent) is responsible for taking notes and drafting the Upgrading Assessment Outcome Report.

In addition, members of the student's advisory committee may attend. In exceptional circumstances an application can be made to the FRDD to deviate from the standard Upgrading Assessment Panel composition.

Note: *supervisors and advisory committee members cannot act as Upgrading assessors for their own students. However, their input, including comments on the viability of the research project plan, should inform the Upgrading Assessment Panel's decision.*

Upgrading Report

The student should submit their MPhil/PhD Upgrading report to the Upgrading Assessment Panel and the FRDM at least one week before the seminar. Students may find it helpful to look at previous Upgrading reports (ask your supervisors for examples). However, the report only represents a part of the process, its structure and content will be determined by the nature of the research it reports, and all reports will be subject to constructive critique. While there is no single ideal format for an Upgrading report, the following should be adhered to. It should be presented in font size 11 and be no more than 7,500 words, including tables (which should be no larger than one page), but excluding references and appendices (larger tables may be included as appendices). The Upgrading report should contain the following:

- An abstract of no more than 300 words.
- A concise literature review providing background to the research work and description of research aims.
- Any preliminary results, with additional details in an appendix, if applicable.
- A timetable of the proposed research and details of key objectives, methodologies and contingency plans that will enable the delivery of the final thesis.
- Confirmation that funding is available for data collection and/or analysis – if not, a viable 'Plan B' for timely successful completion without such funding
- A complete reference list, using a single referencing format
- The following mandatory appendices:
 - Certificate confirming you have passed the [online ethics training](#)
 - Completed 'approvals' form detailing plans for ethical and other approvals, available [here](#).

Note: *you are not expected to have ethics approval before Upgrading – plans often change. However, you must have ethics approval before collecting or analysing any data, including pilot data.*

 - a [data management plan](#)
- If applicable, you may also include appendices describing research tools (e.g. questionnaires) and/or preliminary data

The student is responsible for sending an electronic version of the document to the FRDM for submission to Turnitin, the plagiarism detection software used by the School. The student is also responsible for checking whether the supervisor and review panel members require a hard copy to be delivered to them in addition to the electronic copy of the Upgrading report. If so, the student

should ensure a soft-bound copy is distributed to the supervisors and panel members, as requested. There is a self-service printing and binding service available from [Reprographics](#). The charge code can be obtained from the FRDM.

The Upgrading Process

The Upgrading comprises a public seminar, followed by a closed meeting involving the student and the Upgrading Assessment Panel.

The **Seminar** presentation by the student should last a maximum of 45 minutes to allow time for questions. The seminar can be in London or [online](#), and is open to all LSHTM staff and Research Degree students. Upgrading Panel members must attend the seminar. They should allow other attendees to ask questions first, as they will have extensive opportunity to ask questions during the panel meeting. It is essential that the supervisor allows the student to answer the questions.

The **Upgrading Assessment Panel** will usually confer for a short while after the seminar, before inviting the student to join them for further questions and discussion and to present their feedback on the upgrading report and seminar.

Note: *It is important that all members of the Upgrading Assessment Panel are in attendance for the entire process (seminar and panel discussion), which can take up to three hours. The Chair is encouraged to invite the student in to join the panel discussion as soon as possible.*

The supervisor is responsible for taking notes and drafting the **Upgrading Assessment Outcome Report**.

The Chair, in consultation with members of the Upgrading Assessment Panel, will:

- Identify the outcome of the Upgrading.
- Approve a bullet-point summary of key actions.
- Give final approval for the Panel's decision and the Upgrading Assessment Outcome Report (drafted by the supervisor).
- Ensure that the Panel has agreed a timetable for when they expect any specified revisions to be completed.
- Be responsible for circulating the Upgrading Assessment Outcome Report to members of the assessment panel, the student, FRDD and FRDM **within two weeks** of the Upgrading seminar and panel meeting.

The outcome of the Upgrading will depend on answers to the following questions:

- Is the research feasible, and will it provide the scope necessary for the student to make an original, independent and significant contribution to the subject?
- Are the aims and objectives of the thesis and research questions clearly specified?
- Has the student demonstrated the necessary intellectual and technical capacities to undertake, analyse and write-up the research?
- Is the timetable realistic and achievable?
- Does the student have adequate funds to allow the planned fieldwork or laboratory experiments to be undertaken (if applicable)? If there is doubt, is there a viable 'Plan B' to enable timely successful completion of the research degree?
- Are the necessary arrangements in place for access to specialist advice on materials, and for training in transferable skills (if appropriate)?

- Has the student started the ethical approval process? (See further guidance [here](#))

Possible outcomes are:

- **Immediate approval:** Minimal or no changes required to the Upgrading document. The panel may nevertheless suggest changes to the planned work.
- **Conditional approval:** Upgrading recommended after specific revisions and further review. Deadlines for the revisions should be agreed with the panel.
 - Address specific issues and revise document. Review by supervisor
 - Address specific issues and revise documents. Review by the Panel
- **Not upgraded – opportunity for resubmission and reassessment:** Address issues and revise document for second and final Upgrade Assessment Panel meeting. There will not be a second seminar.
- **Not upgraded – no resubmission or reassessment:** This outcome is not normally chosen after a first submission and assessment. It must be used after an unsatisfactory second submission and assessment.
- **Write and submit thesis for an MPhil**
- **Recommend withdrawal** from the Research Degree programme

The assessors for a resubmission will normally but not necessarily be the same as those for the original submission. For resubmissions there is no public seminar.

Supervisors are expected to meet with the student shortly after the Upgrading Assessment Panel meeting to explain the outcome, review the Upgrade Assessment Outcome Report, and plan how to proceed. Where an upgrading is conditional upon revisions to the document, assessors should provide feedback **within a month** of receiving the revised document from the student.

***Note:** if a student is given conditional approval after a first upgrading, but the revisions are unsatisfactory, they are allowed a second attempt (i.e. resubmission and reassessment).*

Once the upgrading has been approved (whether immediately or following revisions), the student should notify Registry using the [Research Degree Amendment form](#).

Students who decide or are encouraged to withdraw after an unsuccessful upgrading should follow the advice on the Interruption of Studies & Withdrawal Policy, as described in the [Academic Regulations \(Chapter 7\)](#).

Appeals against the outcome of the upgrading procedure must be submitted in accordance with the School's Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure, as described in the [Academic Regulations \(Chapter 7\)](#).

