



ROYAL HOLLOWAY
University of London

Mathematics Department

Staff Guide to PhD Student Supervision
2006-07

October 2006

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1 Introduction

This *Guide* is designed for use by all supervisors, and prospective supervisors, of PhD students in the Department of Mathematics.

This part of the *Guide* serves as an introduction to the entire document. It contains a review of the scope and purpose of the document, general background information, and an overview of the contents of each of the main sections.

1.1 Scope and purpose

The main purpose of this document is to outline the main duties of the supervisor of a PhD student within the Royal Holloway Mathematics Department¹. Much of the information is of a general advisory nature, but there are also specific rules and regulations which must be followed. It is important to note that this *Guide* is not intended to replace any of the formal regulatory documents published by the college and the university (see also section 1.3 below).

This document refers almost exclusively to PhD students. However, this *Guide* is also intended to apply equally to the supervision of MPhil students, including both students wishing to study for a PhD who are initially registered for an MPhil (see also section 4.5), and students who only intend to complete an MPhil degree.

1.2 Roles and responsibilities

The *Director of Graduate Study (DoGS)* is the member of staff within the Mathematics Department with overall responsibility for PhD student admissions and the overall administration of PhD students. Each research student has a *Supervisor*, who is responsible for the student's research programme, and an *Adviser*, who can advise on academic and welfare matters. For a full statement of the responsibilities of the supervisor and adviser see the College's *Code of Practice* (see section 1.3).

As discussed above, the main purpose of this document is to focus on the role of the PhD student supervisor, although a brief section is devoted to the role of the adviser.

1.3 Background information

All PhD supervisors are expected to make themselves familiar with the relevant regulations and codes of practice. It is important to note that the examination of PhD students is managed by the University of London, according to university regulations. It is therefore important for supervisors to be aware of both the college and the university regulations, as well as the college Code of Practice.

The College's *Academic Regulations* are available at:

http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Registry/academic_regulations/

The College's *Code of Practice for the Academic Welfare of Postgraduate Research Students* can be found at the same location.

¹ Note that this includes students registered both for Mathematics and for Information Security. That is, this *Guide* is intended for use by all members of staff of the Mathematics Department, including those who are members of the Information Security Group.

The University of London Regulations for the Degrees of MPhil and PhD are available at:

http://www.london.ac.uk/research_degrees.html

1.4 Structure of document

This document has the following main sections.

- This first section is introductory in nature and introduces the purpose and scope of the *Guide*.
- Section 2 covers the process by which a prospective student applies for, and is offered, a place to study for a PhD in the Mathematics Department at Royal Holloway, University of London.
- In section 3, the processes involved in admitting a new student are described, including the induction process and training. Note that whilst training is covered in this section, training is something applicable to PhD students throughout their time at Royal Holloway.
- This is followed by the central part of the document, namely section 4 on student supervision. A variety of topics related to day to day supervision and monitoring of PhD students are covered.
- The final main part of this document, section 5, is concerned with the completion of a PhD degree, including the submission and examination of the thesis.
- An appendix is also provided, giving specimen copies of forms relevant to the PhD supervisory process.

1.5 Availability of this document

This document is available both in hard copy form (ask the DoGS for a copy) and electronically at:

<http://www.isg.rhul.ac.uk/~cjm/DoGS/SGPSS.pdf>

The document will be updated at regular intervals; however, hard copies of updates will not be routinely distributed. The electronic version will be kept up to date.

1.6 Errors in this document

This document no doubt contains many errors and omissions, for which the author apologises in advance. All suggestions for improvement should be sent to the DoGS.

2 The PhD application process

In this section we examine the process by which a prospective student applies for a place to study for a PhD in the Mathematics Department.

2.1 *Informal enquiries*

It is not unusual for a prospective PhD student to make informal enquiries to a member of staff before making a formal application. Indeed, such enquiries are routinely received by the DoGS, and it is sometimes appropriate for the DoGS to recommend that the potential applicant discusses possible research areas with members of staff before making a formal application.

If a member of staff receives such an informal approach, it is strongly recommended that you are polite and encouraging – often, even if you do not wish to supervise the potential student yourself, other members of staff may wish to do so. As a result it is generally desirable to encourage enquirers to make a formal application, unless he/she is obviously completely unsuitable (e.g. if he/she wishes to work in an area in which we have no expertise). When suggesting to enquirers that they make a formal application, please do direct them to the relevant web sites providing further information on the application process, notably the ISG and departmental web sites at:

<http://www.isg.rhul.ac.uk/phd/>

and

<http://www.ma.rhul.ac.uk/prospective/phd.html>

(whichever is most appropriate), and the college web site at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/graduate-school/pages/prospective.html>

If the enquirer would like further advice on the application process, please ask him or her to contact the DoGS.

If you feel it would help, by all means invite a prospective student for informal discussions about an application, either before or after the individual has made a formal application. However, if you do take this step, please do let the DoGS know, e.g. by email.

2.2 *Making an application*

Every prospective PhD student needs to make a formal application before he/she can be considered for a place on our PhD programme. The application form is available electronically, either as a pdf file, or as an online process. As above, please refer interested students to the relevant college web page:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/graduate-school/pages/prospective.html#Applying>

Again as mentioned above, further subject-specific information on the application process is available at

<http://www.ma.rhul.ac.uk/prospective/phd.html>

and

<http://www.isg.rhul.ac.uk/phd/>

(whichever is most appropriate). Finally, more general information about the College's Graduate School, including information on funding and training opportunities, are available at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/graduate-school/>

Note that, as discussed in more detail in section 4.8 below, PhD students can join on a full-time or a part-time basis. The requested status should be indicated on the application form. With the permission of the supervisor, students may change between full-time and part-time in either direction at any time.

2.3 Handling applications

The procedure for handling Ph.D. applications is as follows.

1. Applications are submitted to the college. Shortly after an application has been received, a copy will be sent to the departmental office. It is then passed to the DoGS for an initial review. If the applicant is obviously unsuitable for a Ph.D., or if the subject area of interest to the applicant is outside of those topics in which we have expertise, the DoGS will arrange for the application to be rejected immediately.
2. If the applicant appears to be a possible candidate as a PhD student, the DoGS will fill out a copy of the *Department of Mathematics, PhD Application* form (see the Appendix), adding in the names of potential supervisors for the student. This list of names will be based on knowledge of staff member research interests and the expressed interests of the student. As a general rule, the policy will be to try to ensure that no-one misses seeing the details of a student in whom he/she may be interested. As a result members of staff may receive a few applications that they can immediately reject. It is hoped that this will not be too great a burden. If this becomes a problem then it is up to the member of staff concerned to let the DoGS know, so that the DoGS can try to ensure that the staff member concerned receives less forms to consider. The one exception to this is if the student has indicated on the application form with whom the student would like to work. In such a case the form will go only to the names indicated (at least in the first instance).
3. The departmental form and the application details will then be circulated to all listed members of staff. In general, members of staff should try to handle applications as promptly as possible; ideally it should not take more than 5-10 minutes to make a decision. All we are asking is for an indication of whether or not you would be willing to supervise the student. However, where relevant, comments would help – e.g. if you are very keen, or if you are only prepared to take the student if he/she gets a distinction in a masters degree that the student is currently taking. Note that your decision should not be related to whether or not the student has the necessary funding– it is the student's own responsibility to arrange funding, and your decision should be made purely on academic grounds.
4. At this point you may decide that you are possibly interested, but that you wish to first interview the student. In such a case please first contact all the other potential supervisors on the form (except those who have already indicated that they are not interested) so that you arrange an interview date suitable for them. This should ideally allow all interested parties to talk to the potential student at the same time. **Please contact the student directly** to make the interview

arrangements; the **DoGS does not need to be directly involved in this**, although it would be of help if the DoGS and the departmental office could be informed of such arrangements (it is often helpful to introduce potential students to the DoGS during any visit to clear up any administrative questions).

