PGR INDUCTION HANDBOOK

School of
Physics & Astronomy

WELCOME TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Welcome to the School of Physics and Astronomy. We are extremely happy that you have chosen to pursue postgraduate research at our institution. We are proud of the School's history and excited that you will become a part of our continued excellence.

Find out about our School and what we do at our School Website.

Dr Mark Williams
Director of Graduate School

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1. Help and Support during your studies

This handbook and the Graduate School SharePoint site are your first point of contact for information. If you are unable to find information you are looking for, please contact The Graduate School Office (Room 4209) at Gradschool.Physics@ed.ac.uk for assistance. If you notice any broken or out of date links, please let us know.

The University provides support, whatever the problems you are having. If your problems are academic, you should approach your supervisor or assistant supervisor in the first instance. If you don't want to approach your supervisor, then you can contact one of our Pastoral Support team

We are all here to help you during your studies, so please reach out if you need help.

The University's Student Disability and Learning Support Service offers help and guidance for students.

EUSA's Advice Place is a good place for information. They offer free, independent and confidential advice on health, disability issues, finance, accommodation, academic issues and financial and legal matters. You may also be interested in using the free, confidential Student Counselling Service

University Student Services and Support

University Student Health and Wellbeing

Further information on support for students from external providers: Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, togetherall and The Wellbeing Thesis.

2. Arrival procedures/Matriculation

Research students may begin their studies at any time of the year, although September/October is most usual. Regardless of when you arrive, there are certain things you should do as soon as possible. University's Getting Started resources

2.1 Confirmation of Attendance

Meet with the Graduate School Office team Room 4209 JCMB-and meet Nicola or Jude who will confirm your attendance.

2.2 University Registration

All students are required to matriculate and formally register with the University as soon as possible. To register you will need to register online with the University of Edinburgh. You will find further information about the online Registration Process on the Student Support webpage. **This**

registration has to be completed at the start of each year of your programme.

2.3 International Check-In

For students on a Student Visa – an additional step in your matriculation is the International Check In. Please be sure to do this as soon as possible after uploading your passport and visa/BRP to your student record.

UK nationals and students with pre-settled or settled status, need to complete the Confirmation of Attendance and University registration to be fully matriculated. International students will need to complete the International check-in in addition to the Confirmation of Attendance and the University registration to be fully matriculated.

Students who are not fully matriculated run the risk of the University cancelling their registrations as "non attended".

2.4 Meeting Your Supervisor

If you have not already done so, make contact with your supervisor as soon as possible and arrange a meeting to discuss the start of your research programme. You must have regular meetings with your Principal Supervisor. The frequency and structure of these meetings will depend on the details of your project, but good practice is a weekly meeting of 30 – 40 minutes, ideally at a regular pre-scheduled time/location to discuss progress and to set targets and plans for work before the next meeting.

2.5 Getting Your Student Card

For details on how to get your student card and other helpful information, please see the information on the New Students webpages.

2.6 School of Physics and Astronomy Induction

Our mandatory PGR Induction programme **will be held on Monday 2nd September 2024** with details on our intranet Welcome and Induction page.

2.7 Essential Training before starting your Programme

Two training courses that you need to take before starting your PhD. **If you have any questions about the specifics of these courses, please contact the course provider directly rather than the Graduate School**

1) Research Ethics and Integrity an introduction – you will need to undertake the online Research Ethics course.

2) Information Security Essentials and Data Protection Training courses - these courses are available on Learn: https://www.ed.ac.uk/infosec/training

3) Consent on Campus course
The course is about "Consent on Campus" and raises awareness of sexual consent, and ways of keeping the campus safe – which are really important topics.
There is more information about the course here: https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/students/consent?check_logged_in=1
And the course itself is here: https://www.marshallacm.co.uk/ClientScorm/Edinburgh/Consent/scormcontent/index.html#/

2.8 Register with Scottish Universities Physics Alliance (SUPA)

SUPA, the Scottish Universities Physics Alliance, is a community of over 1200 physicists, including academics, research staff and post-graduate students. Launched in 2004, SUPA helped establish Scotland as an international leader in research and post-graduate training.

SUPA students are expected to complete 40 hours of advanced specialist courses and 20 hours of professional development training during the first two years of their studies. Full details about these requirements are available in the course information section of the SUPA website. The courses and their associated materials are held in the online learning environment My.SUPA. Students should enrol in courses via My.SUPA at the beginning of each semester. Register with SUPA at the start of your programme to be able to sign up for courses during your studies.

2.9 Setting up a Bank Account

For EU/EEA and Overseas students, this process is not normally available prior to arrival in Edinburgh unless your branch at home has a relationship with a UK bank. You can only set up an account once you have moved into your accommodation. The New Students page gives full details and instructions on how to open a bank account.