Joint PhD Programme for Global Health with Nagasaki University: Qualifying Examination

The procedures are very similar to those for other PhD students except that an assessor from Nagasaki who is external to the project will join (making three assessors in total). Students on the joint programme are initially registered for a PhD without a preliminary registration for an MPhil. The "Upgrading" is therefore called a "Qualifying examination" (QE). It is expected that the QE will usually take place in a hybrid format to enable the assessor and supervisor from Nagasaki to take part. The QE dates should be fixed well ahead of time to ensure the DRDC, LSHTM and NU

supervisors, and the assessors can attend. Normally a member from the programme's Joint Academic Committee will also join the panel as an observer.

The possible outcomes are the same as above, except that there is no option to submit an MPhil under joint registration (although transfer to MPhil registration at LSHTM may be considered).

Progress monitoring and milestones for DrPH students

The DrPH is a professional Doctorate in Public Health available in all three of the School's Faculties (see the [programme specification](#) for more details). Students complete two taught modules (please refer to the [DrPH Marking Scheme](#) for details of the grading system and descriptors), followed by two additional components: Research Study I (RSI), a 15,000-word Organisational or Policy Analysis (OPA), and Research Study II (RSII), a 60,000-word thesis.

Below is a timeline of Progress Monitoring and Milestones for DrPH students. All students start with the taught modules. Most students do RSI/OPA before RSII but the order can be reversed.

Time (months)	Events	Documentation
FT & PT: 1m	Induction and first formal meeting with first supervisor.	Student and supervisor complete initial supervision form on RDR.
FT & PT: 3-6m	<p>Progress monitoring 1</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether core teaching modules have been completed • Further training needs • Funding for RSI and RSII • Whether planning for RSI and/or RSII are underway • Research plan outline • Plans for forming the Advisory Committee • Timetable for further progress monitoring • Any concerns 	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core module grades • RSI and RSII project plans • Research design • Planned timetable towards DrPH review <p>Student completes the ethics research approvals checklist (available here).</p>
FT: 10m PT: 10-20m	<p>Progress monitoring 2</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The advisory committee • Plans for further training • Progress with RSI project • Progress with RSII and plans for DrPH review • Any concerns 	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR, including recommendations on project design, and DrPH review document and presentation.</p>

Time (months)	Events	Documentation
FT: 12-14m PT: 12-28m	<p>Student meets with Advisory Committee for a pre-DrPH Review Meeting to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study design and ethical approval • Funding • Plans for DrPH Review <p>Further meetings of the Advisory Committee should be decided by the student with the supervisory team and advisory committee members, depending on the needs of the student and RSI/RSII projects.</p> <p>RSI (or OPA) report submitted for formative review and feedback by internal assessors. Final summative assessment ratified by the DrPH Exam Board</p>	<p>Student records meeting in RDR, including written recommendations regarding project design, review document and presentation.</p> <p>Supervisors and student to select appropriate (School based) assessors and request their participation.</p>
FT: 15-18m PT: 15-36m	<p>Student submits and presents report to DrPH Review panel, delivers an open seminar, and attends a closed panel discussion.</p>	<p>Supervisor writes a DrPH Review Outcome Report on behalf of the Panel to add to the DrPH Review Decision Report form.</p> <p>Student submits RD amendment form (available here).</p>
FT & PT: Annually (from date of registration) until submission	<p>Annual progress monitoring</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any delays or challenges • Funding issues • Training required and completed • Thesis progress update and planned timetable to submission. <p><i>Note: it's recommended to schedule a progress meeting six months before the thesis submission deadline to ensure the student is on track for on-time submission.</i></p>	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR, including details of training planned/attended, issues encountered and plans to address them, and progress towards thesis submission.</p> <p>Thesis discussions should evolve through planning, execution and submission across progress meetings.</p> <p>Issues should be raised and addressed as early as possible to ensure on-time thesis submission.</p>

Time (months)	Events	Documentation
FT: 36m PT: 72m	Submission of DrPH thesis for normal registration period. Students who have not submitted are automatically moved to writing-up status by Registry.	Supervisors should submit nomination of examiners form 3-6 months before intended submission date of thesis.
FT: 48m PT: 96m	End of maximum registration period and final deadline for submission of DrPH thesis to Registry.	Student must have submitted their thesis.

DrPH Review guidance

All students registered for the DrPH are required to undergo a DrPH Review after commencing the RSII element of their degree. The Review follows the same format as the MPhil/PhD Upgrading process.

There is extensive guidance on the DrPH Review and the roles and responsibilities of participants available on the Doctoral College [Progress/Exams page](#).

The purpose of the DrPH Review is to provide feedback on the student's research plans for the DrPH thesis (RSII). Assessed work related to the DrPH core modules will have been considered separately by the DrPH Exam Board. The RSI (OPA) report will have received formative review and feedback by internal assessors; the final summative assessment will be ratified by the DrPH exam board.

The DrPH Review typically takes place once a detailed research protocol and literature review have been completed, but before the main data collection/analysis phase for RSII. The timing of the DrPH review for both full and part-time students will be agreed during progress monitoring. Students may not begin their fieldwork (other than feasibility or pilot studies) or other forms of primary data collection until after their DrPH Review unless there are exceptional circumstances to be discussed with the Supervisory Team and FRDD.

DrPH Review Preparation

Supervisors must ensure that the student prepares for the DrPH Review. Dates for the DrPH Review seminar need to be fixed well ahead of time to ensure that the appropriate people can attend.

The supervisor should discuss and agree the membership of the DrPH Review Panel with the DRDC (who will chair the panel meeting) *at least 4 weeks before the date of the DrPH Review* (see the [review checklist](#)).

It is the first supervisor's responsibility to:

- Identify independent assessors and consult with the Chair (DRDC) regarding their suitability, including consideration of any conflicts of interest
- Check the availability of the DRDC *before* agreeing a date with the student and assessors

- Complete and submit the [review checklist](#)
- Inform the FRDM when the date is agreed
- Ensure that rooms are booked for the seminar and panel discussion
- Help prepare the student for the seminar presentation (including listening to a run-through)
- Explain to the student what to expect from the DrPH Review process
- Take notes during the post-seminar panel meeting and draft the DrPH Review Outcome report for review and approval by the DrPH Review Panel

The supervisor should ensure that the student and members of the DrPH Review panel understand the nature of a DrPH RSII research project, including how it differs from a PhD research project, and refer them to the [programme guidance](#).

The DrPH Review Panel should be small (4-5 members) but broad-based. The panel should be able to give an independent assessment of the student and project. It should include two independent assessors, at least one of whom is from outside the Department(s) in which the student and first supervisor are based. At least one assessor should be internal to LSHTM.