Of course, arranging a face to face interview will typically only be feasible for a student who is UK based; however, telephone interviews for overseas students are recommended. After an interview, and before returning the form to the departmental office, please ensure that all potential supervisors have had the chance to view the application and complete the form. Also, if you have interviewed the student, then please add a summary of the interview on this form (in the comments section). If you need more room just write on the back.

5. Once the form has been returned to the departmental office it will be passed to the DoGS, who will then make a decision as to whether or not the student should be made an offer (possibly conditional on results for an ongoing course). If the student is to be made an offer, the DoGS will also try to decide who the supervisor and adviser will be; this will be a provisional decision, and can always be changed later. The DoGS will, of course, only allocate a student to a member of staff if that staff member has ticked the 'willing to supervise' box on the form! If two or more staff members have ticked the 'willing to supervise' box, then the DoGS will consult with all the relevant staff members to come to a consensus decision as to who should be allocated the student (the possibility of joint supervision of students is something that can be explored in cases where it seems appropriate). Similarly, the DoGS will only normally allocate a student to an adviser after discussing it with them.
6. If a provisional decision to make an offer has been made, then, before making it official, the nominated supervisor will be asked to discuss the potential student with another member of staff. If both agree that it would be appropriate to take this individual as a research student, then they should sign the bottom of the *PhD Application* form (where indicated). Any Mathematics Department academic can perform this reviewing role. This would normally be the supervisor's probation advisor for those on probation; otherwise it would normally be someone with close research interests to the PhD topic. (It is important to note that the reviewer plays a similar role to peer review of a lecture or appraisal; it is not an authorisation in any sense.) The supervisor will also be required to sign the appropriate college form to indicate his/her willingness to supervise the student.

2.4 Making an offer

Once a decision has been made, the DoGS will inform the departmental office. The college will be informed, and an appropriate formal offer letter then will be sent to the applicant.

If the decision is positive, i.e. we have decided to make an offer, then the DoGS will send an email directly to the applicant informing them that the department has agreed to recommend to the college that an offer be made (together with any conditions that we might request are made on the offer). This wording makes it clear that we are only recommending that an offer be made, and that the college has the final decision over offers. This distinction is important, since the college has the authority to make an offer, and not the department.

The email sent to the applicant will contain the names of the provisionally allocated supervisor and adviser. This email will also be copied to the provisional supervisor and adviser. This will enable members of staff to keep track of how many offers have been made to potential supervisees. Of course, not all students to whom offers are made will turn up; historically, the ‘conversion ratio’ is much less than 50%.

Note that, despite what it says on the college web pages, we are normally prepared to allow PhD students to start at any time during the year (although, for students that you are supervising, you can ask that extra conditions be imposed with regard to the start date – e.g. if you are going to be away at a certain time). Of course, starting at the beginning of the academic year is preferable for a number of reasons, including attending college and departmental induction events, attending training courses, and accessing taught BSc and MSc courses which may be of use to new students.

2.5 Funding

Funding opportunities for PhD students are generally very limited. This section contains a brief summary of the main sources of funding for PhD students in the Mathematics Department – however, more detailed information on sources of funding is available at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/graduate-school/pages/prospective.html#Funding>

Within the Mathematics Department (including the ISG) there are three main sources of funding over which we have direct control.

- *EPSRC studentships*: These are administered as part of what is known as the *Doctoral Training Account (DTA)*. At the time of writing (September 2005) this account contains sufficient funds to fully support two new full-time PhD students every year. The precise number of students funded will vary, as it is possible to carry forward funds from one year to the next, and/or ‘borrow’ money against future allocations. The amount of available funds will also vary since, whenever a staff member holds an EPSRC research grant, a small additional amount of money will be provided in the DTA.

A full EPSRC studentship will pay all fees and also provide a tax-free stipend to the recipient for a period of up to three years (three years being the norm). The value of this stipend varies from year to year – for details see information regarding *Postgraduate Training* at the EPSRC website at:

www.epsrc.ac.uk

The available studentships will normally be allocated in July by the DoGS to the best qualified (and eligible) PhD applicants who are holding offers². There is no need for students to apply for these awards, as the DoGS will consider all eligible students. However, if you feel that an eligible applicant is particularly outstanding, please do remind the DoGS! Note that, to be eligible for a studentship, the student must have been resident in the UK for three years prior to starting the degree. If the student is an EU citizen, then this three-year residence period may include time spent as a full-time student in the UK; however, for non-EU students, time spent as a student does

² Note that this means that all students wishing to be awarded an EPSRC studentship must first apply for a place on our PhD programme. Indeed, this applies to students wishing to apply for any of the sources of funding of which I am aware. In general, always strongly encourage interested parties to make a formal application for a place on our programme.

not count towards the residency period. In recent years the vast majority of EPSRC awards have been allocated to UK students.

- *College and Thomas Holloway Studentships*: Every year the department is awarded a certain (small) number of *College* and *Thomas Holloway Studentships*. The exact number of awards is not fixed, but at the time of writing (September 2005) the Mathematics Department (including the ISG) has one Thomas Holloway Studentship and two College Studentships to allocate to new PhD students each year.

The value of these studentships is as follows:

- *College Studentship*: Home fees only;
- *Thomas Holloway Studentship*: Home fees together with a tax-free bursary of around £6000 per annum (although the precise amount will vary from year to year).

These studentships are normally valid for three years.

The available studentships will normally be allocated in July by the DoGS to the best qualified (and eligible) PhD applicants who are holding offers. Exactly as for the EPSRC studentships, there is no need for students to apply for these awards, as the DoGS will consider all eligible students. However, as before, if you feel that an eligible applicant is particularly outstanding, please do remind the DoGS! All students are eligible for these studentships unless they also hold an award from the EPSRC.

- *Studentships associated with research grants*: In addition to the EPSRC and College/Thomas Holloway studentships, it is not unusual for research grants to include funding for one or more PhD studentships; indeed, applicants for EPSRC funds are encouraged to consider applying for such funds in addition to (or in place of) funds for post-doctoral researchers. In such a case, the grantholder will clearly make the final decision regarding who should receive the studentship, and in such circumstances it will normally be necessary to advertise any such positions.