2.10 Council Tax Exemption

As a full-time student, you are exempt from Council Tax. Following matriculation, Student Administration will provide the City of Edinburgh Council with a list of full-time postgraduate students who are resident within Edinburgh. Edinburgh Council will use this list to verify student status with the University of Edinburgh. Edinburgh Council does not automatically grant exemption based on this list alone. You may be required to supply a Certificate of Student Status provided by Student Administration. Council Tax exemption.

2.11 Registering with a Doctor

If you live within the catchment area of the University Health Centre, you can register with them. If you live outside this catchment area you can register with your local GP Practice. NHS Lothian has full information on GP Practices and procedures.

You will be able to use the National Health Service free while you are here as a student, so you should not need health insurance. When you have matriculated, you should register with an NHS doctor and bring any current prescriptions and medical history with you as necessary.

All students studying full-time in Scotland are eligible for NHS treatment. Please note you this will not be the case if you travel elsewhere in the UK: if you intend to do so, you should arrange private health insurance.

International students are required to pay an Immigration Health Surcharge.

2.12 Updating Your Student Record

You can make changes to your student recordhttps://www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/support-guidance/students/change-your-student-record using MyEd.

2.13 Transport and Parking

The University provides information on various forms of transport to get around the city and between KB and the Central Area.

- Transport and Parking Website
- Campus Maps and travel information

3. School Administration

3.1 Graduate School Contacts

Director of Graduate School
Dr Mark Williams m.williams@ed.ac.uk

Graduate School Office – Room 4209 JCMB Gradschool.Physics@ed.ac.uk
Graduate School Manager Gill Law G.Law@ed.ac.uk
Graduate School Administrators
Nicola Ferguson Nicola.Ferguson@ed.ac.uk
Jude Minto jude.minto@ed.ac.uk

Pastoral Support Team

Institute	Contact	Location	Telephone
Astronomy	Trent Dupuy	ROE Stobie 6	(9)668-8351

	Cyrielle Opitom	ROE Stobie 4	(9)668-8350
Condensed Matter and Complex Systems	Andreas Hermann Simon Titmuss	JCMB 2604 JCMB 2504	50-5824 50-5267
Particle and Nuclear Physics	Anton Ilderton Silvia Gambetta Mark Williams Pascal Reiter	JCMB 4401 JCMB 3411 JCMB 3409 JCMB 8209	50-5243 50-5240 50-5286

PG Student Reps/Student Staff Liaison Committee

The PGR-SSLC comprises student representatives, key staff from within the Graduate School, the PPA President and the EUSA School representative.

Information on the SSLC can be found on the Physics and Astronomy Graduate School SharePoint–PGR Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) page.

Staff members at the University of Edinburgh work closely with student reps. Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) coordinates student reps and provides training and support for reps across the University. Reps listen to you to identify areas for improvement, suggest solutions, and ensure that your views inform strategic decisions within the University, building a stronger academic community and improving your student life.

PPA Society (Postgrads in Physics and Astronomy)/ Student Networks

PPA is the society for Postgraduates in Physics and Astronomy
SoPA Student networks

3.2 Other School Contacts

- Key Contacts in the School
- Human Resources
- Equality and Diversity
- Technical and Building Services

3.3 Health & Safety

Report any Estates and Buildings faults to:
Non-Emergency Building Faults
These should be reported to the admin team via email:
admin-general@ph.ed.ac.uk
Emergency Building Faults

These should be reported directly to Neil Wood (Technical Services Manager) wherever possible:Neil.A.Wood@ed.ac.uk 50-5269
Information about the School's Health and Safety (wiki)

3.4 Fire Alarm Test

The JCMB fire alarm is tested each Wednesday morning at 08.55 am. If the alarm goes off at any other time, you **MUST** evacuate the building. All staff and students must familiarise themselves with the location of fire doors and exits, so that they know as many means of escape from the building as possible, and should know the location of their nearest fire extinguishers, fire alarm call points and read the instructions for their use. Exits and escape routes must not be obstructed by the storage of goods, and flammable materials must not be stored in these areas.

4. Absence Administration

4.1 Leave of Absence

Postgraduate Research students may apply for leave to continue their studies away from the University of Edinburgh campus for temporary periods (please refer to the PGR Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study). The Graduate School and College may give authorisation provided such a temporary move does not conflict with any other requirement of the student's programme of study, including any obligations to be physically available for on-campus activity. While a student is on leave of absence, they must remain in touch with their supervisor.
Leave of Absence forms and Checklists

Students need to complete a Leave of Absence Request Form for all requests and a Leave of Absence Checklist for requests of LoA periods from 3 – 12 months' duration.

The Leave of Absence Request Process:

1) Form and Leave of Absence Checklist should be completed by the student
2) Then sent to Principal Supervisor for approval, and then forwarded to the Graduate School for further action.
3) The Graduate School Administrator will forward this to the Director of Graduate School for approval. Supporting information must be attached.

Additional Information for Students on a Visa
The Leave of Absence process is as above with the additional requirements below:

1) Students on a Tier 4 Visa need to complete a Leave of Absence Request Form and a Leave of Absence Checklist for all requests.
2) The Graduate School will forward the LoA Request Form and checklist to College for formal approval.

4.2 Interruption of Studies

It is essential that you keep to an agreed timetable for your studies. If for any reason your research programme is interrupted by illness or enforced absence, **you must inform your supervisor and the Graduate School Administrator**. It may be possible to arrange an official interruption of study, which will then not count as part of your period of registration. This cannot be done retrospectively. If necessary, please complete an Interruption of Studies form .

The Interruption of Studies Request Process:

1) Interruption of Studies form should be completed by the student
2) Then sent to Principal Supervisor for approval, and then forwarded to the Graduate School for further action.
3) The Graduate School Administrator will forward this to the Director of Graduate School for approval. Supporting information must be attached.
4) The Graduate School will forward the LoA Request Form and checklist to College for formal approval.

4.3 Out of Office Tool (OOT)

All PGR students **must** use the Out Of Office Tool (OOT) to record absences from the School. You can find information on the system and how to create an absence on the wiki page
https://oot.ph.ed.ac.uk/index.php/support/ooo
This applies to WFH, sick leave, leave of absence and Interruption of studies and must be used **in addition** to formal applications for these absences.
You will automatically be added to OOT by the Graduate School Administrators when you have been fully matriculated.

4.4 Desk Allocation and Laptop

All students are allocated a desk to work at and the School and all new students are provided with a computer on arrival. Please contact your supervisor to discuss your requirements. Students are based within their institutes, often within groups with related interests or with other students who are at a similar stage in their studies.

4.5 Research Training Support Grant (RTSC)

All PhD student have access to RTSG funding to support their research. This is to cover: conference costs, (attendance fees, travel, maintenance, poster printing etc.), training costs, (course fees, travel to external courses), travel to experiments, research visits to collaborators, research consumables or slam items of equipment and day-to-day Physics stores items. It is generally £4.2k total (or £1200 per annum) but may be larger for CDT/CASE/iCASE studentships and your Principal Supervisor will have the details. This RTSG funding can be used flexibly PRIOR to submission of your thesis. Personalised RTSG account codes will be available from Louise.Alexander@ed.ac.uk within one month of your start date.

4.6 Course Requirements

All students are required to complete 40 hours of technical courses and 20 hours pf professional skills courses. Please see the Graduate School SharePoint page on Course requirements and regulations for more details.

4.6 Teaching

Taking part in the delivery of the undergraduate teaching programme is a normal expectation for all of our PhD students. Teaching will develop and reinforce key skills, both physics-related and more generic, together with providing valuable experience for your CV and professional development. Types of available duties are: workshops, tutorials, computing and laboratories.

5 International Students on a Visa

5.1 Rights, responsibilities and Restrictions

The University of Edinburgh is the sponsor of your UK visa. The University has a number of legal duties to manage our sponsorship of your visa. These include:

- monitoring your attendance on your programme and
- reporting to the Home Office where you suspend or withdraw from your studies, complete them early, fail to register or are repeatedly absent to the point of being excluded from studies.

The terms of your visa require you to, (amongst others):

- Ensure you have a correct and valid visa for studying at the University of Edinburgh,
- Participate in the requirements of your programme, attend meetings with your supervisor
- Observe the general conditions of a student visa in the UK, including studying on the programme for which your visa was

issued, not overstaying the validity of your visa and complying with the work restrictions of the visa.

Please note that any email relating to your sponsorship, will be sent to your **university email address** – you are expected to check your university email address regularly.
Further details on the terms and conditions of your student visa.
Information or advice about your immigration status can be obtained by contacting the Student Immigration Service.

5.2 Monthly Engagement Points

You will be required to meet with your supervisor at least once a month and your supervisor will record your Tier 4 engagement points in EUCLID, the Student Record system.

5.3 Visa Advice

If you have any questions regarding visa or immigration advice, you can contact one of the trained immigration advisors in the Student Immigration Service. As this is a complex legal area, Schools are not permitted to give out any advice regarding visas. Edinburgh Global also have excellent online information on visa extensions.

5.4 English Language Support for International Students (ELSIS)

Free, non-credit bearing courses are available for undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of Edinburgh, whose first language is not English.

6. Regulations and Policies

It is very important that all students and their supervisors should have read both the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students, the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study and the Postgraduate Research Degree Assessment Regulations setting out the University's regulations concerning your candidature. In the case of any appeal, a student is deemed to have read these publications, which are made available to all students on acceptance or registration.

Student Contract

Successful study at University stems from a partnership between students and staff, and the University is committed to providing you with a learning environment and student services, which enable you to fulfil your potential.

6.1 Academic Rules, Regulations, Policies and Procedures & Code of Practice

The University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study set out the structure and content of programmes and courses, along with the degree regulations that apply to them. The Taught Assessment Regulations and Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees set out how assessment operates.
The Code of Practice sets out the University's standards for its research degree programmes.

A to Z List of Policies

6.2 Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism)

Research degrees are awarded in recognition of your own original contributions to knowledge. Research involves new knowledge and ideas and so plagiarism is intellectual theft. Therefore, any plagiarism discovered, either before or after graduation, will be thoroughly investigated by the University according to its set procedures or dealt with appropriately. This can include expulsion from the university or the withdrawal of a degree, if awarded.
University guidelines on plagiarism

6.3 Other University Regulations and Policies

- Student Complaint Procedures
- Academic Appeals
- Academic Misconduct
- Dignity and Respect
- Tuition Fees
- Withdrawal and Exclusion (scroll to bottom of the page)

7. Training

The Graduate School is flexible on the kind of training that may benefit your academic development. We encourage you to discuss which specific training you will follow during the first stages of your PhD with your supervisor.

7.1 Transferable Skills

The University of Edinburgh's Institute for Academic Development (IAD) provides many courses to help you develop transferable skills.

Free IT learning courses and resources for PGR students in the University are available from Information Services.

7.2 Language Courses

Open Languages Courses run by Literatures, Languages & Cultures are available for postgraduate students and are free of charge.

Postgraduate students may be interested to take these courses for their studies, to enhance their employability, or just out of interest in a language.

7.3 Masters Level Courses

To enrol on any of these courses, you need to get your supervisor to approve which classes you are taking and if they are "class only" or will to include the exam and check with the relevant Course Secretary if there are any places available and that you meet any eligibility requirements.

When this has been confirmed, students should send the approved request to Gradschool.physics@ed.ac.uk with details of the course – course code, name and duration/dates of the course and we will enrol you on the course.

See the DPRS for the list of available courses each year.
http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

8. Resources for Research

The Noreen and Kenneth Murray Library collections contain books and journals on mathematics, statistics, physics and computer science. Once you have registered with the library, you will be able to borrow books and journals. See the Information Services webpages for a detailed introduction to the Science and Engineering libraries on the King's Buildings campus.

9. Physics and Astronomy Finance

The School of Physics and Astronomy Finance team can help you with financial queries like student expenses and stipends
Louise.Alexander@ed.ac.uk

10. Computing Services/IT Helpdesk

The IT team will be advised by the Graduate School when you are expected to arrive in the School. Your supervisor will then let the IT team know what computing kit you need and when this is ready for you to collect from the IT Helpdesk, the IT team will email you directly to let you know. Please note that it may take several days from your initial arrival for the kit to be set up and available for you.

Sending an IT support request to the helpdesk is the preferred method for contact.

Contact details
0131 650 5900
Room 2313, JCMB (Mon – Fri 09:00 – 17:00)

Computing Essentials for PhD Students
Summary of key computing-related things that all new PhD students in the School of Physics & Astronomy need to know.

PGR Starter Checklist

Matriculation/Registration

- ☐ Read the University of Edinburgh New Students webpages
- ☐ Activate your Office365 email address and WIFI networks
- ☐ During Welcome Week, Collect your student card
- ☐ Complete student registration (this is required to be completed annually)
- ☐ Send the 98b form from your Welcome Pack to Louise Alexander, Research Finance Officer Louise.Alexander@ed.ac.uk
- ☐ Complete Bank registration if applicable for stipend payments (details in your welcome email)
- ☐ Register with SUPA in preparation for taking courses over the course of your studies.
- ☐ Students on a Visa – Complete International check in
- ☐ Pay Fees – if you are self-funded or funded externally
- ☐ Meet your supervisor to discuss your research project
- ☐ Complete the two essential training courses (see page 4 of this handbook)
- ☐ Read this PGR Induction Handbook and familiarise yourself with the PGR SharePoint pages
- ☐ Check out Welcome Week activities
- ☐ Read Computing Essentials for PhD Students
- ☐ Meet your supervisor to discuss your research project