Note: *DrPH Review assessors are not paid fees or expenses.*

Note: *DrPH Review panel members cannot be examiners at the final viva examination.*

Membership of the panel should be discussed and agreed with the DRDC, including consideration of any conflicts of interest, *at least 4 weeks* before the planned assessment date. See the [review checklist](#).

The following members must *always* be on the DrPH Review panel:

- Chair (DRDC), who gives final approval for the outcome
- First Independent Assessor: an academic within the same discipline or subject area who is external to the project
- Second Independent Assessor: an academic within the same discipline or subject area who is external to the project and to the student's department
- At least one supervisor: The first supervisor plays a role in providing informed advice on the feasibility of proposed implementation plans for the research project and preparing the formal record. The first supervisor (or the second supervisor if the first is absent) is responsible for taking notes and drafting the DrPH Review Outcome Report.

In addition, members of the student's advisory committee may attend. In exceptional circumstances an application can be made to the FRDD to deviate from the standard DrPH Review Panel composition.

Note: *supervisors and advisory committee members cannot act as DrPH Review assessors for their own students. However, their input, including comments on the viability of the research project plan, should inform the DrPH Review Panel's decision.*

DrPH Review Report

The student should submit their DrPH Review report to the DrPH Review Panel and the FRDM at least one week before the seminar. Students may find it helpful to look at previous DrPH Review reports (ask your supervisors for examples). However, the report only represents a part of the process, its structure and content will be determined by the nature of the research it reports, and all

reports will be subject to constructive critique. While there is no single ideal format for an upgrading report, the following should be adhered to. It should be presented in font size 11 and be no more than 7,500 words (maximum), including tables (which should be no larger than one page), but excluding references and appendices (larger tables may be included as appendices). It should include:

- An abstract of no more than 300 words.
 - A concise literature review providing background to the research work and description of research aims.
 - Any preliminary results, with additional details in an appendix, if applicable.
 - A timetable of the proposed research and details of key objectives, methodologies and contingency plans that will enable the delivery of the final thesis.
 - Confirmation that funding is available for data collection and/or analysis – if not, a viable 'Plan B' for timely successful completion without such funding
 - A complete reference list, using a single referencing format
 - The following mandatory appendices:
 - Certificate confirming you have passed the [online ethics training](#)
 - Completed 'approvals' form detailing plans for ethical and other approvals, available [here](#).
- Note:** you are not expected to have ethics approval before the DrPH Review – plans often change. However, you must have ethics approval before collecting or analysing any data, including pilot data.*
- a [data management plan](#)
 - If applicable, you may also include appendices describing research tools (e.g. questionnaire) and/or preliminary data

The student is responsible for sending an electronic version of the document to the relevant FRDM/A for submission to Turnitin, the plagiarism detection software used by the School. The student is also responsible for checking whether the supervisor and review panel members require a hard copy of the DrPH Review document. If so, the student should ensure that a soft-bound copy is printed, bound and distributed to the supervisors and panel members, as requested. There is a self-service printing and binding service available from [Reprographics](#). The charge code can be obtained from the FRDM.

The DrPH Review Process

The DrPH Review comprises a public seminar, followed by a closed meeting involving the student and the DrPH Review panel. The DrPH Review provides students with feedback to refine their research. The DrPH Review report, seminar and post-seminar panel meeting should:

- Demonstrate that the student can find, evaluate, assimilate and present relevant literature in a scholarly manner
- Present the research plans clearly, with enough detail that the assessors can be reassured that the proposed study is viable, ethical and should lead to the timely, successful completion of the doctorate

The Seminar presentation by the student should last a maximum of 45 minutes to allow time for questions. The seminar can be in London or [online](#) and is open to all LSHTM staff and Research Degree students. DrPH Review panel members must attend the seminar. They should allow other

attendees to ask questions first, as they will have extensive opportunity to ask questions during the panel meeting. It is important that the supervisor allows the student to answer the questions.

The **DrPH Review Panel** will usually confer for a short while after the seminar, before inviting the student to join them for further questions and discussion and to present their feedback on the review report and seminar.

Note: *It is important that all members of the DrPH Review Panel are in attendance for the entire process (seminar and panel meeting), which can take up to three hours. The Chair is encouraged to invite the student in to join the panel discussion as soon as possible.*

The supervisor is responsible for taking notes and drafting the DrPH Review Outcome Report.

The Chair, in consultation with members of the DrPH Review Panel, will:

- Identify the outcome of the DrPH Review.
- Approve a bullet-point summary of key actions.
- Give final approval for the Panel's decision and the DrPH Review Outcome Report (drafted by the supervisor).
- Ensure that the DrPH Review panel has agreed a timetable for when they expect any revisions to be completed.
- Be responsible for circulating the DrPH Review Outcome Report to members of the DrPH Review Panel, the student, FRDD and FRDM **within two weeks** of the DrPH Review seminar and panel meeting.

The outcome of the DrPH Review will depend on answers to the following questions:

- Is the research feasible, and will it provide the scope necessary for the student to make an original, independent contribution to the subject?
- Is the scope of the research reasonable, given the limited duration of the research and the length of the DrPH RSII thesis?
- Are the aims and objectives of the thesis clearly specified?
- Has the student demonstrated the necessary intellectual and technical capacities to undertake, analyse and write-up the research?
- Is the timetable realistic and achievable?
- Does the student have adequate funds to allow the fieldwork to be undertaken (if applicable)? In the case of doubts, has a viable 'Plan B' been identified?
- Are the necessary arrangements in place for access to specialist advice on materials, and for training in transferable skills (if appropriate)?
- Has the student started the ethical approval process? (See further guidance [here](#))

Possible outcomes are:

- **Immediate approval.** Minimal or no changes required. The Panel may nevertheless suggest changes to the planned work.
- **Conditional approval.** Progression recommended after revisions and further review. Deadlines for the revisions to be agreed with the panel.
 - Address specific issues and revise document. Review by supervisor
 - Address specific issues and revise documents. Review by Panel members
- **Not immediate progression – opportunity for resubmission and reassessment.** Address issues and revise document for second and final Review Panel meeting. There will not be a second seminar.

- **Not able to progress – no resubmission or reassessment.** This outcome will not normally be chosen after a first submission and assessment. It must be used after an unsatisfactory second submission and assessment.
- **Recommend withdrawal** from the DrPH and award of alternative degree (e.g. PGCert)

The assessors for a resubmission will normally but not necessarily be the same as those for the original submission. For resubmissions there is no public seminar.