Although allocation of such funds remains under the control of the grantholder, it would be extremely helpful to let the DoGS know as and when such studentships become available.

In addition to the above, there are a huge variety of other possible sources of funding for PhD students, although they are typically outside the control of members of the department. Of particular importance are the following.

- *Royal Holloway Scholarships*³: These scholarships are worth an amount similar to that provided by an EPSRC studentship (the main difference being that all students are eligible). They are awarded by the college directly, and the department has little or no control over the award of these scholarships. Prospective students must make a formal application for these scholarships (after applying for a place), as detailed on the college web pages. These awards are very limited in number, and only very well-qualified students stand much chance of getting one.
- *The ORS awards scheme (ORSAS)*: The government provides a limited amount of funding every year to pay the difference between home and overseas fees (worth around £7000 per annum at the time of writing – for details see section 2.6 below)

³ Not to be confused with Thomas Holloway Studentships – see above!

for exceptional students from outside the EU. Students must make a formal application for such an award, and they may only apply once they have been offered a place on our PhD programme. Details are given on the college web pages. Note that the college as a whole only receives perhaps half a dozen such awards every year, so only very well-qualified students have any chance of receiving one.

2.6 Fees

All PhD students are liable for fees. There are two main fee rates:

- *Home/EU rates*, for which students must have been resident in the EU for at least three years prior to starting the course (where time spent as a student does not count towards the three years);
- *Overseas rates* – note that these fees are much higher than for Home/EU students.

For current fee levels see the relevant college web page:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/graduate-school/pages/fees.html>

Note that for MPhil and PhD degrees, Information Security students are charged the same fees as Mathematics students. **This does not apply for masters students.**

Finally note that the fee level for part-time students is half that of full-time students. Writing-up students (see section 4.8 below) pay a much reduced fee.

2.7 Record keeping – applicants

The departmental office maintains a file on each PhD student application. A list is also kept of current offers, so that at any time it is possible to check the total number of offers made to prospective supervisees of a particular staff member, and also to review details of individual applications. If information is received regarding an applicant which you think should be kept with the application details, please send a copy to the DoGS (e.g. via email). Detailed information on applicants will be of particular value when it comes to deciding which students should be offered financial support (see section 2.5).

3 PhD students – getting started

This part of the *Guide* is concerned with the procedures that should be followed when a PhD student first starts.

3.1 Registration

All new students must register with the college. This process is not something in which the department or the supervisor is directly involved. However, if a student arrives and has not registered he/she must be instructed to do so as soon as possible. Until a student has officially registered he or she cannot get a library card, college email address, or any other services provided by the college.

Once a student has registered, he/she is entitled to a library card and an email address (the latter must be obtained by applying at the Computer Centre). Only once the student has an email address can he/she be enrolled within the departmental computer system.

3.2 Induction week

During induction week, all PhD students starting at the beginning of an academic year should attend two induction meetings (and probably much else besides). The college runs an induction meeting for all new PhD students, to which new students will be invited by the college. Within the department, the DoGS will set up a separate induction meeting, typically on the Friday lunchtime of induction week. All new students are invited, together with as many as possible of the supervisors and advisers of the new students.

At this meeting the DoGS provides a range of information to the new PhD students, together with two forms for each student to fill out, as follows.

- A *Departmental Induction Form*, which all students should fill out at the meeting and return to the DoGS. This form just contains basic information about the student, including email address and college number.
- A *Training Log Form*, which each student should fill out in consultation with his/her supervisor, preferably at their first meeting (see section 3.3 below). This form records the student's training needs, and should be reviewed at the first annual review meeting (see section 4.4 below).

Copies of both forms are provided in the appendix to this document.

3.3 Initial meeting with supervisor

An initial meeting between student and supervisor should be arranged as soon as possible after a new student arrives. Every supervisor has his/her own style of managing the development of his or her research students, but it is strongly recommended that at the first meeting (or one of the first meetings) certain general advice and instruction is provided to every student. This should include the following.

- The supervisor and student should agree on an initial focus for the research work of the student. This might typically involve reading around a particular focussed research topic. It is useful to bear in mind that at some point towards the end of the second term, every new student will be required to give a presentation on a topic covered in this initial work (see section 3.5 below). Commonly this is the result of

this initial piece of research work. Ideally this initial piece of work should involve extensive use of document searching and retrieval facilities, including those offered by the library and also the various online systems to which access is available.

Every student should be very strongly encouraged to attend all the departmental seminar and workshop series that have some relevance to the research being conducted. Moreover, the student should be encouraged to attend all seminars in a series, even if some are not really directly related to the student's work. There would appear to be general agreement that attendance and participation in research seminars is a vital part of the research development of every student. It also greatly helps every student become part of the research student community, which is in itself a very valuable part of the student experience. By and large, successful students do best when they help each other.

It is also worth making special mention of the research student only seminar series run within the department. All students should be encouraged to take an active role in both attending and giving seminars attended only by their peers. This is another important step in the student development process. (Note that, if help is required in establishing a new series of student-only seminars for a particular range of topics, the DoGS should be consulted).

- The supervisor and student should make any necessary arrangements about routine research meetings. For example, if the supervisor operates an appointment system, then the student should be told how this works. In general, the department encourages an informal relationship between students and staff, and students should feel that they are an important and valued part of the research life of the department.
- The supervisor and student should discuss the training needs of the student – if a student has special training needs not catered for by the college or departmental training activities then the DoGS should be informed to see if special arrangements can be made. In general, all students should also be encouraged to take full advantage of the broad range of training opportunities provided by the college (see also section 3.4 below).
- The student should be introduced to his/her adviser as soon as possible during the academic year, and also encouraged to go and see the adviser if, for any reason, there are problems that cannot be resolved by the supervisor (or just if a second opinion is required).
- The student should be encouraged to discuss academic and study problems with other members of staff (particularly the adviser and the DoGS). The student should also be encouraged to pass any issues on to the PhD student representative on the departmental staff-student committee. This representative provides an anonymous channel for issues that need to be addressed by the department.
- The supervisor should check that the departmental induction form has been completed by the student and returned to the DoGS. (This only needs to be mentioned if the student has not attended the departmental induction meeting at the start of academic year).

3.4 Training

At your initial meeting with a new PhD student, the supervisor and student should jointly complete a *Training Log Form* for the student (an example is given in the

appendix). As discussed in section 3.3 above, this form should be used to identify the training needs of the student.

As a fundamental part of the first year training, and in addition to the range of courses provided by the college, every student will be expected to produce at least one substantial report on his/her work, and to give at least one presentation; of course, all students should be encouraged to take an active role in seminars from the earliest possible point.

As part of the first year development, every student should learn how to use a suitable document preparation system. In the past most students have been strongly encouraged to learn the use of LaTeX at an early stage, in that this system is particularly suitable for preparing academic documents. In parallel with this, students should develop skills in writing academic papers and the delivery of seminars and research presentations.

The college provides a wide range of training courses as part of the *Research Development Programme* (RDP). All students are required to participate in this programme. Full details of the courses on offer as part of this programme (which are designed to cover the needs of students at every stage of the research, not just first year students) are available at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/graduate-school/pages/rdp.html>

All courses provided as part of the RDP may be booked electronically using the above website.

