Welcome to York

Sociology

PGR DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK
2017/18
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The purpose of this handbook

This handbook provides a comprehensive introduction to the department of Sociology and information on all aspects of your studies and research. It is a reference guide to help you and should be kept alongside the York Graduate Research School handbook. The York Graduate Research School handbook can be downloaded from: https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/support/.

The York Graduate Research School (YGRS)

The York Graduate Research School (YGRS) exists to ensure research students receive the highest quality supervision and training, and are treated consistently and fairly. The YGRS coordinates resources from across the University to help research students achieve successful outcomes. The YGRS Board has oversight of all matters relating to research students and leads the strategic development of this vitally important section of the University community. The YGRS webpages (https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/) are the main source of information for research students. The YGRS newsletter provides additional updates. All registered research students should automatically receive this.

University Policy on Research Degrees

The Policy on Research Degrees sets out University policy on research degree programmes for research students, supervisors of research students, members of Thesis Advisory Panels and Progression Panels, examiners of research degrees, and other University staff with responsibility for research students. This document provides vital information for all those concerned with research and it is recommended that all are familiar with it. To read the University Policy on Research Degrees in full, visit: https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/support/policies-documents/research-degree-policy/.

Where to go for more information

The York Graduate Research School handbook provides information on central services and support, including accommodation, finance, living in York and further information on Careers, the Library, and other University services: https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/support/.

Your department

Welcome to your department

The Department of Sociology has an extensive PG programme with five Masters degrees in addition to the PhD programme: the MA in Sociology (by Research), the MSc in Social Media and Management [in partnership with the York Management School] and the MSc in Social
Media and Interactive Technologies [in partnership with the Department of Computer Science]. PhD students are able to audit any MA modules but must register with the Graduate Administrator in order to be able to access online teaching materials.

The Department has internationally recognised research expertise in the areas of:

- Gender, sexualities and equalities
- Science, health and technology
- Language and social interaction
- Culture, Values and Practices

Every PhD student is affiliated to one of the above research clusters. In addition to these broad departmental themes, the work of the Science and Technology Studies Unit (SATSU) focuses more specifically on: science and technology governance; sociology of biosciences; and mobilities. The Anomalous Experience Research Unit (AERU) was established in the summer of 2006 to research into the contexts, characteristics and consequences of experiences which suggest anomalous psychological processes and agencies, and exceptional states of consciousness. Other recent research groups which have been established are the Centre for Urban Studies (Curb) and the European Centre for Cultural Exploration (ECCE). ECCE is a European research centre seeking to put culture at the centre of public debates and academic research. CURB focuses on ‘majority-urban’ centres (the kinds of urban settlement where most people live) of all sizes to provide a space for discussion, action and research to inform and improve places for people. The Department also has strong links with the Centre for Women’s Studies.

We offer research training and supervision for higher research degrees in any of these areas, as well as in some of the more specialised fields of research being pursued by individual members of the department.

We currently have approximately 80 registered graduate students (including students on the Department’s MA and MSc degrees).

Further information about the Department’s research can be found on our departmental web pages: [http://www.york.ac.uk/sociology](http://www.york.ac.uk/sociology)

**Introduction to the department**

You are now a member of the Department of Sociology. The department is made up of academic staff involved in teaching and research, support staff and students.

Academic staff - may have the title Professor, Reader or Lecturer. They are leaders in their fields and engaged in teaching and research. Most will supervise research students and some also hold certain key administrative roles within the Department.

Research staff - members of staff employed to conduct research projects within their field of expertise. They may not be involved in teaching or supervision, instead concentrating on their research projects.

Support staff – making the department run smoothly. They communicate important information, provide technical assistance and help signpost you to other services and support you might need within the University.
Students – PGR students are active members of the departmental research community. Every PhD student is expected to participate in the PGR committee, which takes place once a term. Student reps will attend other departmental committees, including the Board of Studies, the Departmental Teaching Committee (for PGWT) and the Departmental Research Committee.

**Departmental office**

The Department of Sociology is situated on the first and second floors of Wentworth College, on the main campus. The Departmental Administrative Office (W/201a) is open daily, Monday to Friday, when the Department and Graduate Administrators are in attendance.

Opening Hours: 9.00am to 5.00pm Mon – Thurs. 9:00am to 4.00pm on Friday.

**Staff contacts**

**The Departmental Administrator** is Mr Sam Bayley (W/201). Sam has overall responsibility for the department and especially its finance.

**The Graduate Administrator** is Mr Richard Firth. (W/201) email: sociology-pg@york.ac.uk They are responsible for all graduate matters. They provide assistance to the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr Wes Lin, maintains all graduate files, and distributes all departmental information to graduates. It is very important that address and contact details are kept up to date in E:Vision so that she is able to contact you via means other than the University email address.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Management Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Department</td>
<td>Paul Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Head of Department</td>
<td>Laurie Hanquinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of Board of Studies</td>
<td>Amanda Rees (Terms 1 &amp; 3) Robin Wooffitt (Term 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Research</td>
<td>Sarah Nettleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of REF &amp; Chair of Impact subcommittee</td>
<td>Nik Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Facilitator</td>
<td>Ed Kirby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Teaching</td>
<td>Joanna Latimer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers and Employability Coordinator</td>
<td>Robin Wooffitt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department Manager</td>
<td>Sam Bayley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head of CWS</td>
<td>Victoria Robinson</td>
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**Research**
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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director of Research</td>
<td>Sarah Nettleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of REF</td>
<td>Nik Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Facilitator</td>
<td>Ed Kirby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Sub Committee (overseen by Director of REF)</td>
<td>Nik Brown (Chair), Ed Kirby, Maggie O’Neill, Merran Toerien (Terms 1 and 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REF Committee</td>
<td>David Beer, Nik Brown, Laurie Hanquinet, Paul Johnson, Ed Kirby, Maggie O’Neill, Sarah Nettleton, Merran Toerien (Terms 1 and 3), Robin Wooffitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads: Culture cluster</td>
<td>Steph Lawler and Gareth Millington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead: Gender, sexuality and inequalities cluster</td>
<td>Wes Lin (Terms 1 and 3), Clare Jackson (Term 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead: Language and communication cluster</td>
<td>Robin Wooffitt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead: Science, Health, Technology cluster</td>
<td>Nik Brown</td>
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**Department Research Centre Directors**

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<th>Department</th>
<th>Director</th>
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<tr>
<td>AERU</td>
<td>Robin Wooffitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATSU</td>
<td>Joanna Latimer (administrator: Sarah Shrive Morrison)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURB (co-director)</td>
<td>Daryl Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECCE</td>
<td>Laurie Hanquinet</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPAC</td>
<td>Nisha Kapoor, Brian Loader &amp; Nathan Manning</td>
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**UG Admissions**

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UG Admissions Officer (and Admissions Team lead)</td>
<td>Nathan Manning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Admissions Officer</td>
<td>Katy Sian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Chrissy Buse</td>
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**Teaching (UG and PGT) and related roles**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director of Teaching</td>
<td>Joanna Latimer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Director of Teaching (with oversight for PGT) and White Rose DTP lead</td>
<td>Gareth Millington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Administrators</td>
<td>Helen Geddes &amp; John Forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations Officer (UG, PGT)</td>
<td>Tim Huijts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptional Circumstances Committee (Sociology) and Disability representative</td>
<td>Nisha Kapoor (chair), Sian Beynon-Jones (Term 3), Brian Loader (Terms 2 and 3), Wes Lin (terms 1 and 3), Daryl Martin, Darren Reed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptional Circumstances Committee (Joint degrees)</td>
<td>Darren Reed (Term 1), Clare Jackson, Nisha Kapoor (Term 1), Brian Loader (Terms 2 and 3), Amanda Rees (Terms 1 and 3), Nathan Manning (Term 2), Gareth Millington (Term 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptional Circumstances Committee (SPS)</td>
<td>Dave Beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism reps (to university StAMP)</td>
<td>Clare Jackson, Daryl Martin, Robin Wooffitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of 1st Year BoS</td>
<td>Nisha Kapoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduates who Teach (PGWT) Coordinator</td>
<td>Nisha Kapoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employability Lead</td>
<td>Robin Wooffitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG Dissertations Coordinator (incl. BA Criminology)</td>
<td>Ruth Penfold-Mounce (Terms 1 and 3), Brian Loader (Term 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International and Erasmus Coordinator, including 3+1 programmes</td>
<td>Brian Loader (Term 2 and 3), Nisha Kapoor (Term 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA Sociology Programme Leader</td>
<td>Daryl Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology with Criminology Programme Leader &amp; BA Criminology Programme Leader</td>
<td>Maggie O’Neill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology with Social Psychology Programme Leader</td>
<td>Clare Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Degrees liaison</td>
<td>Gareth Millington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS Liaison</td>
<td>Brian Loader (Terms 2 and 3), Nathan Manning (Term 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator MSc Social Media &amp; Management</td>
<td>David Beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator MSc Social Media and Interactive Technologies</td>
<td>David Beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator MA Culture, Society and Globalisation</td>
<td>Wes Lin (Terms 1 and 3), Nathan Manning (term 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator MA Criminology and Social Research</td>
<td>Katy Sian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator MA Social Media and Social Research</td>
<td>David Beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Committee Members</td>
<td>Darren Reed (Chair), Wes Lin (Terms 1 and 3), Brian Loader (Terms 2 and 3), Amanda Rees (Terms 1 and 3), Maggie O’Neill, Nik Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELMPS reps</td>
<td>Nik Brown, Darren Reed, Sian Beynon-Jones (Term 3), Stevi Jackson</td>
</tr>
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### PGR