Supervisors are expected to meet with the student shortly after the DrPH Review panel meeting to explain the outcome, review the DrPH Review Outcome Report, and plan how to proceed. Where the DrPH Review is conditional upon revisions to the document, assessors should provide feedback **within a month** of receiving the revised document from the student.

Note: if a student is given conditional approval after a first DrPH Review, but the revisions are unsatisfactory, they are allowed a second attempt (i.e. resubmission and reassessment).

Once the DrPH Review has been approved (whether immediately or following revisions), the student should notify Registry using the [Research Degree Amendment form](#).

Students who decide or are encouraged to withdraw after an unsuccessful DrPH Review should follow the advice on the Interruption of Studies & Withdrawal Policy, as described in the [Academic Regulations \(Chapter 7\)](#).

Appeals against the outcome of the review procedure must be submitted in accordance with the School's Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure, as described in the [Academic Manual \(Chapter 7\)](#).

Progress monitoring and milestones for MPhil students

Time (months)	Events	Documentation
FT & PT: 1m	<p>Induction</p> <p>All students should receive a School-wide induction and a Faculty-specific induction.</p> <p>Students meet with their supervisory team.</p>	<p>Student and supervisors complete the initial meeting form on RDR, discuss the D-TSP, and review the ethics research approvals checklist (available here).</p>
FT & PT: 3m	<p>Progress monitoring 1</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project title/area • Contact with supervisor • Training needs • Funding • Any problems 	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR.</p>

Time (months)	Events	Documentation
FT: 6m PT: 6m	<p>Progress monitoring 2</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether project has been identified and work started • the student's understanding of the project design and background reading • progress with forming the Advisory Committee • whether funding is in place, and Plan B if not • Timetable for progress • Planned date of Review • Transferable Skills Programme training completed and required • Any concerns 	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR, including funding details, project design and planned timetable to submission.</p> <p>Student completes the ethics research approvals checklist (available here).</p>
FT: 7-11m PT: 7-22m	<p>Student submits and presents report to the MPhil Review panel, delivers an open seminar, and attends a closed panel discussion.</p>	<p>Supervisor writes a MPhil Review Outcome Report on behalf of the Panel to add to the MPhil Review Decision form.</p>
FT & PT: Annually (from date of registration) until submission	<p>Annual progress monitoring</p> <p>Student and DRDC discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any delays or challenges • Funding issues • Training required and completed • Thesis progress update and planned timetable to submission. <p><i>Note: it's recommended to schedule a progress meeting six months before the thesis submission deadline to ensure the student is on track for on-time submission.</i></p>	<p>Student and DRDC record meeting in RDR, including details of training planned/attended, issues encountered and plans to address them, and progress towards thesis submission.</p> <p>Thesis discussions should evolve through planning, execution and submission across progress meetings.</p> <p>Issues should be raised and addressed as early as possible to ensure on-time thesis submission.</p>
FT: 24m PT: 48m	<p>Submission of MPhil thesis to Registry for normal registration period. Students who have not submitted are automatically moved to writing-up status by Registry.</p>	<p>Supervisors should submit nomination of examiners form 3-6 months before intended submission date of thesis.</p>
FT: 36m PT: 72m	<p>End of maximum registration period and final deadline for submission of MPhil thesis to Registry.</p>	<p>Student must have submitted their thesis.</p>

MPhil Review guidance

The MPhil Review should take place 7-11 months after registration for full-time students (and no later than 22 months after registration for part-time students). This is not an upgrading process and no decisions regarding change of registration are made at the MPhil Review. However, it follows the same structure as an MPhil/PhD Upgrading or DrPH Review, comprising a report, a public seminar and a panel discussion with two independent assessors, chaired by the DRDC.

There is guidance on the process and the roles and responsibilities of participants on the Doctoral College [Progress/Exams page](#).

MPhil Review Preparation

Supervisors must ensure that the student prepares for the MPhil Review. Dates for the MPhil Review seminar should be fixed well ahead of time to ensure that the appropriate people can attend.

The supervisor should discuss and agree the membership of the MPhil Review Panel with the DRDC (who will chair the panel meeting) *at least 4 weeks before the date of the MPhil Review* (see the [review checklist](#)).

It is the first supervisor's responsibility to:

- Identify independent assessors and consult with the Chair (DRDC) regarding their suitability, including consideration of any conflicts of interest
- Check the availability of the DRDC *before* agreeing a date with the student and assessors
- Complete and submit the [review checklist](#)
- Inform the FRDM when the date is agreed
- Ensure that rooms are booked for the seminar and panel discussion
- Help prepare the student for the oral presentation (including listening to a run-through)
- Explain to the student what to expect from the MPhil Review process
- Take notes during the post-seminar panel meeting and draft the MPhil Review Panel Report for review and approval by the MPhil Review Panel

The MPhil Review Panel should be small (4-5 members) but broad-based. The panel should be able to provide an independent review. It should include two independent assessors, at least one of whom is from outside the Department(s) in which the student and first supervisor are based. At least one assessor should be internal to LSHTM. Membership of the panel should be discussed and agreed with the DRDC, including consideration of any conflicts of interest. See the [review checklist](#).

Note: *MPhil Review assessors are not paid fees or expenses.*

Note: *members of the MPhil Review Panel cannot be examiners at the final viva examination.*

The following members must *always* be on the MPhil Review Panel:

- Chair (DRDC)
- First Independent Assessor: an academic within the same discipline or subject area who is external to the project
- Second Independent Assessor: an academic within the same discipline or subject area who

- is external to the project and to the student's department
- At least one supervisor: The first supervisor plays a role in providing informed advice on the feasibility of proposed implementation plans for the research project and preparing the formal record. The first supervisor (or the second supervisor if the first is absent) is responsible for taking notes and drafting the MPhil Review Panel Report.

In addition, members of the student's advisory committee may attend. In exceptional circumstances an application can be made to the FRDD to deviate from the standard MPhil Review Panel composition.

Note: *supervisors and advisory committee members cannot act as MPhil Review assessors for their own students. However, their input, including comments on the viability of the research project plan, can inform the Panel Discussion.*

MPhil Review Report

The student should submit their MPhil Review report to the MPhil Review Panel and the FRDM at least one week before the seminar. It should be presented in font size 11 and be a maximum of 7500 words, including tables (which should be no larger than one page), but excluding references and appendices (larger tables may be included as appendices). It should include:

- An abstract of no more than 300 words.
- A concise literature review providing background to the research work and description of research aims.
- Any preliminary results, with additional details in an appendix, if applicable.
- A timetable of the proposed research and details of key objectives, methodologies and contingency plans that will enable the delivery of the final thesis.
- Confirmation that funding is available for data collection and/or analysis – if not, a viable 'Plan B' for timely successful completion without such funding
- A complete reference list, using a single referencing format
- The following mandatory appendices:
 - Certificate confirming you have passed the [online ethics training](#)
 - Completed 'approvals' form detailing plans for ethical and other approvals, available [here](#).