The precise details of the RDP courses will vary, and students should be encouraged to consult the site regularly. At the time of writing, courses are available on the following topics:

- Managing your research;
- An introduction to Information Services;
- Communicating your research;
- Creativity, motivation and personal effectiveness;
- Preparing for the viva;
- Academia, research and beyond – preparing for your future career;
- Managing your stress levels;
- Directing creativity;
- Facing the media.

Short courses are also arranged by the Department of Information Services. Details of these are available at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/information-services>

The Graduate School also provide an online discussion forum for research students to exchange ideas, questions, and so on. This is available at:

<http://discussion.rhul.ac.uk/>

Finally, the department runs a significant number of advanced (masters level) courses in both Mathematics and Information Security. All students should be encouraged to

attend any courses which are likely to be of assistance to their research. Similar remarks apply to undergraduate courses.

3.5 First year student presentations

Every year, at some point before the beginning of the third term, the DoGS will arrange a day (or days) at which all first year PhD students will be expected to give a presentation of 30 minutes or so (including questions). All supervisors and other PhD students are encouraged to attend and take part, in what is typically a very rewarding experience for all concerned. The subject of the talk is a matter to be agreed by the student and supervisor, although it would typically relate to work undertaken during the first few months of the student's time at Royal Holloway.

As well as being invaluable experience for the student, this talk is a key step in the progression towards transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD (see section 4.5).

4 Supervision of PhD students

The discussion in this section is concerned with matters relating to the day to day supervision of PhD students.

4.1 *General remarks*

Within the Mathematics Department we have always sought to operate an ‘open door policy’, in which students are encouraged to see their supervisors as and when they wish. Students and supervisors should meet frequently at seminars, short courses, morning coffee breaks, etc., and if this occurs then it is easy for progress to be monitored. Historically we have found that this system encourages independent, self-motivated, original research.

A detailed list of the obligations of supervisors towards their research students is provided in the Code of Practice (see section 1.3).

Please note the particular importance of the 4-year registration limit for all full-time PhD students, applying to all students registering on or after September 2006 (see also section 5.1).

4.2 *Supervisory meetings*

Historically, formal appointments for meetings between students and supervisors have not been necessary; however supervisors and students may, if they prefer, organise scheduled meetings. In any event, students are strongly encouraged to meet their supervisors frequently on an informal basis; typically the frequency of such meetings is between once a week and once every two or three weeks (not counting social encounters). It is incumbent on us all to encourage research students to meet their supervisors regularly to discuss their work, and also discuss any other problems that may arise. Students often get ‘stuck’, and a supervisor can often help students get past obstacles which may otherwise completely stop their progress.

Apart from the routine informal meetings, there is a college requirement on all supervisors to meet their students formally from time to time. The departmental policy is that there should be (at least) four formal meetings between supervisor and student in every academic year. Three of these meetings will typically take place at the end of each academic term, and the annual review (typically occurring in September of each year) will constitute the fourth meeting.

These formal meetings should result in the production of a set of minutes, listing all actions agreed by supervisor and student. The minutes should also record any other matters of significance agreed in the meeting. The minutes should normally be produced by the student after the meeting, and then emailed to the supervisor for checking. It is important that the minutes be an agreed record of the meeting, and that copies are kept by both supervisor and student.

4.3 *Ongoing student development activities*

It is, of course, vitally important that students continue to develop their research skills throughout their time at Royal Holloway. Research skills here covers not only the ability to perform research itself, but also associated skills such as the ability to write

coherent, sound and well-structured academic papers, the ability to present (and defend) their research in public forums, and so on.

There are many ways in which these skills can be developed, both by individual supervisors, and by the department and college as a whole. In the latter category fall the variety of training courses offered by the college (see section 3.4 above), which students should be strongly encouraged to take full advantage of. Nevertheless, it is important to appreciate that the supervisor remains the primary source of training for every student.

There are a number of things that all supervisors can do to support the development of their research students, over and above the normal discussions of research which take place during routine informal meetings between student and supervisor.

- Supervisors should strongly encourage student to attend departmental seminar series and discussion groups – students are normally expected to attend all relevant seminar series, including individual lectures which may not seem directly relevant to their research.
- Supervisors should strongly encourage students to write up and publish their results in a timely fashion (see also section 4.10). Of course, as with writing the thesis itself, students will typically need detailed advice from their supervisor on style and presentation of material, which may involve reading and providing detailed comments on many drafts of a paper.
- Ideally all students should attend one or more national and/or international research conferences during their time with us. These conferences enable students to meet workers in their research field from other institutions worldwide, and are a very important source of inspiration and information. Some funding may be available to help with such activities, in particular if the student has had a paper accepted at the conference. The student should discuss his/her rationale for attending the meeting with you, and if he/she has your support, the student should then approach either the Head of Department or the Director of the ISG (as appropriate), to obtain clearance for Departmental funding.
- The UK Grad Programme (<http://www.grad.ac.uk>) runs residential courses that students have found enjoyable and useful. All students should be encouraged to attend one of these.
- The opportunity arises for some students to get teaching experience by taking tutorials, workshops, and/or computer laboratories, as well as by marking coursework. Such opportunities arise more frequently for Mathematics students.
- Supervisors should endeavour to provide advice on career decisions and on the nature of continued academic work (post-doctoral positions, and so on). Note that career-related courses are available to students as part of the RDP.

4.4 Annual reviews

At the end of each academic year, the progress of every PhD student must be monitored by means of a formal Annual Review of the student. This will involve a formal meeting between the student, the supervisor and the adviser. At the meeting the adviser and supervisor (and anyone else present) should seek to understand the progress the student has made towards the PhD, and provide feedback to the student on progress and future research plans. The discussion at the meeting should be sufficiently detailed to enable the supervisor and adviser to complete the annual review report form (see below).

Whilst the form of the review meeting is up to the supervisor, the following arrangements are strongly recommended.

1. The supervisor should ask the student to prepare a short (e.g. 15-minute) presentation covering the research work he/she has conducted over the past year, what he/she plans to do in the coming year, and also mentioning any training and development activities undertaken by the student. The student should be instructed to give a relatively high level view of his/her work, rather than going into detail. Of course, if the student is nearing the end of the three years, then it would also be reasonable to expect them to present plans for completion of the thesis. This presentation should be given towards the beginning of the review meeting, with the student answering questions from those present.
2. The student should also be asked to produce a short (e.g. two pages) written report covering much of the same ground as the presentation, to be circulated either prior to the meeting or at the meeting itself. Again the student should be prepared to discuss any issues arising from this report during the review meeting.
3. The issue of training needs for the student should be covered during the review. The training activities undertaken by the student should be reviewed, and, where necessary, the student should be encouraged to take those courses in the Research Development Programme relevant to the student and which the student has not previously taken (see also section 3.4 above).

All reviews should be completed by the end of September at the latest.