| Director of Postgraduate Research | Wes Lin (Terms 1 and 3), Maggie O’Neill (Term 2) |
| Graduate Administrator | Richard Firth |

### Other Department Roles

| Chair of Staff Meeting | TBC (by election) |
| Athena Swan Lead and Equality and Diversity Champion | Katy Sian |
| Library Liaison Officer | Chrissy Buse |
| Social Media Liaison | Ben Vincent (managed by professional services team) |
| Computing Officer and data protection | Darren Reed |
| Green Impact Coordinator | Merran Toerien (Terms 1 and 3), Dave Honeywell (Term 2) |
| Training officer | Sam Bayley |
| Events organiser, travel booking | Sarah Shrive Morrison |
| Dept Seminars Organiser | Brian Loader (Term 2 & 3), Gareth Millington (Term 1) |
| Unpolished papers series | Gareth Millington |
| Health and Safety Officer | Richard Firth |
| Mentoring | Various staff |
| Performance reviewers | Various staff (SL and above) |

For a full list of academic staff please follow: [https://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/our-staff/academic/](https://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/our-staff/academic/)

**Communicating with the department**

*Email Policy: Staff-student email response time:* Members of staff are happy to receive emails from and respond by email to students. The volume of email that staff receive means that sometimes we cannot respond immediately. You can normally expect to receive a reply to an email within three working days from the time you send it. If a member of staff is
away from the University and unable to respond they will normally have an ‘out of office’ set on their email to inform you of their limited availability.

Students may use ‘The Department of Sociology, Wentworth College, University of York, Heslington, York YO10 5DD’ as a mailing address. Each student has a pigeonhole (or shared) in the departmental printer room (W/250a) and you should regularly check if there is any post.

There is a PG notice board on the wall next door to the PG Common Room in the Graduate Village. Notices about conferences are on the corridor board opposite W/245 and W/244.

The departmental website can be found: [https://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/](https://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/)

### Departmental facilities

The Department of Sociology endeavours to provide (usually shared) office facilities for all full-time MPhil/PhD students who need them. A dedicated PG study and common room area has been opened on the mezzanine floor of Wentworth which has office space for all PhD students and a common room/kitchen for everyone (including MA/MSc students). Office accommodation comprises desks, shelving, filing cabinets, computing facilities and a telephone for incoming and internal calls. A limited number of places are also available to research students in single or shared carrels in the library and ReCSS. There is always a waiting list so early application is advised.

If you are unable to use computing facilities we strongly urge you to learn. Courses are regularly run by the University’s Computing Service which are available to staff and research students. Competent word processing skills can help save a vast amount of time when preparing papers for supervisors, draft chapters and the final thesis.

**Photocopying and Printing**

Photocopying/printing facilities are available for PhD students via YPP printer cloud. The department usually pays for Sociology research students printing.

**Headed paper**

Students are allowed to use Departmental headed notepaper and mailing facilities when they are clearly needed for research purposes. A supervisor’s permission should be obtained and conveyed to the Departmental Administrator. There is a word template available on the University web site. You should contact Carole Nicolson if you require access to it.

**Catering**

Full catering facilities are provided by Wentworth College’s restaurant/bar “Edge”.

**Social Science Research Centre (ReCSS)**

The Social Science Research Centre (ReCSS) is a multidisciplinary collaborative support infrastructure for researchers involved in social sciences research within the University.

The PhD provision accommodates about 85 students, using a mixed economy of desks for more permanent occupants and more temporary hot desks. In addition, there are lockers provided for students, a dedicated social space, catering facilities (there are three floors with one facility on each floor), and rooms that can be used for smaller meeting purposes. A dedicated RCSS reception has been established. There is also parking and bicycle shed provision.

### Health, safety and security
Everyone working in or visiting the Department of Sociology should make themselves familiar with University Notices concerning Health and Safety. Take particular care to read and understand the notices about ‘What to do in case of fire’ and ‘What to do in medical emergencies’. Please ensure that you observe the no-smoking policy in those areas designated as no-smoking. Make sure you know the location of the nearest fire extinguishers. Make sure you know the fire drill and **ALWAYS** observe the fire alarm.

For information about the University’s health, safety and security information and policies, visit: [https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hsas/](https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hsas/).

**Governance and committees**

Every member of the PhD student community is invited to the PGR Committee meeting which convenes in the Graduate Village once a term. Any item relevant to PhD study can be discussed here and decisions will be made to resolve any problems.

There is research student representation on the Department’s Board of Studies, which deals with general departmental matters, and to which the Graduate Board reports. Research students thus have clear line of contact with the decision-making structures in the department. Both Boards meet each term. This means that research student concerns can be dealt with speedily.

Research student representatives are encouraged to contact the Graduate Student Association which can provide training and guidance about their role. A notice board in the Department, access to ‘unreserved’ minutes of the meetings, and an email directory of the representative’s cohort of students will be provided by the Department. On request, we will provide time and space for students to meet with the people they represent.

We value the input of our Board reps very highly; please consider undertaking this important role as part of your time at the Department.

**Graduate Issues at University Level**

In practical terms, interactions currently involving Research students and the University are conducted within a few administrative departments:

a) Research degree programmes are the responsibility of the Teaching Committee. Proposals for new research degree programmes (or modifications to existing research degree programmes) should be sent to the Academic Support Office for consideration by the Teaching Committee;

b) Recommendations for suspensions of enrolment or extensions of submission deadline should to be sent to the Social Sciences PhD administrator (Registry Services), for consideration by a member of the Special Cases Committee;

c) Where a hearing is required of an appeal or an academic misconduct case involving a postgraduate student, the hearing is conducted by the Special Cases Committee;

d) Recommendations for confirmation of PhD/EngD enrolment, or for programme transfer or transfer between full-time and part-time enrolment, should continue to be sent to the Social
Sciences PhD administrator (Registry Services), for consideration by a member of the Standing Committee on Assessment;

e) University postgraduate studentships are the responsibility of the University Research Committee.

Student representation

Course reps are elected by their peers in their department to act as a two-way mechanism of communication between the University and the student body they represent. They convey the views and interests of students to the department and within the Graduate Students’ Association (GSA).

Academic representation is a partnership between students, through the University of York Students’ Union (YUSU) and the GSA, and the department. Together, we aim to ensure that students play an essential role in monitoring, driving and developing the quality of the academic experience here.

Postgraduate course reps are supported by the GSA, with dedicated support and training throughout the year following the elections and initial training in the autumn term, which is coordinated jointly between the GSA and YUSU.

If you’d like to represent the views of your fellow students and have a say in how your course is run, why not apply to be a course rep? Visit: http://www.yorkgsa.org/students/academic/.

Student evaluation and feedback

We take your views on your experience within the department and University very seriously. This is an important part of the University’s programme of quality assurance and enhancement, and in the appraisal of members of staff. As such, there are points during your degree where you will be asked to give detailed feedback on your experiences as a student and researcher; for example, a Review of Supervision form is completed as part of each meeting of your Thesis Advisory Panel and you may be asked to complete the sector-wide Postgraduate Research Student Experience Survey (PRES). Your support of this process, by providing relevant and constructive feedback, is critical in delivering the best possible research student journey, as well as in facilitating the continued success of postgraduate research at York.

Any concern or feedback could be brought to the PGR committee for discussion, or you may also contact the Graduate Administrator (sociology-pg@york.ac.uk), or the Director of Graduate School (xiaodong.lin@york.ac.uk) to arrange a meeting in confidence.

Accessibility and disability support

Disability Services can provide support, advice and guidance for those with a diagnosed disability, including: dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties; Asperger’s syndrome; visual and hearing impairments and physical/medical impairments, amongst others. All students with
disabilities, including research students, are encouraged to contact Disability Services to discuss meeting your individual needs.

Please let the department know as soon as possible if you have a disability and may require any support. You can discuss this with your supervisor. Please note that even if you studied a previous degree at York you will need to notify the department’s disabilities representative again of any disability when you enrol for a research programme, as your support needs for the research degree are likely to be different than those for your taught degree.

Please contact the office for any disability queries sociology-pg@york.ac.uk

For further information, visit: https://www.york.ac.uk/students/support/disability/.

Equality and diversity

The University of York values the diversity of its students and staff and is committed to the creation of a positive environment which is fair, welcoming and inclusive, and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

For further information about the University’s equality and diversity policies, visit: https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/eo/.
Your research degree

Departmental programme

PhD in Sociology

Programme aims

Programme aims for PhD’s can be found at https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/support/policies-documents/research-degree-policy/ In section 2.

Research integrity

Researchers have an obligation to the research community, to the funders of research and to society as a whole to conduct their research to the highest standards across the full research process, from planning and conducting research through to recording, reporting and applying the findings. This is known as ‘research integrity’. The University’s expectations are set out online, at https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/. These are:

- Code of Practice on Research Integrity.
- Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance. (Research ethics form a subset of research integrity, focusing on the avoidance of harm within the conduct of research. This Code sets out the University’s framework of ethical principles and University requirements for formally reviewing and approving research which raises ethical considerations. It includes a ‘Checklist of areas where ethical considerations are likely to arise’.)

It is important that you read these documents and ensure that you have a clear understanding of the standards and practices expected of you. You are advised to talk through the implications with your supervisor. Key elements include:

- Ensuring that your research data and supporting records are accurate, complete and retrievable, and stored securely, taking particular care in relation to any sensitive information.
- Taking responsibility, supported by your supervisor, for identifying any areas of your research project which fall within the University’s ethical framework, and referring them for University review and approval prior to commencing the activity.

Research Integrity Tutorial

The Research Integrity Tutorial (RIT) is a compulsory requirement for all postgraduate research students and must be completed prior to your first TAP meeting. The RIT is tailored to the specific needs of postgraduate research students and has been designed to familiarise you with the principles, policies and procedures of research integrity and ethics at the University of York. The tutorial is divided into three main sections each of which takes approx. 45 mins to complete.
and is followed by a short section test. After completing all 3 section tests you will receive a Research Integrity Certificate and your completion will be recorded in e:vision. The RIT will provide you with practical information for your research here at York and will be highly valuable in the development of your academic career.

The Research Integrity Tutorial is located in your Yorkshare VLE module list. If you have trouble accessing the tutorial, email integrity@york.ac.uk.

For more information and details of further support for research integrity to build on the core training provided by the tutorial, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/training-and-support-for-research-integrity.

Please note that completion of the tutorial is mandatory for all research students and completion is a requirement for progression.

**Ethics**

*The Ethics Committee comprises* Darren Reed (Chair), Wes Lin (terms 1 and 3), Brian Loader (terms 2 and 3), Amanda Rees (Terms 1 and 3), Maggie O’Neill, Nik. The committee involves reviewing undergraduate and postgraduate taught students’ ethics applications. PhD ethics applications need to be submitted to the ELMPS committee.

**University Ethics Guidance:** http://www.york.ac.uk/about/organisation/governance/sub-committees/ethics/

**ELMPS Applications:** https://www.york.ac.uk/about/organisation/governance/sub-committees/ethics/elmps/apply-for-approval/

**Departmental Information** is available on Yorkshare in the Sociology Virtual Office/Departmental Ethics Policy

If you are an MA by research student or if your research does NOT involve the use of human subjects at any point then you should complete the departmental ethics form available from the Sociology Virtual Office on Yorkshare. This will be considered by the Department of Sociology Ethics Committee

**All PhD and Staff Research Ethical approval involving human subjects must now be submitted through the ELMPS Ethics Committee which convenes only four times per year. There is a new procedure now in place as all the social science ethics forms are being assessed by a specific social science committee. You must complete either the ELMPS Lite or ELMPS Full depending on your research profile. (See below).**

**This committee meets only 4 times a year so it is essential that you plan ahead in order to submit your proposals in time for the meeting. You should aim to have your ethics approved as soon as possible in order not to lose research time waiting for approval.**
Ethics forms which are submitted late will have to wait for the next meeting before they can be considered and approved. Forms are normally expected to be submitted one month before the meeting is scheduled. See Darren Reed if you have questions on this process.

NB If you are collecting data from NHS patients or staff, or Social Service users or staff, you will need to apply for approval through the Integrated Research Application System (IRAS) at https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/Signin.aspx

Student applications for approval through IRAS should normally be pre-reviewed by department ethics committees or ELMPS.

For the University’s full code of practice and principles for good ethical governance, visit: https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/.

**Academic misconduct**

The University is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and any academic misconduct is regarded as an extremely serious matter. It is your responsibility to be aware of the University’s guidelines, policies and procedures on misconduct and act with integrity. Further information is available at https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/supporting-students/academic/research/misconduct/.

**Academic progression**

**Your supervisor**

Supervisors play a fundamental role in supporting research students throughout their programme. Your supervisor or supervisory team is responsible for helping you to manage your research, as well as being your primary link to your department and the University. Your main supervisor is your first point of contact for any issues that arise throughout your programme.

Formal Supervision meetings with your supervisor or supervisory team should take place at least twice per quarter (i.e. roughly once every 6 weeks) for all full-time and part-time students. At these meetings your supervisor(s) should give detailed feedback on the work you present and help you make plans for your next steps. A detailed record of your formal supervisory meetings and actions agreed will be kept through Skillsforge, and must be signed by both you and your supervisor(s).

All students will be allocated to two supervisors at the beginning of the first academic year; normally student and supervisor(s) will already have met or corresponded before admission. Where relevant to the student’s research interest, a second supervisor from the Department may be appointed.

As well as the main supervisor(s), a Thesis Advisory Panel (TAP) will be appointed, to monitor students’ progress towards completion and offer advice where necessary. For further information about the Thesis Advisory Panel, see the information below. Full time students are required to have two TAP panel meetings a year.
Students are themselves responsible for their final thesis, but the supervisor/supervisee relationships will have a major influence on the progress of the research. The learning process should be two-way, from which you should both benefit. However, a supervisor should help to maintain and develop a student’s intellectual interests, offering new perspectives on the research topic, drawing attention to new work in the area, providing appropriate academic contacts, giving notice of useful conferences and seminars, and advice on publication. He or she should direct students to relevant short courses offered in other departments, and by university service departments. The supervisor should also help the student in the planning and organising of his or her time. The formal role of the supervisor is set out in more detail below.

**Supervisorial meetings** are the most important formal part of a higher degree. Part-time students, who will face many calls on their time, must give these meetings priority. Meetings should take place without interruptions. Students have a right to expect their supervisor(s) to set aside time to discuss their work.

It is important that supervisor(s) and supervisee should meet frequently and regularly, though the frequency may vary according to the nature of the project and the stage reached in the research. The Department considers it good practice for full time students to have no fewer than three supervision meetings with their supervisors per term, and part time students to have at least two meetings per term. **It is compulsory for students to have at least two formal supervision meetings (1 for P/T students) every 3 months and to generate a report form onto Skillsforge/E:Vision at the end of each meeting.**

When students are conducting fieldwork away from the University arrangements must be made to ensure regular supervisory contact by telephone and email. This is particularly important for long absences, such as those necessary in undertaking fieldwork overseas. Students should be required to check in regularly, generally each week, and to provide longer reports on their progress on a fortnightly basis. This contact is essential in ensuring that the supervisor does not lose track of the student’s work and is consulted about any problems arising during fieldwork.

Where a student submits written work, it is essential that the supervisor’s comments, criticisms and suggestions for improvement are clear and unambiguous. Sometimes it may be sufficient to convey these orally or by comments on the student’s text. But for important pieces of work supervisors should provide written comments, which specifically aim to give his or her overall view of the text and identify all necessary revisions. Students should not be left in doubt of their supervisor’s judgement of the quality of work, particularly if improvements are required.

Supervision involves identifying a candidate’s research training needs and ensuring they are met. Those who have not previously followed the training programme provided by the Department’s ESRC recognised MA should do so, unless exemptions have been agreed by the Board of Studies. Research training should continue throughout the period of registration. This training should include any advanced or specialised methodological skills required for the student’s project as well as general transferable skills. Research training should be decided upon prior to the start of each academic year in order to ensure that students are enrolled on appropriate courses and should be regularly reviewed and monitored. (See Section 16).

Students should keep in touch with their supervisor(s), and discuss any change of direction in their work as such changes arise. Notice should be given if appointments cannot be kept. Students should go to supervision meetings well prepared and with an idea about what they want to get out of the meeting. They should ensure than any written work to be used as a basis for supervision should reach the supervisor(s) well in advance of the meeting. Students are urged to let their supervisors know if they are feeling stuck, depressed or isolated. All academics lose enthusiasm and momentum at some point; this can often be talked through and resolved.
The Department of Sociology will make every effort to provide alternative supervision if a member of staff is away on leave, is ill or resigns.

**Termly Reports**

All supervision meetings must be recorded on Skillsforge/E:Vision and the minimum requirement for Full time students is that at least two supervisions every quarter of a year are submitted onto Skillsforge/E:Vision. (One per term for part time students). These reports are generated by the student, signed off by the supervisor and will detail progress, future work/plans and the student’s transferable skills training requirements discussed during the supervision.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the forms are completed and submitted onto Skillsforge/E:Vision after supervision meetings. Failure of PhD students to do so will result in the loss of free printing access for the following term.

**Supervision in the first year**

As well as undertaking required elements of research training, in the first term students should, with the help of their supervisor(s) and Thesis Advisory Panel, be clarifying a practicable research topic, with reference to existing work in the field, the availability of sources, and what they find most intellectually exciting. The supervisors will check that the topic is viable, sufficiently specific, and not over ambitious.

Student, supervisor(s) and Thesis Advisory Panel members will jointly need to plan, in some detail, a timetable of research which is clearly oriented towards the completion of the thesis within the timetable stated above. This may involve the learning of specific techniques, the conducting of interviews, and the study of source materials in different parts of the country or abroad, depending on the subject. The time spent in these activities should be balanced with the time required for writing.

By the end of the first year, the student will be expected to have completed core elements of their research training; to have clearly defined the subject of the research; to have a grasp of the relevant literature; to have completed the greater part of the bibliographical work, and to be well embarked on primary research. In addition he or she should have completed a substantial piece of writing, which may be an introductory discussion, a survey of the literature, or a draft chapter.

**Supervision in the 2nd and 3rd Year**

Even when students are most actively engaged in research, meetings with their supervisor(s) will still remain important, and should be given a very high priority. Regular discussion of research findings is always helpful, and can mitigate feelings of isolation and confusion.

As writing-up gets underway, a supervisor’s advice will be crucial. Regular drafts of chapters should be submitted; he or she will be looking at the quality of writing, at general strength of argument, and at scholarly presentation.

Throughout the drafting process, a student will be asked to defend and justify the relevance of the chapters to the overall direction of the thesis; this is where a supervisor can be of most use. Before the thesis is finally submitted the supervisor(s) should see the complete final draft.
The role of the supervisor

The relationship between supervisor(s) and research student is of critical importance to the success of the latter’s studies. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to scrutinize the balance and direction of the student’s work at every stage of the research. In addition to supervising the research itself (see below), the supervisor or supervisors must ensure:

- That back-up supervision is available and in place when they are absent (e.g. on research leave or ill).
- That the Thesis Advisory Panels meets early in the candidate’s registration, so that he or she is aware that she can rely on a broad support network, and thenceforth at least twice per year (annually for part-time students).
- That, where there is co-supervision, there exist clearly defined roles and arrangements for the conduct of supervision.
- That the research training needs of the candidate are clearly identified at the commencement of supervision and are fulfilled over the course of the registration.
- That any problems impeding the student’s progress are identified, brought to the attention of the Graduate Committee, and that appropriate action is taken. He or she can be expected to provide advice in all these, as appropriate.

Direction of the research

Your supervisor is in general responsible for advising you about the direction and practical aspects of your research, and more specifically about:

- The relevant research literature in your area
- The design of your project, including samples, methodology, conducting fieldwork, etc.
- Gaining access: this includes assistance in making contact with those who may give you access to data, permission to make audio or video recordings, etc.
- Ethical aspects of your research, including constructing subject consent information/forms, and applying to ethics committees (e.g. NHS Ethics Committees) for permission
- Data collection (including the availability of secondary data sources)
- Data analysis
- The scope of your study, and what areas will need to be covered or included in your project and dissertation
- Constructing work timetables, and a schedule towards the timely completion of your dissertation.

Mechanisms for dealing with problems in the supervisor-supervisee relationship

Occasionally problems arise in the supervisory relationship. It is vital that the supervisor make the candidate aware, at the start of his or her registration, of the mechanisms available if things go wrong. Research students should feel free to express comments on their supervision at any time, directly to the supervisor, to another member of the Thesis Advisory Panel, to the Chair of the Board of Studies, the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Head of Department. At the end of each meeting of the TAP the supervisor(s) are required to leave the room enabling the student to have a free and frank discussion on the quality of supervision with other TAP members. Supervisors should explain to candidates that raising problems in any of these ways does not necessarily constitute a formal complaint, and will be treated in strict confidence. Supervisors should draw supervisees’ attention to the University’s mechanisms for formal complaints. Candidates should also be made aware that they can approach the Board of Studies through their Board of Studies representative. Students have a right, under University regulations, to request a change of supervisor when the supervisory relationship breaks down irrevocably. Changes of supervisor must be formally approved by the Board of Studies and Registry Services must be informed immediately. Where the student is supported by funding from research councils, changes of supervisor also require the approval of the funding body.
Mechanisms for monitoring progress

The following procedures are in place and should be followed for monitoring the progress of higher degree research:

• Regular supervision, accompanied wherever possible by written comments on the candidate’s work which is recorded on Skillsforge/E:Vision.
• Formal twice termly report forms, to be filled by the student, and submitted onto Skillsforge/E:Vision.
• Regular Thesis Advisory Panel meetings, to discuss and monitor the development of the research project.
• Written reports of the Thesis Advisory Panel meetings to be recorded on the appropriate form, submitted to the Chair of the Board of Studies, logged on Skillsforge/E:Vision and kept on the student’s file.
• Regular meetings of the PGR Committee to discuss and resolve any problems arising from the conduct of supervision and research. Student problems are raised and reviewed under a regular item of reserved or ‘starred’ business (from which student representatives are excluded) on the agenda.
• The PhD Confirmation procedure (based on submitted written work and an oral examination), followed by a written recommendation on the appropriate form to be approved by the Chair of the Board of Studies (or the Chair of the Board of Examiners) and submitted for approval to the University’s Graduate and Undergraduate Studies Committee.
• Final submission and examination according to the University’s Regulations.

If a student has not completed the thesis by the end of the full registration period (full-time and part-time), he or she is responsible for keeping in regular contact with her supervisor(s) during any approved period of extension.

Further details can be found at:
https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/supervision/.

Thesis Advisory Panel

Your Thesis Advisory Panel (TAP) consists of your supervisor(s) and at least one other member of academic staff from your department. Full-time students meet with their TAP at least once every six months. The purpose of TAP meetings is to discuss your progress and training needs and to give advice on the direction of your research and your professional development.

You and your TAP will document your meeting on the TAP meeting form, highlighting your progress and any goals that you should be working towards for the next meeting. This record of your TAP meeting will be kept on SkillsForge and must be signed by you and your TAP members.

University Regulations are available at
http://www.york.ac.uk/about/organisation/governance/governance-documents/ordinances-and-regulations/regulation-2/

In addition to being allocated a supervisor(s), all students are assigned to a Thesis Advisory Panel, as a matter of University policy within 3 months of the start of PhD/MA study. The main task of this panel is to monitor a student’s progress, and to supplement and support the
supervisory relationship. The Thesis Advisory Panel consists of the student’s supervisor(s) and at least one named member of the academic staff from the Department of Sociology. In accordance with University policy, this panel is required to meet with the student at least twice a year during the normal full-time registration period to review progress.

Student, supervisor(s) and Thesis Advisory Panel members will jointly need to plan, in some detail, a timetable of research which is clearly oriented towards the completion of the thesis within the agreed timetable.

It is now a requirement that one meeting is to be scheduled during Autumn/Spring Term with the 2nd meeting during the Summer Term/Vacation.

For part-time students, meetings should be held at least yearly. Other meetings of the Panel may be arranged where particular problems arise which cannot be resolved by a normal supervision session.

At each meeting the supervisor(s) will be expected to leave the room so that the student can discuss in confidence any problems with supervisory arrangements with the remaining Panel member(s). If any problems emerge from this discussion, the panel chair will be able to advise about appropriate action, and to assist if necessary (for instance by speaking with the supervisor concerned, or raising the matter with the Director of Graduate Studies or the Head of Department).

- Meetings of the Thesis Advisory Panel will be additional to formal supervisory meetings. The thesis advisory panel is expected to meet only during the student's normal registration period.
- Full time students will have a full TAP and one light TAP meeting per year with part-time students reduced accordingly.
- In preparation for TAP meetings, Students must complete the first section of the University TAP form and submit it to the supervisor(s) at the same time as the other chapters/documents that are required for the TAP meeting. This will also assist the supervisor in commenting on the student's progress.
- Students will be given an opportunity to comment confidentially on the quality of their supervision orally at the meeting in the absence of the supervisor. This 3rd Section of the TAP form must be completed and signed by both the student and the independent TAP member.
- Following each thesis advisory panel meeting a brief report on progress and future action, agreed by all the panel members, will be produced, possibly on the pro forma referred to above. Copies of the reports of panel meetings will be submitted to the chair of the departmental Graduate School, and placed on the student's skillsforge/e-vision record.

A member of the TAP, other than the supervisor(s), may be appointed as the student's internal examiner. In this case, the member of the panel concerned will not be involved in the final preparation of the student's thesis.

For further information visit https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/supervision/.

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Formal reviews of progress for PhD and MPhil students (Masters by research students do not have formal reviews of progress)

Formal reviews of progress: overview

All PhD and MPhil students (but not MA/MSc by research students) are subject to formal reviews of progress. The purpose of formal reviews of progress is to ensure that you are making satisfactory progress with your research project and other elements of your PhD or MPhil programme. A formal review of progress should give you a clear sense of the progress you are making on your degree but the decision of a progression panel does not serve as a prediction for the outcome of the final examination.

Formal reviews of progress take place on an annual basis, towards the end of each year of enrolment, for full-time PhD and MPhil students, and on a biennial basis for part-time PhD and MPhil students. Formal reviews of progress are not required for entry into a continuation period, where this is permitted.

You have a maximum of two opportunities to meet the relevant University progression criteria at each formal review of progress. If you have not met the relevant University progression criteria after two attempts you will have failed the progression point and will be transferred to an alternative programme or your enrolment will be terminated.

Procedure for formal reviews of progress

In a formal review of progress, you will be assessed against University progression criteria (see below) which set out the threshold requirements for progression to the next year (or equivalent period for part-time students).

The assessment is undertaken by a progression panel, which is independent of your supervisor(s) to gain an external perspective on the progress that you are making, and to ensure that your relationship with your supervisor remains focused on your development as a researcher.

Your department determines what evidence (oral and/or written) its PhD and MPhil students should provide to demonstrate that they have met the relevant University progression criteria (see below for details). The evidence you provide is considered alongside a supervisor’s report on your progress.

Progression criteria and student evidence for a first formal review of progress

For progression into year 2 of a full-time PhD or MPhil programme (or equivalent stage of a part-time PhD or MPhil programme), a student must demonstrate that they:

(a) can articulate the direction their research is taking and the research questions it addresses;
(b) have planned in a realistic fashion the second year (or equivalent) of their research, indicating any risks and how these will be mitigated;
(c) have sufficient acquaintance with the relevant field of knowledge to place their research into context;
(d) have sufficient proficiency in the relevant research methods, techniques and theoretical approaches to move their research to the next stage;
(e) have undertaken all required training;
(f) have considered ethical issues (including data management and authorship) where applicable.

Progression criteria for a second formal review of progress

For progression into year 3 of a full-time PhD programme (or equivalent stage of a part-time PhD programme), a student must demonstrate that they:

(a) can articulate the direction their research is taking and the research questions it addresses and how this will lead to a substantial original contribution to knowledge or understanding;
(b) have planned in a realistic fashion the third year (or equivalent) of their research, based on the expectation that the project will be completed and the thesis submitted on time, indicating any risks and how these will be mitigated;
(c) have the ability to write up their research in an appropriate academic format for it to be critically assessed by peer reviewers and examiners;
(d) have begun to acquire the wider background knowledge of their research field required for the degree of PhD;
(e) can apply the relevant research methods, techniques and theoretical approaches required to make an original contribution to knowledge or understanding;
(f) have undertaken all required training;
(g) have considered ethical issues (including data management and authorship) where applicable.

Departmental PhD Progression Review

Progression Point 1: Year 1 for FT PhD
Year 2 for PT PhD

Time frame - 6 weeks: June to early July for October starters; September to early October for January starters, month 9 (post enrolment) for others

Required evidence for the panel:

1. A statement of the research aims, questions and methods (if appropriate) and a literature review (8,000 to 10,000 words in total)
2. A timetable for completion
3. Certificate of completion of the online Research Integrity Tutorial
4. Ethics approval (evidence of submission), if applicable.
5. Evidence of appropriate research training, including the departmental training programme and other external training.
6. Supervisor’s report

The PhD student is required to submit the listed documents to the panel by the end of month eight (post enrolment), and no later than ten days prior to the scheduled meeting.

**Progression Point 2: Year 2 for FT PhD**

**Year 4 for PT PhD**

Time frame - 6 weeks: June to early July for October starters; September to early October for January starters, month 21 (post enrolment) for others

Required evidence for the panel:

1. Two substantive chapters, up to 20,000 words in total. One piece can be an updated version of the chapter submitted for the first progression point; the other chapter should normally be a substantive chapter for the thesis that the student intends to contribute to their completed thesis.
2. A timetable for completion
4. Evidence of appropriate research training, including the departmental training programme and other external training.
5. Supervisor’s report

The PhD student is required to submit the listed documents to the panel by the end of month twenty (post enrolment), and no later than ten days prior to the scheduled meeting.

**Progress review meeting**

The progression panel will consider your evidence and the supervisor’s report at a progress review meeting. Based on these elements, the progression panel will make a decision as to whether you have met, exceeded or not met the relevant University progression criteria as well as a recommendation regarding your progression.

The Department of Sociology adapts the ‘major’ TAPs model, with Year 1 progression panels integrated with TAP 2 meetings and Year 2 progression panels integrated with TAP 4 meetings. The major TAPs model means that the progress review panel (in the absence of the supervisors) will work with the student to deliver the developmental aspect of the TAP meeting and to complete the TAP form alongside the progress review form.

The student can request their supervisors to be present at the progression panel. However, supervisors do not make any contribution or decisions during the progress review panel meeting.

A progression review panel is individually appointed for each student and includes a senior academic member of staff (SL and above) as the Chair. It also includes independent member(s) of the TAP. The appointment of the chairperson will be built into the Department’s workload model, in line with appropriate expertise from each research cluster.
Prior to the progression meeting, named supervisors will be required to provide a report to the panel to evaluate the student’s progress and the written submission (using pro forma from Graduate School).

The PhD student is required to submit the listed documents to the panel by the end of **month eight** and **month twenty** (post enrolment), and no later than ten days prior to the scheduled meeting. If a PhD student fails to progress at the first attempt, the panel may recommend student withdrawal or transfer to a lower degree as the outcome of the progression at this stage according to the University’s progression review policy. The student will also have the option to have a second attempt. This should take place within 3 months after the first meeting. See University progression policy for full details.

Reports of the meeting and the student’s progress will be prepared by the panel and make it available to the student. The report will set down any advice and recommendations offered and any directions or conditions for the future progress of the thesis.

If a panel decides not to recommend progression of the PhD for the second attempt, it may recommend instead that the student’s enrolment be terminated or that the student should be allowed to submit a thesis for the award of an MPhil degree or a dissertation for the award of an MA or MSc degree by Research (where those degrees are available), subject to the normal regulations and requirements for those degrees. The department will follow the university policy on progression regarding second attempts.

The progression panel will consider your evidence, the supervisor’s report and **agreed TAP reports** at a progress review meeting. Based on these elements, the progression panel will make a decision as to whether you have met, exceeded or not met the relevant University progression criteria as well as a recommendation regarding your progression.

**Progression panel decision and recommendation**

If a progression panel decides that you have met or exceeded the relevant University progression criteria at the first attempt, they will recommend to the Standing Committee on Assessment (SCA), which is responsible for approving progression decisions on behalf of Senate, that you progress into the next year of your programme.

If the progression panel decides that you have not yet met the relevant University progression criteria, you will be permitted a second attempt at progression within three months but the panel may recommend that it would be in your best interests to transfer to an alternative programme or to withdraw from the University. You will need to let your department know as soon as possible if you wish to ignore a recommendation for transfer or withdrawal.

**Second attempt at progression**
If you make a second attempt at progression but do not meet the relevant University progression criteria at this attempt, the progression panel will recommend that you are transferred to an alternative programme or that your enrolment with the University is terminated.

If you make a second attempt at progression and do meet or exceed the relevant University progression criteria at this attempt, the progression panel will recommend that you are progressed but this does not alter the timing of the next formal review of progression (if applicable) or the deadline for submission of the thesis.

See https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/support/policies-documents/research-degree-policy/ (Appendix 4) for full details of the procedure to be followed for making a second attempt at progression.

**Exceptional circumstances**

If you have any exceptional circumstances that may impact on a formal review of progress then you should contact your supervisor as soon as possible to discuss your options.
Key milestones for your research degree

The following section lays out the key milestones that you must achieve as a research student.

Programme structure
First year (and part-time equivalent) milestones PhD and MPhil milestones

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>First formal review of progress</th>
<th>Second attempt at first formal review of progress</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAP 1 Submission of written evidence</td>
<td>TAP2/Progress review meeting Approved by GSB</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Full-Time Students**

| Month from enrolment (full-time students) | M 5-6 | End of M 8 | M 9 and early M 10 | End of M 10 | M 12 | M 12 | M 12 |

**Part-time students**

| Month from enrolment (part-time students) | M 11-12 | End of M 20 | M 21 and early M22 | End of M 22 | M 27 | M 27 | M 27 |

If you commence a PhD or MPhil programme outside a cohort entry point, or if your journey goes out of sync with the rest of your cohort (e.g. due to a leave of absence) the dates specified above may not apply to you, but will be calculated in terms of how long you have been enrolled on the programme.
### Second year (and part-time equivalent) milestones PhD and MPhil milestones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Second formal review of progress</th>
<th>Second attempt at second formal review of progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAP 3</td>
<td>Submitted of written evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAP4/Progress review meeting</td>
<td>Approved by GSB</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resubmission of written evidence</td>
<td>Further progress review meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Approved by GSB</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Full-Time Students**

- **Month from enrolment (full-time students)**
  - M 17-18: End of M 20
  - M 21 and early M 22: End of M 22
  - M 24

**Part-time students**

- **Month from enrolment (part-time students)**
  - M 34-35: End of M 41
  - M 42 and early M 43: End of M 44
  - M 48

If you commence a PhD or MPhil programme outside a cohort entry point, or if your journey goes out of sync with the rest of your cohort (e.g. due to a leave of absence) the dates specified above may not apply to you but will be calculated in terms of how long you have been enrolled on the programme.
Researcher training and development

Being a research student isn't just about producing a piece of academic work. It's about developing skills that will help you succeed in your chosen career. Your department and supervisor will help you with skills specific to your subject, and training and support is also provided centrally.

Becoming an Effective Researcher Tutorial

The ‘Becoming an Effective Researcher Tutorial’ is an online induction available through the VLE to all postgraduate research students and supervisors. The tutorial is organised in six easy to navigate sections so that, following completion of the tutorial, you are able to come back to the information as you need it throughout your programme. You are expected to complete this tutorial as part of your induction at the University and are encouraged to discuss it with your supervisor and TAP. You can access BERT directly from the VLE or by clicking the link: https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/new-students/.

Research training modules/courses

Training by the Department: PhD (Staff-led) Training Seminars
This programme consists of a few one/two-hour training sessions each term. The seminars include different skill training purposes. The 'skills sessions', are based around developing skills and competencies which are useful for PhD study and beyond. These skills sessions have previously covered topics like publishing in peer reviewed journals, constructing academic CVs, effective research presentations and understanding the REF. The PG administrator will email you more details of the training seminars in due course.

Other departmental training and opportunities

Endnote Training
http://www.york.ac.uk/it-services/training/staff/endnote/
Learn how to create a bibliographic database, insert citations and a bibliography into Word, import references, search online databases, retrieve references from journals, databases and the Library catalogue, and use EndNote with Word for thesis writing.

PhD Conference
Every year, usually in the Easter vacation, the PhD students organise a day conference which is open to all students affiliated to the White Rose DTC or British Sociological Association. It is expected that you will get involved in the organisation of this event at least once during your registration period and also use the conference as an opportunity to present your research to your peers. Many of our students also attend conferences in the UK and present their research in the form of talks or posters.

Departmental Seminars
Later on in your PhD you will be invited to speak about your research at one of the Department Seminars on Wednesday afternoons.
**PhD Away Day**
Every year, usually in the Summer Term, the PGR Committee organises a PhD Away Day and it is expected that every registered PhD will attend this event. Activities include planning student-led activities for the next academic year, research fieldwork and other academic development.

**Research Excellence Training Team (RETT)**
The University's Research Excellence Training Team (RETT) provides a range of skills training and support to help you develop the skills you need to progress your research and your career. This includes communication, careers, collaboration, project management and public engagement. Book on workshops via SkillsForge and visit the RETT pages (https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/training-forums/research-excellence-training-team/), Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/rett.york) and Twitter (@rett_york) for up to date information.

**Library Research Support Team**
The Library's Research Support Team (RST) provides advice and guidance on research data management, open access publishing and repositories, copyright and bibliometrics.

The team delivers workshops on these themes within the Research Excellence Training programme. To view information on workshops and to make a booking, visit http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/researcher-development/students/. For further information on the team, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/library/info-for/researchers/support/.

The Library also provides a wide range of services for researchers in addition to the RST, for more information, visit http://www.york.ac.uk/library/info-for/researchers/.

**Academic Liaison Librarians**
Your Academic Liaison Librarian is your main contact in the Library. Talk to your Academic Liaison Librarian about your research; they can point you in the direction of the best resources. Find your librarian, lists of useful resources and further guidance by clicking on your department’s name on this website: subjectguides.york.ac.uk.

**Research Computing**
All researchers use computers at some point in the research process and IT Services provide a wide range of services and support, from email to Tier 3 High Performance Computing. The Research Computing team provides training and one-to-one support so that you can make the most of the systems and resources provided at York. Whatever your level of experience, help is on hand to get you started and choose the right tools for your research or project.
Designed with the aim of making research easier, faster and more productive, our systems and resources could be of use to all researchers, regardless of discipline or research project. To discuss what help we can provide, email: itsupport@york.ac.uk.

Additional information can also be found at: https://www.york.ac.uk/it-services/research-computing/.

Departmental conferences/seminars/fora/publications

There are frequently conferences, workshops, one day meetings and so forth on most areas of sociological research. You may like to attend such meetings, either to learn about current research in the area, or to give a presentation or paper. Your supervisor should keep you informed about such meetings, and if necessary help you in preparing presentations. Information on conferences is posted on the notice board opposite W/254. You are expected to present the progress of your work at least once a year within the department, either at seminars, workshops or conferences.

Publication of research

The successful completion of your degree ultimately rests on the completion of your dissertation or thesis, and its quality. Your supervisor is responsible for advising you about all aspects of writing draft reports and chapters, commenting in detail on those, and the shape and content of the final dissertation.

Equally important, however, is that you disseminate the results or findings of your research, as early as is practicable, and bearing in mind the standards of academic rigour. Publication is a vital part of the dissemination of your research findings, and of your career development. You should expect to have published (or have accepted for publication) at least one journal article by the time you finish your studies here. Again, your supervisor should provide advice about all aspects of publication - including a decision about what findings to publish, in what journals, how to prepare and submit a paper for publication, and how to handle reviewers' recommendations and suggestions.

The inclusion of a supervisor as co-author of a paper or chapter which relates to a student’s project or research findings is subject to the strictest departmental control. In view of the potential for the abuse of opportunities for a supervisor claiming co-authorship of work which is substantially that of a student, co-authorship should only be considered if the supervisor has made a substantial and original contribution to the work in question.

Financial support for research

Many students begin their studies with only partial funding, or funding themselves. In such circumstances, it is often possible to secure further (or top-up) funding from a variety of sources, including the EU, Overseas Research Students awards, university bursaries, and specialist agencies such as medical bodies, the Wellcome Trust etc.. Your supervisor will be able to give you guidance about where to look for such funding opportunities, and assistance in completing applications.
In addition, you may incur exceptional costs during your research, for instance in attending conferences or doing field work away from York. Your supervisor may be able to give advice about seeking funding to cover such costs, and any Departmental allocation to support graduate attendance at conferences or related academic meetings.
Your thesis

Theses and dissertations for research degree programmes at:
https://www.york.ac.uk/students/studying/manage/research-students/presentation-binding/
The process for the supervisor and the examination is at:
https://www.york.ac.uk/students/studying/manage/research-students/degrees/

Thesis content and style

Requirements for the presentation and binding of theses and dissertations
Please read the detailed guidance at:
http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/gso/exams/thesis/requirements.htm

Printed copies of theses and dissertations submitted for examination shall be soft bound, as specified in the University’s requirements for the binding of theses and dissertations. The number of printed copies submitted shall equal the number of examiners appointed.

Candidates shall also submit the same number of copies of a CD (or other portable data storage unit acceptable to the University) containing an electronic copy of the thesis or dissertation. The electronic copy shall be in pdf format (or other format acceptable to the University and appropriate to the medium) and shall be identical in every way to the printed copy.

Each CD (or other portable data storage unit) shall bear a label giving the title of the thesis or dissertation (in abbreviated form, if necessary), the volume number (where applicable), the author’s name, the name of the qualification for which the thesis or dissertation is submitted (e.g., PhD or MA), and the year of submission.

For detailed guidance about the style, formatting and sequence of material standards for your thesis, go to https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/thesis/format/.

In addition to online guidance on preparing and formatting your thesis, the University also offers courses to help you through the Library’s research support team and through RETT. For more information visit: http://subjectguides.york.ac.uk/skills/training and https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/training-forums/research-excellence-training-team/research-students/.

Thesis submission

Examination of both MPhil and PhD theses is by means of a viva with internal and external examiners. Students are required to notify the Registrar of their intention to submit a thesis, together with the title of the thesis, not less than eight weeks before the date of presentation.

This process is now handled in E-vision as a fully automated process linked directly to the student record. In order to trigger the appointment of examiners, the student must now simply log onto E-vision and complete an online ‘intent to submit’ form. The graduate administrator and the supervisor will then automatically be informed of the student’s intention to submit by
email, and a request will be made for the names of appropriate internal and external examiners will be requested (if they haven't already been appointed).

The supervisor will then receive a request for a completed Appointment of Examiners form for research students. This is downloadable at: http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/gso/staffonly/Exams/ExtExamAppointResearch.doc. This also goes to the Examination Office with a copy to Carole Nicolson.

Students submitting an MA dissertation or MPhil/PhD Thesis must complete the form at: https://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/gso/exams/forms/Receipt-SBTheses.doc along with the soft bound thesis.

**Before submitting**

You should discuss your submission plans with your supervisor, though ultimately it is your decision when to submit your thesis for examination. About two months before you expect to submit your thesis, you should complete the 'notification of intention to submit' in your e:vision account (located under 'Research Progress' within the 'My Supervision Meetings and Research Details' section). This allows the department to make the necessary arrangements for your examination. You do not need to be over-exacting in calculating your submission date, provided that you adhere to your deadline for submission.

**When to submit**

You must submit your thesis by the final deadline, though it is a good idea to plan to submit long before that, in order to give yourself time to deal with unexpected events in both your research and your personal life. You can see your submission deadline in your SkillsForge account. Late submissions will only be accepted once an extension has been applied for and approved. A pending extension request is not sufficient.

**How to submit**

Theses may be submitted to the Research Student Admin (RSA) team by hand via the Student Hub (https://www.york.ac.uk/students/support/student-support-hub/), by post, or by courier service. It is your responsibility to ensure that the thesis reaches RSA by the deadline.

**[Continuation period]**

Your continuation period: https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/thesis/continuation/ begins at the end of your normal period of enrolment. During this time you will retain access to the Library and IT facilities. You may only access departmental facilities with the written permission of the Chair of the departmental Graduate School Board. Students entering a continuation period will be liable to pay a continuation fee.
Thesis examination

Viva Procedure
The examination should take place within three months of the submission of the thesis. The oral examination usually takes between one and two hours. If the Examiners’ recommendation is accepted by the Graduate and Undergraduate Studies Executive Committee, the degree will be conferred on the next Degree Day. For the various options open to examiners students should consult the Ordinances and Regulations of the University.

All PhD Thesis vivas are tape recorded. Equipment should be ordered through the University AV Unit or via Carole Nicolson in the Sociology Office. For data protection reasons the recorder must be switched on as soon as the viva begins and stopped immediately when it ends. The tape(s) must be sent to Examinations Office where they will be kept for 12 months.

PhD Thesis and Viva Forms
(These are also available from the Department Virtual Office on Yorkshare)
This is a list of the necessary forms for the submission and examination of PhD theses:

- Intention to Submit: This is now done online through your E:Vision account
- Appointment of Examiners: [http://www.york.ac.uk/media/staffhome/learningandteaching/documents/assessments-feedback-marking/examinations/ExtExamAppointResearch.docx](http://www.york.ac.uk/media/staffhome/learningandteaching/documents/assessments-feedback-marking/examinations/ExtExamAppointResearch.docx)
- Examiners’ Report Form: [http://www.york.ac.uk/media/abouttheuniversity/supportservices/academicregistry/registrservices/exams/ReportPhd.doc](http://www.york.ac.uk/media/abouttheuniversity/supportservices/academicregistry/registrservices/exams/ReportPhd.doc)
- Declaration of satisfactory completion of minor corrections: [http://www.york.ac.uk/media/abouttheuniversity/supportservices/academicregistry/registrservices/exams/MinorCorrPhd.pdf](http://www.york.ac.uk/media/abouttheuniversity/supportservices/academicregistry/registrservices/exams/MinorCorrPhd.pdf)

PhD Viva Outcomes
There are 7 possible outcomes to a Research degree final exam viva:

1. That the degree of PhD should be awarded with no corrections to the thesis being required;
2. That the degree of PhD should be awarded subject to minor corrections being made to the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal or another of the examiners (normally within three months of the candidate’s receiving written notification of the corrections to be made)
3. That the thesis should be revised and resubmitted, after a further period of not less than three and not more than twelve months, for the degree of PhD. (A thesis may normally be referred on one occasion only. The thesis shall be re-examined, normally by the original examiners. The examiners may at their discretion require a further oral examination)
4. That the degree of MPhil should be awarded with no corrections to the thesis being required;
5. That the degree of MPhil should be awarded subject to minor corrections being made to the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal or another of the examiners (normally within
three months of the candidate’s receiving written notification of the corrections to be made)

6. That the thesis should be revised and resubmitted, after a further period of not less than three and not more than twelve months, for the degree of MPhil. (A thesis may normally be referred on one occasion only. The thesis shall be re-examined, normally by the original examiners. The examiners may at their discretion require a further oral examination)

7. That no degree should be awarded.

Appointment of examiners

Once a notification of your intention to submit has been presented, the Director of Graduate Studies nominates examiners and submits the recommendation to the Standing Committee on Assessment for approval. Your supervisor(s) will have been consulted on who will be suitable examiners and you should be asked to confirm that there are no known conflicts of interest with the selected examiners. There will be at least two, and not more than three, examiners, including at least one external examiner from another university.

Oral examination

Following the submission of your thesis for examination, MPhil, PhD and EngD candidates will be required to sit an oral examination known as a viva. The purpose of an oral examination is to allow your examiners to explore your work and satisfy themselves that:

- the work is of appropriate quality;
- you are well acquainted with your subject matter;
- you have applied appropriate research methods;
- the work is your own, or if a collaborative piece, that your contribution is adequate.

The oral examination also allows you to respond to any shortcomings identified by the examiners. Your oral examination will take place within three months of submitting your thesis.

Oral examinations for all research degrees will be recorded. These recordings are used only in the event of an appeal based on the conduct of the examination, or when an additional examiner has been subsequently appointed to resolve a dispute. Recordings will be destroyed one year after the result of the examination has been confirmed, or one year after appeal proceedings have been concluded.

PhD, MPhil or EngD students: your department will contact you to arrange your viva.

Examination outcomes

There are five possible outcomes for research degree examinations:

1. Pass
2. Pass conditional on corrections
3. Revise and resubmit for re-examination
4. Opportunity to be awarded lower degree either with or without changes being made
5. Fail

For details of these outcomes are applied to a Masters by Research, MPhil, PhD and EngD, see the Policy on Research Degrees: https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/support/policies-documents/research-degree-policy.

The outcome will be ratified by the Standing Committee on Assessment (SCA) and you will be informed of the decision and advised on how to proceed. You have the right to appeal against the examiners' recommendations on the grounds of unfair or improper conduct of the examination, prejudice on the part of the examiners, or procedural irregularity.

More information

Full details on thesis submission and examination can be found on the University website, at: https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/thesis/.

Change of plan?

Leave of absence

A leave of absence allows you to take an authorised break of a month or more from your studies. You may apply for a leave of absence for a documented medical or personal reason. Breaks of less than 1 month can be approved at departmental level, but will not then result in an extension to your progression or final submission deadlines.

Any student can apply for a leave of absence. It can be a good solution for a research student who genuinely finds that medical or personal difficulties are preventing their study for a period of time. However, approval remains at the discretion of the Special Cases Committee.

As far as possible, you should apply for a leave of absence in advance. Departments should not submit requests to the Special Cases Committee later than one month after the proposed start date of the leave period. Leave of absence that is entirely retrospective will not be considered or approved.

For more information on when and how to apply for a Leave of Absence, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/change/loa/.

Students on Tier 4 visas should be aware that a Leave of Absence will impact on their eligibility to remain in the UK, and so should consult with immigration advice before making any decision.

Full-time/part-time

You may be able to switch between full-time and part-time attendance at University. Not all programmes have a part-time option, so you should check with your department first.
Speak with your supervisor and discuss the options available to you. This decision should not be taken lightly. It is essential that you understand the implications that changing your mode of attendance may have.

Changing your mode of attendance will affect the end of your period of registration, your submission deadline and the tuition fees payable for the remainder of your programme. It will alter how you fulfil the University's requirement of a minimum period of registration.

Changing your mode of attendance may also affect your entitlement to:

- Financial support
- Funding
- Student visas
- Accommodation
- Council Tax exemptions.
- Tuition fees and accommodation.

Your funding body may place restrictions on whether and how often you can change status. RSA can give you further guidance.

For more information, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/change/full-time-part-time/.

**Change programmes**

While we do not encourage research students to change programme, situations may arise which make a change worthwhile.

Reasons may include:

- you're progressing well at a lower level and wish to upgrade to a degree at a higher level;
- you have not met the requirements for the degree for which you are registered and are transferring to a lower degree;
- a change in personal circumstances means you need to end your programme early, but still want to receive a qualification;
- your supervisor is moving to a different department.

This is by no means an exhaustive list. Reasons for a change of programme are often unique to your situation. If you think a change of programme may be right for you, you should speak to your supervisor.

For more information, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/change/transfer/.
Extension

If exceptional circumstances are affecting your ability to work in the final 3 months before your submission deadline, you may be permitted to extend your submission deadline, but only in proportion to the documented impact on your work. You should be planning to submit considerably before the deadline to allow for less exceptional but still unpredictable events that might affect your work.

There is no guarantee that you will be able to extend your programme in this way, especially if the circumstances could have been remedied with a leave of absence at an earlier stage. Extensions are normally limited to a maximum of six months. In exceptionally compelling circumstances, a longer extension of up to one year may be granted. Multiple extensions exceeding a total period of two years will not normally be granted.

Applications for extensions should be made before your current submission deadline. If you need to apply for an extension of submission date, you should speak to your supervisor. This date should be justified by the circumstances and approved by the departmental Graduate Chair or the Director of Graduate Studies.

For more information, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/change/extension/.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal is the term used when a student decides to permanently leave the University before completing their programme of study. Before deciding to withdraw you should meet your supervisor to discuss any issues you may have and explore your options. It may be more appropriate for you to take a leave of absence, switch to part-time study, or change programmes.

If you need more advice, or want to speak to someone other than your supervisor, support is available from:

- RSA;
- the Student Hub;
- GSA.

For more information, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic/change/withdraw/.
Professional development and employability

Teaching/demonstrating opportunities

As a research student, you work at the cutting edge of your field. You live, breathe and care passionately about your subject. We encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities available to teach and share some of your expertise with other students. Each department has a designated Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) co-ordinator who organises the teaching opportunities and provides support.

Why teach? It can:

- improve your confidence;
- enhance your ability to explain and engage people with your research;
- allow you to reflect on the impact of your research and why it is important;
- develop skills of creativity and innovation in you and your students;
- increase your resilience and resourcefulness;
- assimilate you into the faculty as a recognised expert in your field.

The departmental administrator or the PGWT co-ordinator will send out information regarding opportunity, application and the selection process to become a PGWT in the department.

You are welcome to contact the PGWT co-ordinator to express your interest of teaching. The co-ordinator’s detail can be found on the administration and leadership roles in this handbook.

All students who wish to teach at the University must attend the ‘Introduction to Learning and Teaching’ workshop. The training for GTAs is designed to help you develop the skills and confidence you need to support your students. For more information on training opportunities, visit: https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/training-forums/research-excellence-training-team/postgraduates-who-teach/.

RETT additionally advertises teaching opportunities for GTAs on behalf of academic and support departments (e.g. Maths Skills Centre and Writing Centre Tutors), visit: https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/training-forums/research-excellence-training-team/postgraduates-who-teach/teaching-opportunities-for-postgraduates/.

Public engagement

Another way to share your expertise and enthusiasm for your research is through public engagement. The University runs a range of one-off and ongoing public events and initiatives that are fantastic opportunities for you to share your research and its findings with a broad audience. This includes events such as YorNight, York Talks and the Festival of Ideas. For more information, visit https://www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/.

Like teaching, public engagement activities can:

- improve your confidence;
enhance your ability to explain and engage people with your research;
allow you to reflect on the impact of your research and why it is important;
assimilate you into the faculty as a recognised expert in your field.

Careers/employability

The University Careers service offers information and advice to support postgraduate researchers with their skills development and career planning. For more information, visit [https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/careers/](https://www.york.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/careers/).

Some of the services they offer:
- Skills development courses
- Volunteering in local schools and the community
- Student business support and enterprise activities
- Access to part-time work, internship and graduate job opportunities
- Help with choosing and researching career ideas
- Access to careers information on your department, industry sectors, types of work and study opportunities
- Recognition of your achievements through the York Award
- Online Employability Tutorial to help you get the most out of your time at York and plan for your future
- Interactive Careers Service with online database of jobs and opportunities, events and appointment booking
Appeals and complaints

A complaint is about any service received. An appeal is about an academic decision reached.

Appeals

You can appeal against a procedural error in arriving at the academic decision or on the basis of mitigating circumstances if you have a good reason for not declaring these at the appropriate time. You cannot appeal against an academic judgement of the quality of your work.

Complaints

You may complain about your experience of any academic or non-academic service you have received as a student. If you are not happy with the outcome of an initial investigation of your complaint you can pursue your complaint further under the formal Complaints Procedure.

The GSA has a dedicated advice service to guide students through these procedures. If you are considering making an appeal or a complaint, email advice@yorkgsa.org, or visit http://www.yorkgsa.org/students/welfare/book-an-advice-service-appointment/.

For more information on complaints and appeals, and how to complain or appeal visit: https://www.york.ac.uk/students/help/appeals.
Disclaimer

Whilst the University tries to ensure that information contained in this document is accurate when published, the University does not accept liability for any inaccuracies contained within it. Where circumstances occur or change outside the reasonable control of the University, the University reserves the right to change or cancel parts of, or entire, programmes of study or services at any time without liability, before or after students have registered at the University. Circumstances outside the University’s reasonable control include: industrial action, over or under-demand from students, staff illness, lack of funding, severe weather, fire, civil disorder, political unrest, government restrictions and concern regarding risk of transmission of serious illness. The University’s contract with its students does not confer third party benefits under the Contract (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999.
## Glossary

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<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>BoS</td>
<td>Board of Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDT</td>
<td>Centre for Doctoral Training</td>
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<td>CELT</td>
<td>Centre for English Language Teaching</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Departmental Research Committee</td>
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<td>DTC</td>
<td>Departmental Teaching Committee</td>
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<td>DTP</td>
<td>Doctoral Training Partnership</td>
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<td>GSA</td>
<td>Graduate Students' Association</td>
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<td>GTA</td>
<td>Graduate Teaching Assistant</td>
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<td>RETT</td>
<td>Research Excellence Training Team</td>
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<td>RSA</td>
<td>Research Student Administration</td>
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<td>RST</td>
<td>Research Support Team (Library)</td>
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<td>SCA</td>
<td>Standing Committee on Assessment</td>
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<td>SCC</td>
<td>Special Cases Committee</td>
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<td>Thesis Advisory Panel</td>
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<td>YGRS</td>
<td>York Graduate Research School</td>
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<td>YUSU</td>
<td>University of York Students' Union</td>
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