Note: *you are not expected to have ethics approval before your MPhil Review – plans often change. However, you must have ethics approval before collecting or analysing any data, including pilot data.*

 - a [data management plan](#)
- If applicable, you may also include appendices describing research tools (e.g. questionnaire) and/or preliminary data

The student is responsible for sending an electronic version of the document to the relevant FRDM for submission to Turnitin, the plagiarism detection software used by the School. The student is also responsible for checking whether the supervisor and review panel members require a hard copy of the Review document. If so, the student should ensure that a soft-bound copy is printed, bound and distributed to the supervisors and panel members, as requested. There is a self-service printing and binding service available from [Reprographics](#). The charge code can be obtained from the FRDM.

The MPhil Review Process

The MPhil Review comprises a public seminar, followed by a closed meeting involving the student and the MPhil Review Panel. The MPhil Review provides students with feedback to refine their planned research. The MPhil Review report, seminar and post-seminar panel meeting should:

- Demonstrate that the student can find, evaluate, assimilate and present relevant literature in a scholarly manner.
- Present the research plans clearly, with enough detail that the assessors can be reassured that the proposed study is viable, ethical and should lead to the timely, successful completion of the MPhil.

The Seminar presentation by the student should last a maximum of 45 minutes to allow time for questions. The seminar can be in London or [online](#) and is open to all LSHTM staff and Research Degree students. Review panel members must attend the seminar. They should allow other attendees to ask questions first, as they will have extensive opportunity to ask questions during the panel meeting. It is important that the supervisor allows the student to answer the questions.

The **MPhil Review Panel** will usually confer for a short while after the seminar, before inviting the student to join them for further questions and discussion and to present their feedback on the review report and seminar.

Note: *It is important that all members of the MPhil Review Panel are in attendance for the entire process (seminar and panel meeting). The Chair is encouraged to invite the student in to join the panel discussion as soon as possible.*

The Review Panel will provide detailed feedback (summarised in a report drafted by the supervisor and approved by the assessors and panel Chair), which may include suggestions for transferable skills training, such as presentation skills, in addition to a discussion of the quality of work.

11. DATA COLLECTION

Planning for data collection

Many students will undertake at least some of their research away from the School, working 'offsite'. Before all travel on School business, RD students must read the [Travel](#) webpages and submit their travel plans to the LSHTM **iTravel** system. This will ensure that all necessary risk assessments are completed, travel authorisations are collected, and destination-specific training is undertaken. Students must also maintain contact with their supervisory team when working offsite. The communication method should be agreed between the student and supervisory team, but may include Zoom calls (or similar), email, or voice calls. Contact should remain at least monthly for FT students, and at least once every two months for PT students.

Frequent communication is also important for lab-based students, who will be required to meet with their supervisors and collaborators on a regular basis. Data will usually be reviewed regularly in a larger forum, such as lab meetings, but you should also schedule regular supervisor-student meetings at least monthly (for full time students). It is important to work to a plan with agreed deadlines to ensure sufficient data of appropriate quality are generated to support successful submission of the thesis within the permitted time.

Wellbeing and offsite working

We encourage any student due to be away from usual support networks for a prolonged time, and who may need additional support, to contact [Student Support Services](#) before they leave. They can arrange for a confidential chat about how any difficulties might be managed. An informal and confidential meeting with one of the student counsellors can help you to identify triggers which might mean you cope less well than usual, as well as look for potential strategies to prevent this happening, or actions you can take if you find that you are struggling.

Ethics approvals and breaches

Soon after registering (or soon after completion of the term-1 taught modules for DrPH students), students should discuss the [research approvals form](#) with their supervisory team. **Almost all research degree students' projects must be reviewed by LSHTM's Ethics Committee. Do not collect new data or analyse existing data prior to obtaining a favourable opinion from the relevant Ethics Committee.**

***Note:** You will need specific ethics approval for your work even if the project you are working with already has ethics approval. Please read the [research ethics web pages](#) and contact the research ethics team on ethics@lshtm.ac.uk if you have any questions or doubts.*

An overview of the approvals process for various types of projects can be found [here](#). Students doing fieldwork abroad will normally also need to obtain ethical clearance in the country concerned. Final approval by the LSHTM Ethics Committee is dependent on local approval being obtained.

Whilst every effort must be made to ensure that appropriate ethical approvals are in place for each student's project, circumstances may arise where an ethics protocol is breached. Such a breach may be relatively minor (e.g. a small amount of additional data collected after the expiry of the

ethical approval) or very serious (e.g. failure to seek ethics approval where this is subsequently found to have been necessary, or substantial change to the study design or method).

The School's response will depend on the nature of the breach and the point at which it is identified. All cases of breach should be discussed with your supervisory team and referred to the chair of the ethics committee for advice.

Note: *Any data collected without ethics approval will be inadmissible in the thesis unless it has been confirmed that ethical approval is not required.*

If students are found to have collected data without seeking ethical approval or have changed their study design so that it no longer complies with the ethics approval given, they will be considered to have committed a serious offence. This will be investigated through the [Student Disciplinary procedures](#) and may lead to the student being deregistered or failing the degree.

Data management and protection

Data produced during a research degree should be managed appropriately, ensuring that it is stored, organised and documented in a manner that allows it to be understood and used for the intended purpose, in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation, as described [here](#).

Ethical and information security obligations must be considered, taking into account the guidance provided in the [Good Research Practice Policy](#) and the [School's Data Protection policy](#). The School's IT Services should be consulted if there is a need to store large data collections on the School network.

You will be expected to include a [Data Management plan](#) in your Upgrading/Review document.

12. REVIEWING WRITTEN WORK

A student and supervisory team should agree on the timing of submission and review of written work. Supervisors will normally ask to see outlines of plans and chapters, as well as specific sections of work. Most students and supervisors find it helpful to have clear deadlines to schedule time to write and review work. Students should expect supervisors to take at least a week to provide feedback on short documents, and longer for more substantial sections of your thesis.

Supervisors will normally provide written feedback on the scientific, organisational or presentational aspects of your work rather than edit or proofread.

13. THESIS AND THESIS SUBMISSION

It is a good idea for students to look at examples of existing theses as early as possible.