There are four forms relevant to the Annual Review, examples of all of which are given in the Appendix. Please note that current versions of these forms are available at:

<http://www.isg.rhul.ac.uk/~cjm/Forms.htm>

Copies of the forms should be prepared by the supervisor prior to the Annual Review meeting. If there are any problems in obtaining the necessary forms, please refer to the DoGS.

1. Firstly, and most importantly, an *Annual Review Form* must be completed, signed by all present at the meeting, and returned to the Director of Graduate Studies immediately after the meeting. It is recommended that the student makes a copy both for themselves and for the supervisor's records prior to the form being returned to the DoGS.
2. Secondly, it is also very important that every student should complete a *Student Feedback Questionnaire*. One of these should be given to every student at the time of the Annual Review, and the student should return it to the Mathematics Department office directly. The rate of return of these forms is monitored by the college, and so it is very important that every student should complete and return this form after the Annual Review meeting (if the student has not already done so).
3. Thirdly, where relevant, the supervisor and adviser should discuss the *Transfer of Registration Form*. This form only applies to those students who are currently registered for an MPhil (and almost all new students are registered for an MPhil). For further details of the use of this form see section 4.5 below.
4. Finally, for first year students only, the *Training Log Form* should be reviewed. As mentioned above, this is a form that a new student should complete when first meeting his/her supervisor. At the first annual review meeting the form

should be reviewed and completed, and a copy should be provided to the DoGS (a copy should also be kept by the student).

4.5 MPhil to PhD transfer of registration

As stated in paragraph 26 of the *Code of Practice* – see:

http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Registry/academic_regulations/PGR_Code_of_Practice.html

all research students are registered initially for the degree of MPhil, with the opportunity of transferring to PhD status after one or two years following a formal review of progress. Only when candidates are exceptionally well qualified – for example if the student already hold an MPhil degree – will the College consider initial registration for the PhD degree.

The decision that a transfer of registration is appropriate could be made as part of a student's annual review, or it could be made at a separate meeting. The latter will only normally be necessary when a student is not transferred at the first annual review meeting (and the issue of a possible transfer should certainly be discussed by the supervisor and adviser at the first annual review meeting). In any event, any decision to transfer the registration of a student should only be taken with the agreement of the supervisor and adviser, or a person acting in place of the adviser.

The following conditions should be met by any student who is transferred from MPhil to PhD. These detailed conditions have been agreed within the department; however, they are believed to be consistent with the college regulations and guidelines.

1. The supervisor and adviser should be convinced that the student is capable of obtaining a PhD degree. This decision should take into consideration the work that the student has performed since first registering for the degree.
2. The student shall have given at least one presentation to a general audience on a research topic. This requirement will normally have been met through participation in the First Year Student Presentation Day (see section 3.5 above). Of course, as discussed in section 4.3 above, all students are encouraged to take an active role in departmental seminars.
3. The student shall have completed at least one piece of written work on a research-related topic. Whilst this does not need to be publishable, it should nevertheless relate to possible research directions for the student. Possible examples of suitable piece of work include:
 - a detailed discussion of a research paper, e.g. rewriting the results in the student's own notation and providing some discussion of the research results and possible unsolved problems;
 - a review of a research topic, covering the major published work and highlighting the unsolved research problems;
 - a publishable paper.

If there is agreement that the student merits being transferred to registration for a PhD, then the supervisor should complete and sign a *Transfer of Registration Form* (see also section 4.4 above) and return it to the DoGS. Attached to this form should be a written report, signed by the supervisor and adviser (or other person acting in place of the adviser), justifying the decision to transfer the registration of the student. Note that the

college guidance includes a requirement that the student has demonstrated sufficient proficiency in the English language.

4.6 Role of adviser

As described in the Code of Practice (see section 1.3), the main duties of an adviser are to:

- participate in the annual review process (see section 4.4), and also in the procedure for transfer of registration (see section 4.5);
- where necessary, act in place of the supervisor if the supervisor is absent for any significant period of time.

With respect to the second main duty, the Code of Practice makes specific mention of two situations in which an adviser might be required to act in the place of a supervisor, namely when a supervisor takes a period of sabbatical leave, or if the supervisor leaves the institution. However, in neither of these cases (or in any other case) should it be automatically assumed that the adviser will always 'take over' as supervisor. An adviser shall only be expected to act in place of a supervisor as a short term 'emergency' arrangement, e.g. in the case of supervisor illness, until such time as more permanent arrangements have been made (typically involving the DoGS). For further details of temporary or permanent transfers of supervisory responsibilities, see section 4.9 below.

4.7 Interruption of studies

From time to time it may be necessary for a PhD student to take a break from research. This could arise for a wide range of reasons, including student illness, family problems (including illness of family members), or changes of financial circumstances. In such a case, the student should be advised to seek a period of *Interruption of Studies*. During such a period the student will not be expected to pay fees, but in return should not expect the normal detailed research guidance from the supervisor. Applications for such interruptions will need the support of the supervisor, and supervisors are expected to look upon (genuine) requests sympathetically.

4.8 Student status

Every current research student must be registered with one of the following statuses:

- full-time;
- part-time;
- interruption of studies (see section above); or
- writing up.

(See section 2.6 for a discussion of fees).

Note that, before a student is entitled to transfer to writing up status, he/she must have completed three years as a full-time student or six years as a part-time student (periods spent on interruption of studies do not count towards this total). Because of pressure of space within the department, only full-time students will automatically be entitled to a desk in a shared office. However, space constraints permitting, it is intended that writing-up and part-time students will have access to a shared desk in one of the research student offices.

If a student wishes to change status, then (apart from the relatively routine transfer to writing-up status after three years of registration as a full-time student), the DoGS should be consulted. In any event, the DoGS should be notified by the supervisor of any requested changes of status.

Finally, from time to time students ‘disappear’, or other problems arise with supervision. Supervisors should always let the DoGS know if a student ‘disappears’, or if the supervisor becomes aware of any other problems.

4.9 Changes of supervisor/adviser

There may be a number of reasons for a temporary or permanent transfer of supervisory responsibilities from one member of staff to another. We discuss certain special cases in more detail. However, regardless of the type of transfer (i.e. temporary or permanent) and the reason for the transfer, the student involved shall always be consulted, and should be satisfied with the new supervisory arrangements. Whenever a change of supervisor is agreed, the DoGS should be informed.

Changes of student adviser shall also only be made with the full knowledge and consent of the student. Whenever a change of adviser is necessary, the DoGS should be informed.

4.9.1 Temporary transfers

In the case of a period of sabbatical leave, leave of absence, or any other extended period of absence, a supervisor shall always be responsible for making arrangements for the supervision of his or her research students while he or she is absent. This may, of course, involve the adviser, but this shall never automatically be assumed, and it is up to the supervisor to make all such arrangements before the period of absence commences; the supervisor should also ensure that the student(s) concerned are happy with the arrangements made. Any breaches of such arrangements should be reported immediately to the DoGS and Head of Department.

4.9.2 Permanent transfers

In the case of the departure of a supervisor, wherever possible the supervisor should arrange for a smooth handover of the supervision arrangements before departure. Again, the supervisor shall wherever possible find other members of staff willing to take on supervisory arrangements, as always, in consultation with the student(s) involved.