Examples of MPhil and PhD theses, and DrPH OPAs (RSI) and theses (RSII) can be found in the Library, with many now available at [Research Online](#).

DrPH students following the 2018 and the 2023 regulations are required to submit a portfolio that includes both RSI/OPA and the RSII/thesis. For those following the 2018 regulations the RSI/OPA assessment feedback sheet will also be provided (by Registry) to the examiners. In all other respects their final portfolio submission is the same as for the old DrPH regulations and PhD thesis submissions.

The DrPH thesis must be written in English and comply with the requirements set out in the [Research Degrees Regulations](#). It must be your own account of the investigations you have conducted and how your study has advanced a specific body of knowledge. You may include work conducted collaboratively with others (including your supervisor), but roles must be clearly defined and acknowledged.

Relevant [forms and procedures](#) are listed on the Doctoral College website.

Word count – the maximum word limit for each type of thesis is stated in the corresponding [programme specification](#). The current maximum thesis limits are 100,000 words for a PhD, 60,000 for a DrPH RSII, and 60,000 for an MPhil. Any words that precede the introductory chapter are excluded from the word count, as are the bibliography, appendices and experimental protocols. Tables, boxes, figures, footnotes and endnotes are included. Tables cannot be converted to images to reduce the word count and will normally count as 250 words if they are included.

References – a full reference list is required.

Appendices – these can be questionnaires, qualitative topic guides, other research instruments, or publications derived from the thesis (where these are not included as standalone chapters). Only material that examiners need for reference should be included.

Binding and layout – to limit costs to students we no longer require traditional hard-bound theses. Guidance on thesis style, layout and submission is on the [MPhil/PhD](#) and [DrPH](#) exam entry pages.

Thesis style

The basic outline is the same for the MPhil, PhD and DrPH RSII. Some years ago, LSHTM expanded from the traditional “**book style**” to allow the inclusion of published papers (sometimes called “**research paper style**”). In many cases, **a thesis will be a combination of the two styles**. There is no need to specify a style in advance. The option to include research papers means that sections that might otherwise be chapters can now be written as stand-alone research papers, while foundational work that may be unpublished but was important to the development of your research ideas can be included in book-style chapters. The inclusion of paper-style chapters saves unnecessary rewriting of material that has already been or is in the process of being published and encourages timely publication of findings. See [FAQs on thesis style](#).

Book style thesis – this is a single narrative. An example structure is outlined below:

- Title
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments
- Table of contents
- Table of abbreviations
- Glossary
- Introduction (setting out the background and what the thesis covers)
- Literature review
- Research question
- Methods
- Results (number of chapters will vary between PhD, MPhil and DrPH RSII)
- Critical overarching discussion
- Conclusion
- References
- Appendices

***Note:** The structure may be different from this – e.g. with different sections each with their own methods results and discussion.*

Combination book- / research paper-style thesis – this format includes work that was published or prepared for publication during the student’s registration period. Although this includes research papers as chapters, it must still meet the general requirements of the book-style thesis, including an introduction and a general discussion to make a coherent whole.

Each paper-style chapter must be accompanied by a **research paper coversheet** detailing the student’s contribution to the paper and signed by the student and their supervisor(s), available [here](#).

An example structure for a PhD thesis written in this style is outlined below

- Title
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments
- Table of contents
- Table of abbreviations

- Glossary
- Introduction (setting out the background and what the thesis covers)
- Literature review (which may be a published paper)
- Research question
- Methods (normally including more detail than in the published papers)
- Foundational pilot work (book-style)
- Research paper 1 (published)
- Research paper 2 (pre-print)
- Research paper 3 (draft paper)
- Critical overarching discussion
- Conclusions
- References
- Appendices

Note: *The number of papers and the balance of published versus unpublished work is not prescriptive but will be informed by discussions between the student and their supervisors, as well as the expectations of the research field.*

When including published papers there is no need to reformat them for the thesis. However, you should review the journal publisher's rules to determine whether you can include the final typeset published version or the 'author-accepted' version in your thesis. As in the above example, you may also include pre-prints, submitted papers or draft papers.

Note: *It is important to include methods in as much detail as you would in a book style thesis, so you may need to have a chapter including details and discussion of methods that goes beyond that included in your published papers.*

PhD by (Prior) Publication

This is only available to staff with a substantial academic publication record and a history of research leadership – see the [programme specification](#) and the [PhD by Publication](#) intranet page for further guidance).

The thesis for a PhD by Publication is a portfolio comprising three elements:

- (a) A 15,000 words (max) critical analytic commentary describing:
 - the overarching objective(s) of the research presented in papers contained in the portfolio
 - a coherent argument linking these papers
 - the original contribution to knowledge that the papers have made in a defined area of research, with reference to the existing literature
 - a critical analysis considering the current state of the art
- (b) A minimum of four interconnected, peer-reviewed, published research papers written in English. Papers should be in the public domain and traceable in bibliographic or other public databases. For multi-authored papers, the student is expected to be the first author or to clearly demonstrate the importance of their academic contribution.
- (c) A statement describing the student's contribution to each paper, signed by the student and counter-signed by the lead co-author and/or Principal Investigator.

An example structure for a PhD by Publication thesis is outlined below.

- Title
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments
- Table of contents
- Table of abbreviations
- Glossary
- Analytic commentary
- Research paper 1
- Research paper 2
- Research paper 3
- Research paper 4
- Research paper coversheet (available [here](#)) per paper detailing the student's contribution
- References
- Appendices

Thesis / Portfolio submission

The thesis or portfolio must be submitted after the minimum and before the maximum period of registration. These can be found in the [Academic Regulations \(Chapter 9\)](#). Visit the [MPhil/PhD](#) and [DrPH](#) exam entry pages for more information on formatting and how to submit.

Note: *The examination entry form must be sent to the RD Examinations team in Registry (rdexaminations@jshtm.ac.uk) copied to your FRDM/A 3-4 months before submission. The first supervisor is must also submit the Nomination of Examiners form 3-4 months in advance of submission.*

Proofreading and Editing – Students are responsible for proofreading and editing their thesis or portfolio and are strongly encouraged to do this themselves. If you arrange for proofreading or editing to be done by a third party, you should follow the School policy on third party copy editing and proofreading, which can be found in the [Academic Writing Handbook](#).

Oral Examination (Viva Voce) – Students may attend the viva in London or online. It is the supervisor's responsibility to request these alternative arrangements in advance. A student will usually have a mock viva examination, so they know what to expect. The recording of the [Doctoral College seminar](#), 'the research degree viva explained', may be useful. Students should take a copy of their thesis or portfolio to the viva examination. You will be expected to defend your research approach and interpretations, and to answer questions on your area of research.

Examination Results – The possible outcomes of the viva are detailed in the [Academic Regulations \(Chapter 9\)](#). Students are normally told the outcome of the examination by the examiners immediately after the viva. You will usually be officially informed of the outcome within six weeks of the viva, when you will receive a copy of the Examiners' Report.

Thesis/portfolio revisions – If, as an outcome of the viva, you are required to make revisions you will have three months to make *minor* revisions, six months to make *major* revisions, or eighteen months if a significant re-write is required. The deadline for submission of the revised thesis will be calculated from date of the official notification of the viva examination outcome.

Final Thesis/portfolio – Once your final (revised) thesis or portfolio is approved by the examiners, you should proofread it again before submission to RDexaminations@lshtm.ac.uk in the Registry for inclusion in LSHTM Research Online. Visit the [MPhil/PhD](#) and [DrPH](#) exam entry pages for more information on how to submit your final thesis.

Degree Award – Your degree certificate will usually be available within three months of formal notification of your award.

Appeals – Students who wish to appeal an outcome must follow the [described in the Academic Regulations \(Chapter 7\)](#).

Assessment Misconduct – Any activity that compromises the integrity of your research or assessment will be considered under the Assessment Irregularity Policy described in the [Academic Regulations \(Chapter 7\)](#). This includes plagiarism, cheating and failure to follow correct progression and examination procedures.

Copyright – The copyright of your thesis belongs to you. If your research was conducted as part of a contract with an external sponsor, the ownership of copyright will be subject to those contract terms.

Intellectual property – LSHTM will assess any invention, product or process created as part of your research. When registering with the School, you agreed terms related to IP, copyright and access. More information can be found [here](#).

Data Protection – The School and all of its staff and students are subject to the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). LSHTM's [Data Protection Policy](#) provides further detail on this.

14. YOUR DEVELOPMENT: SKILLS

All students are encouraged to allow time for development and training activities to enhance employability and the ability to conduct independent research. [Training](#) is available for a wide range of transferable skills and more focussed technical skills.

Doctoral Transferable Skills Programme (D-TSP) – All Research Degree students are expected to take part in the [Doctoral Transferable Skills Programme](#). This includes sessions in each term. Some are available online, and many run more than once per year.

The courses cover:

- Writing, publishing and dissemination
- Library – literature searching and data management
- Ethics and research integrity
- Personal skills and essential information
- Qualitative research methods
- Computer programmes
- Funding

Details are available on [Moodle](#). And you will also find links to the booking forms there.

Go to the [booking system](#) for dates and to see currently available sessions.

We strongly recommend that you consider taking some of the following during your first term of study:

- Ethics
- Research information and literature searching skills
- Endnote
- Mendeley
- Introduction to teaching
- Improving your assertiveness
- Using conceptual frameworks for research
- Time management

Some students on Research Council Doctoral Training Programmes (DTPs) have their own, similar set of transferable skills courses and are not required to attend the D-TSP. Students who are not able to attend their yearly D-TSP training one term can attend the following term. Students who can demonstrate that they have attended equivalent training elsewhere and have support from their supervisory team may choose not to attend some of the D-TSP.

[Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network \(BPSN\)](#) allows you to access free workshops offered by the other University of London Colleges. These cover a wide variety of topics and are well evaluated. They are advertised at the beginning of each term and fill up, so visit the website and sign up early.

The [Vitae website](#) is specifically designed to promote professional development for researchers. Its Researcher Development Framework is a useful way to explore skills and identify ways to enhance them. The 'Professional Development' and 'Doing Research' sections are recommended. For students who are new to project management, the 'Planning your research project' and 'Managing Yourself' sections are also recommended.

[Academic English](#) webpages offer support for students whose first language is not English. LSHTM offers a free weekly programme of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes for students whose first language is not English. This is a series of topic-based group workshops presented by a specialist tutor in teaching [English for Academic Purposes](#) and runs during term time.

MSc modules – You may want to develop or update your knowledge in specific subject areas. There are lots of Masters modules available. Places on the London-based courses are limited. You should discuss whether you would benefit from taking MSc modules with their supervisory team. RD students are allowed to take a maximum of four modules (free) per academic year. Students also have access to the material from any MSc modules via Moodle. This includes material for some distance learning modules, which are particularly well suited to independent learning. Courses are accessed using your School network ID and password via [Moodle](#). Click on 'London Staff & Students' (in the top line) and select 'Access to Moodle courses (Staff/Research Degree students ONLY)'. Then select courses you would like to add to get access to. Further details on how to apply to register for modules is available on the [Skills, Training and Courses](#) page.

Short Courses Programme – There are several options in this programme. As short courses are intensive, you may need to take a break from your research programme to take a short course. Again, your supervisor will be able to advise you. A fee is charged for these programmes. Note that most of them are versions of what is also available as MSc modules.

Computer Training and Services – Support for specialist and general IT packages and software is available from the [IT Portal pages](#). General support is provided by the [IT Helpdesk](#). Online training via [Moodle](#) is available on a variety of software and applications including Access, Endnote, Excel, GraphPad PRISM, Nvivo, PowerPoint, STATA, Web design, Word.

[R users' group](#) – an informal group for R users across the School to share and discuss coding in R. It meets roughly once a month. Subscribe to the mailing list to receive updates.

[Library](#) – Find out more about the wide range of services and training provided by the library. These include training in literature searching (available through the transferable skills programme); one-to-one training on systematic reviews; reviews of search strategies; advice on data management and open access publishing; advice on funding for publication.

[LinkedIn learning](#) – LSHTM's subscription provides access to a very large number of courses for free. If you find particularly useful courses, please let your colleagues and the Doctoral College know so we can circulate the information.

15. YOUR DEVELOPMENT: NETWORKS

There are many opportunities to interact with other researchers and students.

Departments – You all belong to a Department, which contains academics and other students working in disciplines and on subjects similar to yours. Get to know them and make the most of this opportunity by attending Departmental meetings, functions and seminars.

Centres and interest groups – As well as belonging to a department and faculty, we encourage you to join one or more of our interdisciplinary [academic centres](#). They cover a wide range of topics and encourage student involvement. As well as the centres, there are **interest groups**, such as [STIRIG](#) (sexually transmitted infections interest group); [CHIL](#) (Centre for Health Economics in London); [R users Group](#); and some with a regional focus (e.g. Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Tanzania, India).