Permanent transfers of students from one supervisor to another may also arise for other reasons, including the following.

- Students may request to be transferred to another supervisor, e.g. because they have been working with another member of staff on an informal basis and wish to make this arrangement more formal. This is often a natural process, and students should never be discouraged from transferring from one supervisor to another, as long as the new supervisor is happy with the transfer.
- The research interests of a student may change, and as a result a different supervisor may be more appropriate.

4.10 Writing papers

Where a student has made sufficient progress, a supervisor should encourage him or her to write up the results as a paper for publication in a conference or journal. This will, of course, be of value to the student in seeking employment after completion of the Ph.D. degree, and presenting a paper at a conference will also provide a student with invaluable experience in presenting his or her work.

Whether or not the name of the supervisor should be included as an author of a student paper is a matter for the student and supervisor to decide. It is common (although not universal) practice for the supervisor name to be included only when the supervisor has made a significant contribution to the paper – e.g. when a supervisor has done significantly more than give general guidance in writing style and correct minor mistakes. In this connection it is worth bearing in mind that papers can only be included in an RAE submission if the supervisor is a named author.

The question of the order of author names is again something that is at the discretion of student and supervisor. The custom in some parts of the Mathematical Sciences (e.g. in at least some branches of Pure Mathematics) is always to put names in alphabetical order, even when one author has contributed much more than another. However, in other areas (e.g. in much of Computer Science) it is customary to use alphabetical order only when the authors have made roughly equal contributions, and otherwise to put the main author first – in such a case in normal circumstances all papers that a student writes should list his or her name first.

Finally, where relevant, students need to be reminded that the college owns the intellectual property of all research conducted as part of a Ph.D. (unless alternative arrangements have been made, e.g. in the case of industrially sponsored students).

4.11 Record keeping – current research students

The departmental office maintains a file for each current PhD student. This file will contain copies of the original application, the departmental induction form, annual review report forms, and other relevant documentation. Supervisors should feel free to consult such files, particularly prior to annual reviews and/or meetings to discuss transfers of registration.

4.12 Student-staff committee

Liaison between staff and students occurs informally on a daily basis through personal contact and formally through the *Student-Staff Committee*. The Committee consists of two student representatives elected from each undergraduate year group (except that there is only one representative from the fourth year), one taught postgraduate representative, one research postgraduate representative, and staff representatives. It has the wide-ranging brief to discuss any and all matters of interest or concern to students. It normally meets two or three times a term in the first two terms, and once in the final term.

A separate committee exists for the Information Security masters degree.

Photographs of the student representatives, the agenda and minutes of meetings are displayed on the departmental notice board. Items for the agenda should be raised with the research postgraduate representative, who is elected by the research postgraduate student body on an annual basis.

5 Completing the degree

5.1 Limits to the period of registration

As specified in clause 25(c) of the college postgraduate regulations – see:

http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Registry/academic_regulations/Postgraduate_Regulations.html

‘students first registered on programmes leading to the award of PhD in or after September 2006 must submit the thesis for examination within four calendar years of full-time study, or seven years of part-time study, excluding any formal interruptions of studies approved under the provisions of paragraph 26, otherwise their registration on the programme may be terminated under the provisions of paragraph 76’.

Similarly, with respect to MPhil students, it is stated in clause 25(b) that ‘students first registered on programmes leading to the award of MPhil in or after September 2006 must submit the thesis for examination within three calendar years of full-time study, or five years of part-time study, excluding any formal interruptions of studies approved under the provisions of paragraph 26, otherwise their registration on the programme may be terminated under the provisions of paragraph 76’.

How strictly these limits will be enforced remains to be seen, but it would be prudent to assume that they will be very rigorously enforced. This means that, in future, we should very carefully review students who have not submitted after three years, to determine whether the student has a realistic chance of completing within one further year. This review will probably need to include laying out a detailed timetable for completion of the thesis, involving the establishment of a series of firm deadlines and close monitoring by the supervisor.

One possible means by which the four-year deadline can be extended is for a student to apply for a period of interruption of studies – see section 4.7. However, this measure should not be abused or over-used.

5.2 Writing up

Once the student has achieved sufficient research progress, then he/she will need to prepare a thesis reporting on this research. Clearly, an important role of the supervisor is to give advice to the student on when this point has been reached. Of course, in many cases it will not be completely clear whether or not there is sufficient material until the writing up process is well under way – in any event, it is much better for the student to start on the writing up process earlier rather than later. The act of writing up will itself often prompt the student to do the extra work necessary to fill in obvious gaps in the research.

The role of the supervisor in helping a student prepare a well-structured thesis with appropriate content is crucial. Research students often have little idea of how to prepare such a major document. Students should be encouraged to prepare a structure for approval by their supervisor before starting to write the thesis, and should also be strongly encouraged to seek advice from their supervisor during the writing process itself. It is worth pointing out to students that consulting existing theses on related topics is a very worthwhile exercise. Many theses produced by recent PhD students are available as departmental technical reports, and all graduating students should be encouraged to make their thesis available to a wider readership in this way.

5.3 Submitting for the examination

When a student nears the end of his or her studies (typically once he/she has started writing up their thesis in earnest), the student will need to formally enter for the Ph.D. examination. This involves completing certain forms, available from the college registry. The process is described in clause 5 of the Ph.D. degree regulations, available at:

http://www.london.ac.uk/research_degrees.html

Students and supervisors should take especial note of clause 5.3, which states that: ‘The entry form ... must be submitted at least four months before the submission of the thesis’. This means that, if the thesis is nearing completion, the student should enter for the examination as soon as possible.

5.4 Choosing examiners

Two examiners must be appointed by the University of London to examine every student who submits a thesis. Normally, one examiner will be internal to the university and one external. Whilst the formal appointment of examiners is outside the control of the supervisor, he/she is nevertheless required to nominate candidates for these two roles. An examiner nomination form should be completed and submitted to the college registry with the student examination submission forms (see section 5.3).

Formal guidance on the nomination of examiners is available from the University of London website – see:

http://www.london.ac.uk/research_degrees.html

This site also provides a list of the Subject Area Boards to which nominations are sent (the supervisor will be required to specify the appropriate board on the nomination form). A ‘generic’ copy of the nomination form is also available at the above site, although this form should not be used since it lacks college-specific details.

Note that the internal examiner may be from Royal Holloway or from any other college of the university. Note also that neither the internal nor the external examiner should have worked with the student prior to the examination, or have any other significant connection with the student (e.g. advisers should not normally act as an internal examiner).

Before formally nominating the examiners, the supervisor should approach possible examiners informally to see if they are prepared to act. Typically this would involve sending an email with a copy of the draft thesis abstract, so that the potential examiner can see what he/she is being asked to examine. Any such letter must make it clear that the request is an informal one, and that if he/she agrees to act then he/she may or may not be formally invited to act by the university.

New supervisors are advised to speak to the DoGS and/or other experienced members of staff members for advice regarding possible examiners.

5.5 Submission of the thesis

Precise details of the formal requirements for thesis submission are given in the University of London Regulations (see section 1.3). However, at the time of writing, a student is required to submit two copies bound in accordance with the university regulations.

It typically takes several weeks for the submitted copies to reach the two examiners. As a result, it is therefore a good idea for the student to prepare two additional soft-bound copies (which need not be bound in accordance with the regulations) and for the supervisor to send these directly to the two examiners. This will enable the examiners to start reading the thesis earlier (and hence it will probably help to bring forward the date of the examination itself). Note that the student must not make any direct contacts with the examiners prior to the examination.

The supervisor must inform the DoGS when the thesis has been submitted.

5.6 The oral examination

The supervisor is responsible for arranging the oral examination, including negotiating the date and time with the examiners, booking a room in which to conduct the examination, etc. Typically, oral examinations will be held in the department at Royal Holloway. Once a date has been arranged the supervisor must let both the DoGS and the University of London know.

Guidance on the conduct of the oral examination is available at the University of London website:

http://www.london.ac.uk/research_degrees.html

The supervisor may be present at the examination if the student wishes. Past practice in this area varies; some supervisors never attend Ph.D. oral examinations, whereas others always attend. This would appear to be another area where practice appears to depend on the subject area – attending oral examinations appears to be quite common for supervisors in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, whereas it does not appear to be so in Pure Mathematics. If the supervisor is present during the examination, he or she can act only as an observer, and may only speak if requested to do so by the examiners.

It is often useful to give a student the opportunity to have a ‘mock’ oral examination, prior to the real thing, where two members of staff (e.g. the supervisor and adviser) spend an hour or so acting as the internal and external examiners. This will enable the student to get a feel for the types of question likely to be asked, and will also enable the supervisor to criticise any inappropriate aspects of the student’s behaviour.

5.7 After the examination

There are a number of possible outcomes from an oral examination ranging from ‘pass with no changes’ (the best possible outcome), to ‘fail with no possibility of resubmission’ (very rare). In the past, the most common result has been a pass subject to the student making changes and corrections to meet specified points made by the examiners. The supervisor shall inform the DoGS of the outcome of the examination.

If corrections are required, the nature of the corrections, and the methods to be used to verify that the changes have been made in accordance with the wishes of the examiners, will vary. In many cases the external examiner will be happy to let the internal examiner do the necessary checks. In any event, the supervisor should make sure that the instructions to the students are provided in a timely way, and that they are unambiguous. This may require the supervisor to communicate with the examiners after the examination, e.g. if ambiguities arise.

The supervisor should provide guidance to the student during the corrections process; this might typically involve reviewing a draft of the corrected thesis before it is sent to the examiner(s) for final checking.

Appendix – Sample forms

The purpose of this appendix is to provide examples of some of the forms used as part of PhD supervision. The following forms are included:

1. *Department of Mathematics PhD Induction Form*: every new PhD student will be requested to fill in this form on arrival, and a copy will be kept in his or her file held in the departmental office (see section 4.11).
2. *Department of Mathematics PhD Application Form*: a copy of this form is attached to every application and circulated to interested members of staff (see section 2.3).
3. *Postgraduate Research Student Annual Report Form 2005/06*: this report should be completed by the supervisor at the end of the student's annual review.
4. *Transfer of Registration Form*: this form should be completed when the transfer of a research student from MPhil to PhD has been approved.
5. *Postgraduate Student Feedback Questionnaire*: this form should be completed by every research student at the end of every academic year, e.g. at (or around) the time of the annual review; once completed it should be returned to the departmental office.
6. *Research Student Training Log*: this form should be completed by every new PhD student (in consultation with the supervisor), and should be formally reviewed as part of the first annual review for the student. Training needs should be reviewed at every annual review meeting.

Royal Holloway, University of London

Mathematics Department & Information Security Group

Research student departmental induction form

Family name (last name)

Given name (first name)

Email address

URL of personal web page (if available)

Date of registration

Status (*full-time* or *part-time*)

Programme (*Mathematics* or *Information Security*)

Supervisor

Adviser

Student number

Funding source (and reference number if known/applicable)

Department of Mathematics

PhD application

Applicant's Name:

Date Received:

Date Passed to	Potential Supervisor	Tick One	Comments
		Willing <input type="checkbox"/> Not willing <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Willing <input type="checkbox"/> Not willing <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Willing <input type="checkbox"/> Not willing <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Willing <input type="checkbox"/> Not willing <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Willing <input type="checkbox"/> Not willing <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Willing <input type="checkbox"/> Not willing <input type="checkbox"/>	

We have received the attached application for admission to our PhD programme. A preliminary assessment by the Director of Graduate Studies (DoGS) has suggested that you, as one of those listed above, may be an appropriate supervisor. Please consider this application as quickly as possible and indicate whether or not you would be willing to accept the applicant as one your research students. Please make any comments you think appropriate. If you believe another member of staff should or may want to see this application, then please add them to the list. As soon as you have completed your part of the form, please pass it on to the next name on the list and notify Joy (joy.fitzsimmons@rhul.ac.uk) of its whereabouts. If you are the last recipient, please pass it back to Joy when you are done. (A more detailed summary of the procedure for handling PhD applications is given overleaf – see also the *Staff Guide to PhD Student Supervision*).

The procedure for handling Ph.D. applications is as follows. [Note that in the text below Admin. is used as an abbreviation for the member of staff in the departmental office who handles PhD applications – currently this is Joy Fitzsimmons].