The "[Kritikos](#)" [Social Science Discussion Group](#) is an informal discussion group for qualitative researchers, staff and RD students, to share and discuss ideas, meet others working in related fields and learn from one another's expertise, in a supportive environment.

[The Events Diary](#) and the weekly email newsletter the Chariot contains information about the wide range of seminars, lectures and research meetings open to LSHTM students. Make the most of your time at LSHTM and attend some of these. Look out for **Inaugural Lectures** (lectures given by those who have become full professors) and the **Global Health Lecture series** on Monday evenings during term, covering a wide range of topics, as well as research seminars. Many lectures are live streamed and recorded.

LSHTM week – Held in mid-September each year. A major networking event for staff and RD students with a wide range of seminars and activities. In September 2019 a "Dragon's Den"-style event was won by a PhD student, allowing him to take his PhD research to the next stage.

Poster Day – This is an annual event where students present their research in progress on a poster. All students are expected to do this at least once during their programme. Each Faculty awards prizes to the best posters, and there is also a "People's Prize" to allow you to vote for your favourite poster. There is a 'Presenting a Research Poster' session in the Transferable Skills Programme which you are strongly recommended to take.

Upgrading/Review Seminars – This milestone in the RD journey is an opportunity to present to the LSHTM community and receive feedback. You are encouraged to attend other such seminars across the School to get experience before doing your own, and to support your peers.

Pre-viva Seminar – after thesis submission, Research Degree students are strongly encouraged to share their research findings with staff and fellow students at an open departmental 'pre-viva' seminar, which will be publicised within the School; you may invite a wider audience at your (and your supervisors') discretion. A pre-viva seminar provides very helpful preparation for the viva examination, as it will generate a range of questions and give you practice in formulating answers.

Note: *The pre-viva seminar is **not** part of the viva examination process. Therefore, it should **not** be scheduled on the day of the viva examination, nor should the examiners be invited to attend.*

External Conferences – These provide an invaluable opportunity to network with the wider research community in your area and for you to present to an external audience. Funding is sometimes available at Faculty/Department level to support this – please check with your FRDM/A in the first instance.

Event Organisation – Students are encouraged to organise social activities and research events. Students can discuss ideas with their Faculty Research Degrees Committee and the Student Representative Council.

RD Student Reps – Each Department has one or more research student representatives. See [Key contacts](#) on the website to see who they are. They attend Faculty research degree committees (once per term), along with various School-level committees where issues relevant to research degree students are discussed. All are invited to attend meetings with the Head of Doctoral College at least once per term. These are key roles facilitating a two-way flow of information and helping the School improve its provision for Research Degree students. Student reps organise social events for the students across the year, some events are managed by the reps, and some can be instigated by other students with input from the student reps. These events give students an opportunity to meet other students. Every Research Degree student is encouraged to stand as a student representative, and to organise and attend social events for their fellow students. The student reps run a [RD student newsletter](#) which is full of information on events of various types.

Student profiles – Please complete your [student profile](#), giving you a presence on the LSHTM website, and making it easier for others to find you.

16. PUBLISHING

Many journals charge for publishing, particularly for open access, and some funders insist on open access publication.

LSHTM Library manages the Charity Open Access Fund (COAF) and UKRI Block Grant, to help pay open access fees for research projects funded by the UKRI and the Charity Open Access Fund partners (including Wellcome Trust, British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK). If you are funded by these bodies you can apply to the Library to fund gold open access from these funds, and they will confirm eligibility and availability of funding. Funds should be available for Wellcome Trust for original research articles. Other students should check whether their supervisors have access to any suitable funding.

Some journals have waiver schemes available to those without other funding, especially authors from low-income countries (see the [library website](#) and [open access guidance](#))

In all cases it is essential to find out the situation before submitting an article.

17. TEACHING AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Teaching opportunities – There may be opportunities for paid teaching at the School. These are dependent on the needs of the Faculties and support required for taught courses. Students who wish to teach will need to undertake relevant training via the [Doctoral Transferable Skills Programme](#) and should contact their Faculty Taught Programme Director to find out what is available. The Taught Programme Directors are Melanie Morris (for EPH), Hannah Babad (for PHP) and Laith Yakob and Vanessa Yardley (for ITD). The move to online teaching during COVID-19 has increased opportunities to be involved. See the website for details on how to find [teaching opportunities](#) and what you need to do before you teach.

Training for Teaching – Training for teaching is included in the [Doctoral Transferable Skills Programme](#) and should be done before you do any teaching. Research students can also attend the Talent & Educational Development programme workshops on ‘Small Group Teaching’ and/or ‘Distance Learning Tutoring’. You will usually be encouraged to shadow an experienced teacher in your first session.

STEM Ambassadors Scheme – This is a national scheme coordinated by Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Network. Some students act as role models and provide lessons/extra-curricular activities for school age pupils.

Public Engagement – for information on public engagement training, support and funding opportunities available at LSHTM and elsewhere.

There is also the [Cheltenham Science Festival](#), which is open to researchers at RD level and higher and aims to find and nurture scientists with a flair for communicating to public audiences. Heats usually run November to February around the UK.

18. USEFUL READING AND OTHER RESOURCES

The best preparation is to talk to other students and attend upgrading and pre-viva seminars so you know what to expect.

You can also attend **Doctoral College Seminars**, which provide an opportunity to hear about and discuss key topics relevant to RD students, including '*the upgrading/review*', '*the viva*', '*getting your work published*', '*accessing funding*', and many others. These run several times a term, and recordings and slides are posted to the [DC Seminars page](#).

Guides to Research Degrees

- Petre M, Rugg P. The unwritten rules of PhD research. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2010.
- Phillips EM, Pugh DS. How to Get a PhD: A Handbook for Students and their Supervisors. 6th ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2015.
- Kearns H & Gardiner M. The Seven Secrets of Highly Successful Research Students. <https://www.ithinkwell.com.au/bookshop/the-seven-secrets>. (see also other books and articles on their website)

Writing guides

- Bailey S. Academic writing: a handbook for international students. 4th ed. London, New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Goodson P. Becoming an academic writer. Los Angeles: Sage, 2013.
- Borga A. How to prepare a manuscript for international journals. Elsevier [blog](#) [2014].
- Murray R. Writing for Academic Journals. 2nd edition Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2009.
- Oliver P. Writing Your Thesis. 3rd ed. London: Sage, 2014.

The Viva

- Murray, R. How to survive your viva: defending a thesis in an oral examination. 3rd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press; 2015.
- Smith P. The PhD viva: how to prepare for your oral examination. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.