1. When an application arrives it goes to Admin., who passes it to the DoGS for an initial review. If the applicant is obviously unsuitable for a Ph.D., the DoGS will ask Admin. to reject the application immediately.
2. If the application looks potentially appropriate, the DoGS will fill out a copy of this form, adding in the names of potential supervisors for the student. This will be based on the DoGS' knowledge of your research interests and the expressed interests of the student. The job of the DoGS is to try to ensure that no-one misses a student in whom he/she may be interested, so you may get a few applications that you can immediately reject (all being well this won't be too much of a burden – if it is then please let the DoGS know, who will try to ensure that you get less forms to consider). The one exception to this is if the student has indicated on the form with whom he/she would like to work. In such a case the form will normally go only to the names indicated (at least in the first instance).
3. This form and the application details will then be circulated. Please try to handle this form as promptly as possible – it should not take you more than 5-10 minutes to make a decision. All we are asking is for you to indicate whether or not you would be willing to supervise the student. However, where relevant, comments would help – e.g. if you are very keen, or if you are only prepared to take the student if he/she gets a distinction in a masters degree currently being taken.
4. At this point you may decide that you are possibly interested, but that you wish to first interview the student. In such a case please first contact all the other potential supervisors on the form so that you arrange an interview date suitable for them (so that all interested parties can talk to the potential student at the same time). Then contact the student directly, and make the interview arrangements (please let Admin. know what is going on). Of course, a face to face interview will typically only be feasible for a student who is UK based; however, telephone interviews for overseas students are, generally, a good idea. After the interview, and before returning the form to Admin., please ensure that all potential supervisors have had the chance to complete their part of the form. Also, if you have interviewed the student, then please add a summary of the interview on this form (in the comments section). If you need more room just write on the back.
5. Once this form has returned to Admin. (all being well she will not need to chase you!) it will come back to the DoGS, who will then make a decision as to whether or not the student should be made an offer (possibly conditional on results for an ongoing course). If the student is to be made an offer, the DoGS will also assign a supervisor (this will be a provisional decision, and can always be changed later), and also who will be the advisor. The DoGS will, of course, only allocate you a student as supervisor if you have ticked the 'willing to supervise' box on this form! If two or more staff members have ticked the willing to supervise box, then the DoGS will consult with all those in this category and attempt to come to a consensus decision as to who should be allocated the student (the possibility of joint supervision of students is something that can be explored in cases where it seems appropriate). Similarly, the DoGS will normally only allocate a student to an advisor after discussing it with him/her.
6. If a provisional decision to make an offer has been made, then, before making it official, the nominated supervisor will be asked to discuss the potential student with another member of staff. If both agree that it would be appropriate to take this individual as a research student, then they should sign the bottom of this form. Any Mathematics Department academic can perform this reviewing role. This would normally be the supervisor's probation advisor for those on probation; otherwise it would normally be someone with close research interests to the PhD topic. (It is important to note that the reviewer plays a similar role to peer review of a lecture or appraisal; it is not an authorisation in any sense.) The supervisor will also be required to sign the appropriate college form to indicate their willingness to supervise the student.
7. The decision will then be put into the college system, which will mean the student will be notified. At the same time, the DoGS will email the student to let them know that he/she is to be made an offer, and the identities of his or her provisionally allocated supervisor and advisor. As a result you should know which students you might eventually get to supervise, and the student will have a contact name for questions about their application. Admin. retains a copy of all application details, if you need to consult them at any time.

Record of decision made regarding this application

Nominated supervisor:

Nominated advisor:

I agree to act as supervisor for this applicant. I am confident that this student is capable of submitting a thesis within four years, and I will endeavour to ensure that this occurs	Supervisor signature:
I confirm that I believe that this student is capable of completing a thesis within four years, and I recommend that an offer be made	Reviewing member of staff:

**Royal Holloway
Postgraduate Research Student Annual Report Form**

This confidential report should be completed by the supervisor at the end of the student's annual review. The supervisor should return the form to the departmental Director of Graduate Studies, together with:

- the student's summary of the work completed during the year;
- a statement of the research training that the student has undertaken during the year.

Department:		Supervisor: Adviser:		
Student name:		Student number:		
Degree for which registered: MPhil / PhD		Date of initial enrolment		
Expected status in 2006/7: Full-time Part-time Writing-up		Expected completion date:		
		Date of annual review:		
Working thesis title:				
Written evidence of progress which was submitted:*				
Dates of supervision meetings:				
Student's performance over the last year	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Some Concerns	Unsatisfactory
Please comment on action being taken to initiate improvements in performance if concern has been noted, or if formal warnings have been/will be issued:				
Research training undertaken/completed:				
Research training planned for next year:				
Signature of student:		Date:		
Signature of supervisor:		Date:		
Signature of adviser:		Date:		

*This should comprise:

- a substantial piece of written work with a full bibliography, together with any other required pieces of work, or a piece of practice-based work relevant to their chosen topic of study;
- an 'annual report' of work done, including evidence of an understanding of the literature (e.g. a literature review or an appropriate piece of written work), with a timetabled research plan for the next year / completion;

A copy of this form should be made available to the student, and a copy placed on the student departmental file. If the upgrade has taken place as part of this annual review, a report on the upgrade interview and the submission should be attached to this form.

Comments from Student:

**Royal Holloway
University of London
Registry**

**TRANSFER OF REGISTRATION AS AN INTERNAL STUDENT
(MPhil to PhD / PhD to MPhil)**

CANDIDATE'S DETAILS

SURNAME.....

FORENAMES.....

FIELD OF STUDY (DEPARTMENT).....

FULL-TIME / PART-TIME / WRITING-UP (Delete as appropriate)

DATE OF INITIAL REGISTRATION.....

DATE OF TRANSFER OF REGISTRATION INTERVIEW/ ANNUAL REVIEW

**MEMBERS OF
PANEL**

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT'S SUBMISSION (e.g. report, oral presentation, thesis plan)
A written report of the transfer of registration review must be attached.

The student named above is recommended for a transfer of registration to the degree of PhD in accordance with University Regulations and the Code of Practice for the Academic Welfare of Postgraduate Research Students (see section 2.4). The student has made satisfactory progress to date, has maintained regular contact with the supervisor(s) and has demonstrated sufficient proficiency in English language. Therefore, given no exceptional circumstances, we expect the student to complete the PhD thesis within the normal registration period.

Where a student is permitted to transfer his / her registration to the PhD degree, such registration may be dated from the date of initial registration for the MPhil degree on request.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR.....

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE..... DATE.....

By signing below we confirm that the transfer of registration referred to above has been formally approved.

HoD's SIGNATURE..... DATE.....

DoGS's SIGNATURE DATE.....

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO DATA MANAGEMENT, REGISTRY, FW114.



STUDENT FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

For postgraduate research students

We are seeking always to improve the educational experience of our students. Please help us by completing this short, anonymous questionnaire, using the space beneath each question to expand on your answer. Responses will be considered within the department, and to demonstrate that we take your views seriously, we will tell the Student:Staff Committee about any changes made in light of your feedback.

Our main aim is to improve the general experience for students in future. If instead you are unhappy about your experience and feel that something needs to be done straight away, you should talk first of all to your supervisor or adviser. You can find further guidance in the Complaints Procedures for Students on the College website.

Department:

Today's date:

	disagree strongly ◀				▶	agree strongly
1. Supervision						
I am satisfied with the quality and quantity of supervision I have received.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	

2. Research facilities and learning resources in the department and elsewhere

I have access to adequate resources to support my research.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
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3. Research and skills training in the department and elsewhere

I have access to adequate training to support me in my research and career.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
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4. Research culture in the department and elsewhere

I benefit from being part of a wider research culture.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
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Please use the reverse side of this questionnaire to expand further on any important issues and to comment on anything not covered in the questions above.

Royal Holloway

Research Student Training Log

In accordance with the Code of Practice, each research student should decide, with their supervisor, a programme of research training for the year.

The student should take this form to his/her supervisor at the start of the research programme and after discussion, note down his/her training needs for the year. The log should be reviewed at the first annual review meeting (or earlier if appropriate) to indicate whether the needs have been met. At the annual review, the supervisor should submit to the Director of Graduate Study a copy of this completed log with the summary annual report form. The student and the Department should both have a copy of this log.

Progress on these training needs should be assessed and recorded at each annual review, indicating whether any remain outstanding, and identifying training needs for subsequent years of study.

Department:	Supervisor:
Student's Name:	Student Number:
Status: Full-time Part-time Writing-up	Start date:
List training needs for the coming year and identify how they will be met:	
Training Need: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	How the need will be met:
Student's signature:	Date:
Supervisor's signature:	Date:

