University of Portsmouth

Guidance for Distance Learning and Part-Time Postgraduate Research Students Working Remotely

To be read in conjunction with the [Research Degrees Operational Handbook](#).

Contents

Introduction and purpose

Welcome to the University of Portsmouth and the beginning of your postgraduate research studies. Our University provides a richly diverse, friendly and thriving research environment, and we are very aware of the additional considerations involved in supporting learners working remotely from our campus for part or all of their studies.

The purpose of this handbook is to enable you to easily identify the staff, processes and resources that will support you throughout your registration, and to ensure you quickly feel a part of our research community. You will have many questions as you begin your research, and the following information will provide answers and points of contact for you.

As well as your supervisors, there are staff in your Faculty and the Graduate School who are here to support you, and there will be many opportunities online for you to attend events and training which enable you to meet your fellow postgraduate research students (PGRSs). Your individual development is vital to your research, but we will also help you to balance independent working with opportunities to share thoughts, ideas and experiences with other students and academics.

We very much hope you will enjoy your studies and would encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities available to you to enhance your research and employability skills. As we help you to carry out your research in a safe, ethical and robust manner, we will do all we can to support you in planning for your future career.

IMPORTANT: in your first supervisory meeting, complete the contact list in Appendix E.

Important links and resources

Research Degrees Operational Handbook	Comprehensive guidance for each stage of your qualification – **read this in the first month**.
The Graduate School Hub Moodle Site	Hundreds of training resources and links to external support.
Regulations and Guidance	Guidance and forms for each stage of your qualification.
Resources for Postgraduate Research Students	Quick links to a wide range of support.
How to Use Your Student View	View your course information and make requests to the University.
Research Ethics	**Complete the Ethics Screening Tool** to see if you need to make a full application.

Quick guide to terminology in this document

Asynchronous Non-live online training resources including recordings of live sessions, guidance documents and online courses that can be accessed at any time via the [Graduate School Moodle Hub](#).

Contact hours Contact hours are those spent with the supervisors(s) and student together, whether in person or online. The [supervisor workload allocation](#) also includes non-contact time which they will use for marking drafts, research in support of your work and administration.

DDPGR Departmental Director of Postgraduate Research – see [Appendix E](#).

DNA Development Needs Analysis is the process of assessing your strengths and development needs in order to identify appropriate training. The student and first supervisor should discuss this at the beginning of each year of study, and there is a tool in [Skills Forge](#) to support the process.

FDPGR Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research – see [Appendix E](#).

GProf [Graduate Students' Professional Development Programme](#): the initial teacher training programme for postgraduate research students.

GSDP [Graduate School Development Programme](#).

Milestones [Milestones](#) are key points in the registration of postgraduate research students such as yearly reviews and the final examination.

PGRS Postgraduate Research Student.

Synchronous Synchronous online training is delivered live online by a tutor, who can therefore interact and answer questions.

Student mode definitions

Distance learning definition

A Distance Learning (DL) PhD student is enrolled full-time or part-time at the University of Portsmouth but is not required to visit the campus at any stage of their registration. Supervision, training and examination are provided via video-conferencing and other electronic means such as email, the University Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle), and online resources developed or subscribed to by the University.

Other enrolment formats may be agreed during the admissions process, such as Collaborative Partnerships or split campus arrangements, in which the UoP elements are delivered as distance learning.
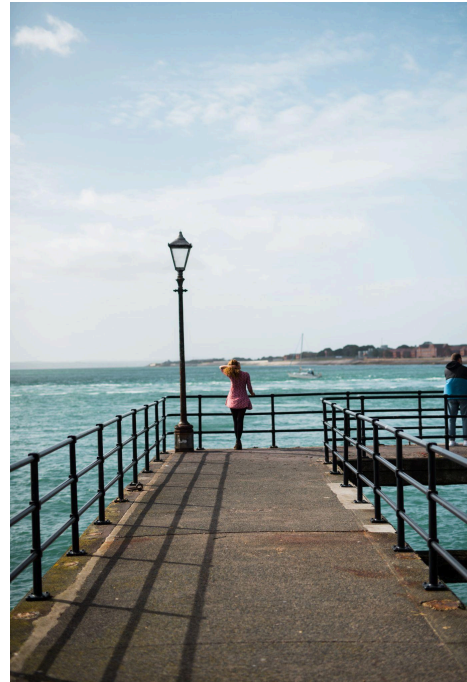
The current regulations for research degrees will apply and it will be the norm for induction, supervisor meetings, reviews and examination to take place online. Electronic submission of written material will be facilitated, and the satisfactory submission format for any relevant artefacts will be agreed during the admissions process.

PLEASE NOTE: a DL PhD student is not expected to visit the campus during their degree but they may visit by arrangement with their supervisor. Access to physical resources during such a trip cannot be guaranteed, but can be discussed with the supervisor. If a DL student wishes to start attending regularly a change of registration may be considered.

Part-time definition

Part-time PGRSs will undertake six years of study instead of three for full-time. Students who choose this mode generally do so because of ongoing work or other obligations which they must continue to meet while studying, and this can mean that they work remotely for a large proportion of their registration.

Studying part-time does not affect the key milestones of a research degree except for the order of yearly reviews as explained in the PhD Milestones section of this guidance. Although the majority of their study will not be based at the University of Portsmouth, part-time students **may** attend the University of Portsmouth for Induction, Major and Annual Reviews and Viva Voce examination(s).

Registration and identity checks

You will need to register at the start of your course and re-register each year via the online registration form. Once you receive an email notifying you when you can register, log in to your Student View to complete this form. If you experience any issues when completing the registration form, please contact regform@port.ac.uk or +44 (0)23 9284 7745.

You will also need to produce your personal identification (ID) documents as part of a virtual ID check at the start of your programme. For International and EU students, this is required at the start of each academic year as part of our obligations to UK Visa and Immigration.

You will receive an email once you have completed the online registration process with further information.

Induction and making contact

Distance Learning students receive the Graduate School Induction Programme online and we will send you the joining instructions. Part-time students may also register for online induction if they are unable to attend the face-to-face event. International time differences may make it difficult for you to access induction at a suitable time, but you can contact graduate.school@port.ac.uk if this is the case to arrange alternative ways to see the materials. Each Faculty and School will also offer you Induction activities in a suitable format, so please ensure you attend all of them to give yourself the best start to your programme.

The Graduate School will advertise online follow-up sessions to enable students working remotely to meet peers and colleagues from across the University, and ask any further questions they may have following Induction.

Part-time and distance learning students will also be invited to join the Part-time and Distance Learning Online Community (PaDLOC). This runs fortnightly in the evenings to provide training and foster a supportive community of doctoral researchers. Running throughout the academic year, the

programme includes sessions adapted from the campus based Graduate School Development School Programme, writing workshops and informal discussion and peer support sessions. You can attend whichever sessions you like and will have the opportunity to suggest topics and themes for the programme.

Supervision, contact hours and communication

You will have at least two and sometimes three supervisors. Supervisors are allocated a fixed number of hours each year for the supervision of PGRSs, split between them:

- For a full-time student this is 90 hours in total across all supervisors;
- For a part-time student this is 45 hours in total across all supervisors.

This allocation is for contact hours with you and non-contact work such as marking drafts of your work and administration. You will usually interact with your first supervisor more than with second and third supervisors. Regular communication is strongly recommended to support your progress, confidence and wellbeing, and records of supervisory meetings and action plans will be maintained on Skills Forge, the postgraduate research management software used by the Graduate School.

You can expect your first supervisor to:

- agree a schedule of meetings with you;
- sign off your records of meetings on Skills Forge;
- discuss and agree a programme of research training;
- provide or direct you to sources of advice and guidance when required;
- monitor the progress of your research project;
- provide timely and constructive feedback on drafts of your work;
- ensure that ethical screening is undertaken, and that ethical approval is sought, where applicable, before data collection;
- ensure that your research is conducted in accordance with the agreed principles;
- ensure that you are aware of institutional-level information regarding ethics, careers guidance, health and safety legislation and equality, diversity and inclusion legislation;
- complete administrative and practical arrangements for review panels and examination;
- support you in preparing for reviews and examination;
- ensure that you have the opportunity to meet other researchers working in the same area.

A full description of the first supervisor is in the Research Degrees Operational Handbook.

Part-time students should undertake around 18.5 hours of research activity per week. Supervisors will encourage scheduling of this time and offer support where required.

PhD milestones

This section summarises the key stages and processes of PhD research with notes to indicate where there are differences between full-time (normally three years) and part-time (normally six years) practices. Please refer to the [Research Degrees Operational Handbook](#) for comprehensive guidance.

Admissions process – from first point of contact to application, interview and acceptance.

Fees and funding – the schedule and method for the payment of fees is established.

Registration – students complete necessary checks and receive confirmation of the terms and duration of their registration.

Induction – full introduction to School, Faculty and Graduate School provision.

Development opportunities – Development Needs Analysis completed annually with supervisors, and training booked or arranged.

Graduate School Development Programme – mapped against the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, these [training sessions](#) cover a broad range of topics which will be useful at various stages of your research.

Ethical Review – all students complete the Ethics Screening Tool and, if appropriate, Application for Ethical Review. Please see [Research Ethics](#) for the process and forms. **IMPORTANT**: **if you apply for Ethical Review, a favourable opinion must be issued by the Faculty Ethics Committee before you collect any data.**

Annual Review – the student submits evidence by the deadline and meets with a panel of academics to assess progress. For part-time students, this happens at the end of years 1,3,4,5; for full-time, at the end of year 2; for Prof Docs, at the end of each year of the research phase until submission.

Major Review – the student submits evidence by the deadline and meets with a panel of academics to assess capability to complete satisfactorily. For part-time students, this happens at the end of year 2; for full-time, at the end of year 1; Prod Docs do not undertake Major Review.

Interim Examination - if a PGRS does not seem to be progressing as anticipated at any point during their studies, an Interim Examination can be requested by the supervisory team to provide the student with the opportunity to demonstrate that their standard of work and commitment are sufficient to continue the registration.

Submission – the student must submit the thesis and, where applicable, an artefact, by the deadline. Research Degrees will contact the student to remind them of the deadline which will normally be at the end of year 6 for part-time students, and year 3 for full-time.

Examination – an online Viva Voce will be arranged according to the regulations of the particular award.

Post-examination amendments – where the Examiners require these, the student is given 3, 6 or 12 months to complete amendments and resubmit. A second Viva Voce may be required.

Examiners award a degree – following receipt of a successful decision by the Examiners, the student completes any final amendments, submits the thesis to the University, and completes remaining forms and duties. Once this stage is complete, the student will receive their parchment (certificate).

Graduation – you will be invited to attend a Graduation Ceremony. If you are hoping to attend graduation, which happens in July each year, your final thesis must be submitted by 5th July of that year. For any final thesis submitted after this date, the award confirmation and parchments will be confirmed and produced as soon as possible, and you will be eligible to attend graduation the following year.

Mutual commitment to promote success and wellbeing

A postgraduate research degree involves a dialogue between the student and the supervisors as the student gradually develops into a fully independent researcher. We are very aware of our commitment to this dialogue and, for students working remotely, of the additional need to ensure the dialogue is regular, comprehensive and supportive. At the same time, students need to participate constructively in the dialogue and be willing to respond to feedback to ensure progress. The following statement of our mutual commitment has been adapted from Alan Tait's recommendations 'for optimising student success in open, distance and online programmes' (2018, p. 107). We hope it will enable you to appreciate the way in which we prepare to support you academically and personally, and also to adopt a positive approach to your studies.

Our commitment to you

1. **Learning design as a framework:** supervisors will work with you to ensure digital technologies support your research, and that you are welcomed into the University research community. This will include Department, Faculty and Graduate School opportunities to help you develop and network with colleagues.

2. **Pre-study information, advice, guidance and admission:** the admissions process will take into account your application, circumstances and available resources to ensure any offer of a place is based on a secure understanding of your needs.

3. **Curriculum for student success:** the curriculum will develop through dialogue between you and your supervisors as you design research questions, establish your methodology and define the scope of the research.

4. **Assessment and Examination:** you will receive regular feedback through the supervisory relationship, assessment at the end of each year in the form of Annual and Major Reviews, and a mock Viva Voce in preparation for the final examination.

5. **Intervention at key points and in response to student need:** supervisors will support you in preparing your submissions as key deadlines approach, and will respond to your needs in a timely manner with advice or appropriate referrals.

6. **Personalised support:** supervisors will listen to you, value your contributions, take account of individual needs and foster wellbeing.

7. **Information and logistical systems:** the University will maintain responsive and agile virtual learning systems, and provide timely support for any issues that you face. You will have access to a range of administrative departments throughout your registration who will provide timely and accurate information.

8. **Managing for student success:** the University will undertake regular quality assurance activities to make improvements in response to student feedback and the rapidly evolving digital environment. Opportunities for you to give us feedback on your experience will be available all year round via student and staff forums, and through annual surveys.

Your commitment to us

By following the guidance below, you will really be helping yourself: good, regular communication is at the heart of a successful research degree, and it's important that we know how you are doing and what we can do to help.

1. **Have an open mind:** there are many twists and turns during a research degree, and you may find your initial ideas and objectives change over time as you delve further into the subject. Supervisors are there to be critical friends, so be prepared to accept feedback and review your work in light of it.

2. **Timely response:** please try to respond within a few days to requests from your supervisors and other University departments; if the response is going to take you longer than that, send a quick email to let them know you have seen the request and are working on it.

3. **Notification of change of circumstances:** it is vital that we know about any changes of circumstances as soon as possible so we can update our records and support you if necessary.

4. **Ask for help sooner rather than later:** many things can happen while you are studying and some of them may affect your engagement with research. Whatever happens, talk to us quickly, and we will do what we can to help.

5. **Deadlines:** do your best to meet deadlines for drafts of chapters and milestones such as submission for reviews or the ethics committee; supervisors and committees schedule time to work on your submissions, so lateness can affect their ability to respond quickly.

6. **Organisation:** fitting study into a busy life requires careful planning. Work with your supervisors from the outset to establish a weekly schedule and plan to access the resources you need in good time.

7. **Use resources:** your faculty and the Graduate School will provide many opportunities to attend training and events; some of these will be vital for your research, and some will help you meet people and feel connected. Look regularly at what is on offer and make time to participate.

8. **Help us to help you:** give us feedback and let us know if there are things we can do to improve your experience.

The Graduate School

The Graduate School works across all faculties to help research students and their supervisors with training, support networks and research degree processes. We offer a wide range of training and other events throughout the year and work closely with PGR Student Representatives and colleagues to improve the student experience.

Part-time students should complete 5 days of professional development each year and full-time students 10 days. Much of this can be met by attending Graduate School Development Programme (GSDP) sessions but, in agreement with your supervisor, other experience such as conferences, presentations, meetings with colleagues, external training, volunteering, committee attendance and teaching can count. Essentially, anything that will help you with your research or career is relevant.

The GSDP offers over 80 sessions, almost all of which run in online or hybrid formats. If you miss a session, we will direct you to asynchronous resources or recordings to help you with the topic. Our courses are aimed at a general audience of cross-faculty students and complement the more specialised training by faculties.

Skills Forge

Skills Forge is the software provided by the Graduate School which enables students to book courses, record their supervision meetings, and reflect on the learning and actions from development sessions and activities. Guidance documents and videos are available via the link.

At the beginning of each year, reflect on your development needs with your supervisor and plan training. Map your knowledge and skills against your research and career planning goals, and arrange training to address your development needs.

Graduate School Eventbrite

The Graduate School Eventbrite page contains information about special events that fall outside of the main Graduate School Development Programme. The annual Festival of Doctoral Research, PGR-Catch-Ups (bite-sized training workshops), our monthly online Research Culture Drop-Ins, and student-led In-Focus sessions can be found here.

Core training

The GSDP sessions you choose to attend will vary depending on your prior knowledge and the nature of your research. It is important to undertake regular professional development, however, and taking a refresher in an area you know well can sometimes be very instructive. We strongly recommend you undertake the GSDP sessions in the following table, and have suggested the stage of your research at which they might be appropriate.

The GSDP Brochure and Events Poster can be found on the Graduate School Hub.

Early stage GSDP recommendations	
Academic Skills	- Critical reading and writing - Introduction to writing the literature review - Making best use of Microsoft Word for preparing your thesis
Library Skills	Effective literature searching for researchers
Personal Effectiveness	Managing the supervisory relationship
Doctoral Process	- Preparing for your major review - Planning and writing your thesis
Research Governance and Organisation	- An introduction to research ethics, integrity and governance* - Project management for research - Managing your research data and documents
Exploring Research Design	Principles of research design
Moving Forward with Research Design and Data Collection	The courses in this domain will depend upon your research but there will be some that are directly relevant to you
Mid stage GSDP recommendations	
Academic Skills	- PhD writing retreats - Producing an authoritative thesis
Personal Effectiveness	Surviving and thriving in academia

Analysing and Presenting Research Data	The courses in this domain will depend upon your research but there will be some that are directly relevant to you
Engagement, Influence and Impact	• Writing a successful abstract • Conference skills • Getting published in print • Getting published on the web
Career Development	• Enhancing your employability during your studies • What next? Career options
Late stage GSDP recommendations	
Doctoral Process	• Preparing for your doctoral viva voce examination
Career Development	• Effective job searching • Marketing yourself: developing an effective application form or CV

* An introduction to research ethics, integrity and governance is mandatory for all students and should be undertaken early in the first year.

GProf – Introduction to teaching for postgraduate research students

The GProf introduction to teaching will be available online and is mandatory for any PGRSs who support UoP students in any way, including lecturing, leading seminars, demonstrating, marking, supervising and tutoring. You must attend the initial GProf session before working with students. While it may be unlikely that you will become involved in teaching on campus, you could be involved in teaching online in a variety of capacities.

If you are not likely to teach but are interested in teaching in the future, you are welcome to register for GProf.

GProf involves an introduction to all stages of the teaching cycle and addresses lesson planning, active learning, formative and summative assessment, standardised marking and working with individuals. You will also complete an online observation of teaching and learning in your department if this can be arranged, or a micro-teach observation with fellow PGRSs.

On the GProf Moodle Page, you will find the application form, which must be completed with your supervisor, and links for booking the sessions.

Academic integrity

Referencing

It is, of course, of the utmost importance that you provide correctly formatted references and citations for all your sources. Depending on the nature of your research, these might include all sorts of media in addition to the books and journals that we traditionally use. Whether quoting directly or paraphrasing, you must enable the reader to see where your background research ends, and your original contribution begins. As mentioned above, the Library pages will help you understand the referencing system you are using and also provide tools to help you keep track of your references as they build up. Poor management of references or a failure to cite things correctly can lead to charges of plagiarism even where it was unintentional, so decide on your approach to managing references at an early stage.

It is also important that your original work is entirely your own, and one purpose of the Viva Voce examination is to question the candidate to ensure their knowledge is consistent with the submitted work. We all discuss our work and ideas with other people, but we must acknowledge them if we incorporate their original thoughts.
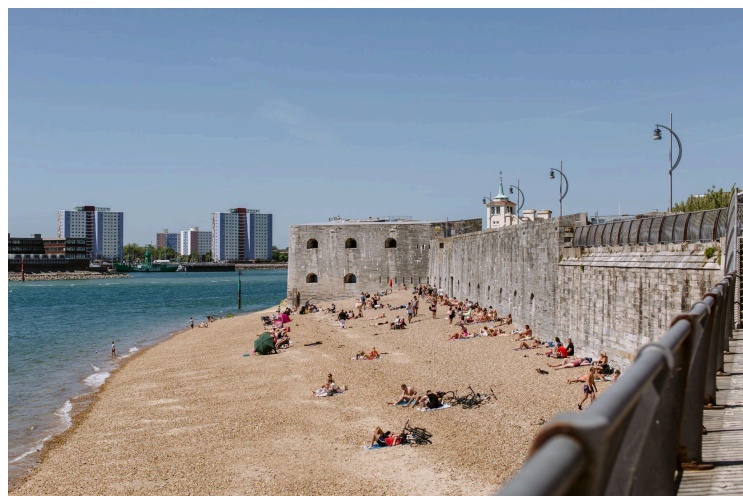
Turnitin

Turnitin is the software the University of Portsmouth uses to enable students to carry out a similarity check on drafts of their work. At the bottom of this page on the Graduate School Hub, you will be able to upload chapters and see where Turnitin detects similarities with previously published work and student submissions. A high similarity score may not be a problem if you look through the highlighted sections and see that you have correctly referenced them, but it might also indicate an over-reliance on quotation and paraphrase, or areas where you have not fully synthesised source material with your own thoughts. We strongly advise you to put your work through Turnitin before submitting drafts to your supervisor and for examination.

Thriving as a distance or remote PGR student

As you begin your research, it will be useful to consider the nature of learning at a distance and how you should approach it. Information technology has made remote learning ever more accessible to the point that Alan Tait has concluded that 'there will not in the future be anything remarkable about learning online that retains this segment descriptor as valid' (2018, p. 114). This may be true, but remote learning is still sufficiently different from most people's previous educational experiences that it repays some reflection. The following discussion is designed to support you in orientating yourself successfully as you begin your research.

Some people may feel they are more suited to remote learning than others: they may think of themselves as self-motivated and self-sufficient, and only require their supervisors to confirm they are on the right track. Others will miss the planned and unplanned social interaction that comes with life on campus such as being in seminars and meetings with peers and staff, sharing an office with colleagues in the same field, bumping into people in the corridor and having a chat. Whichever you are, research demonstrates that there are factors missing in a remote learning relationship which the University has addressed through the design of its provision. As well as gaining a qualification, we want you to feel connected and become part of our research culture.

Remote learning has distinct advantages and represents more than a simple switch from face-to-face to online: it can create opportunities for you to access education at a doctoral level while maintaining family, work or other commitments; it can provide access to specialist supervisors from wherever you are around the world; it can be available at a time that suits you no matter what time zone you are in or when you are available to study. At the same time, remote learning requires a particular level of commitment by the student and the University. To support achievement, the University provides specialist resources, bespoke training and key events for remote learners; by engaging in these, and

using your organisational and motivational skills to ensure regular progress, you will maximise your chances of success.

A positive way of approaching remote learning is to be aware of the potential issues from the start so you can plan to counteract them. Research tells us that you should not underestimate the importance of being connected with supervisors and fellow students, and ensuring this happens involves an extra level of planning and commitment. Zvavahera and Masimba (2019, p. 34) note that a lack of 'face-to-face interaction with other students and the supervisor may affect the student's

critical thinking', and that feelings of isolation 'may lead to lack of focus and delay in the completion of the programme' (p. 37). The Graduate School and faculties provide many online opportunities to train alongside and socialise with other PGRSs, so you can have those conversations which surprise, stimulate, provoke or challenge you. You can also join the PGR Society in the Student Union which delivers a range of events and ways to connect online.

Unplanned corridor conversations and 'water-cooler moments' with fellow PhD students do not happen for remote learners, and this reduces the opportunity to share problems and successes and access a network of people who can provide mutual support. It is easy to deprioritise social interaction because we feel it is less important than other goals, but it is a vital part of the PhD experience and will support your progress, self-efficacy and wellbeing. Some of our remote learning students find our virtual Research Culture Drop-In sessions and faculty coffee mornings central to their feelings of connectedness, and you can also join the Professional and Distance Learning Online Community (PaDLOC).

As a remote learner, there are fewer opportunities for vicarious learning which, as Kozar, Lum and Benson (2015, p. 450) note, arise when students observe others at work day-to-day and 'form a detailed mental image of their progress in relation to other students'. This is not about competition, but about the human tendency to observe and learn from each other as our understanding of new approaches, techniques and possibilities expands. Through our comprehensive training programmes,

you will have the opportunity to work with other PGRSs and, while we cannot transport you directly onto our campus, we hope you will network with colleagues who can provide regular discussions about progress and the next stage of development.

In working in close proximity with supervisors, Kozar et al. also observe that we can form 'an image of a possible future self, which may be not only useful for career purposes, but also highly motivating' (p. 450), and this too will be less easy online. For this reason, distance learning students need to compensate through conversation for what they miss in daily interactions. Although the main purpose of supervision meetings is your progress, ask some questions back and find out about how your supervisors approach their research, keep themselves up to date, network with colleagues, write articles, and balance their research with teaching and other responsibilities.

Making a good start is very important, and your First Supervisor will be your conduit into the wealth of support available at Portsmouth which you will find detailed in the rest of this document. Our supervisors are experts in their fields and are also skilled in supporting PhD students through their learning journey; they will be very happy to answer the many questions you will have in the early days and agree a schedule of meetings and key deadlines. We strongly recommend you agree on dates for regular supervision meetings: if you make a vague arrangement to get in touch when you need a meeting, time can quickly slip away, and you may begin to deviate from your research plan. No question is too small or too silly: please take every opportunity at the outset to make sure you understand the PhD process and how to access support, and you will begin your research with confidence and a clear sense of direction.

Reference list

Kozar, O., Lum, J. F., & Benson, P. (2015). Self-efficacy and vicarious learning in doctoral studies at a distance. *Distance Education, 36*(3), 448–454. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2015.1081739

Tait, A. (2018). Education for Development: From Distance to Open Education. *Journal of Learning for Development, 5*(2), 101–115.
http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1185867&site=eds-live

Zvavahera, P., & Masimba, F. (2019). The use of information and communication technology in supervising open and distance learning PhD students. *Ukrainian Journal of Educational Studies and Information Technology, 7*(3), 32–41. https://doi.org/10.32919/uesit.2019.03.04

Appendix A: Information technology for the distance learner

Technical recommendations

Google Apps Suite

The University of Portsmouth has Google Workspace, which allows you to work and communicate easily. Your University email address, which is your username@myport.ac.uk, can be used to access Google Mail, Calendar, Drive and many other applications.

Communication

Email

The University, the Graduate School and your supervisory team will use your @myport email address to communicate with you. You should ensure you use this email address in correspondence with the University. You may wish to set-up forwarding of emails from your @myport email account to an alternative account to ensure you do not miss communications.

Video conferencing

Zoom allows for online meetings, teaching sessions, workshops, seminars and presentations, and has an easy-to-use breakout room function.

Cisco Webex can be used for video conferencing, online meetings, screen share and webinars and can provide full transcriptions.

Google Meet is also included with your University Google account.

Equipment

As a Distance Learner, you must ensure your device has a web camera, microphone and speakers in order to fully participate in online meetings and other events. Purchasing a USB headset that includes a microphone can be particularly useful in blocking out background noise, and allows you some privacy when participating in online activities. Your Wi-Fi signal/ connectivity must be of sufficient strength to support your camera and microphone when you make presentations or attend meetings.

Developmental record

Skills Forge is the online software that allows you to book and record training and development events. Use the Development Activities tab to search for and book Graduate School Development Programme workshops, and to record any other developmental or professional activities you undertake.

The Diary tab allows you to record and share your supervisory meeting notes and actions so your First Supervisor can monitor them and sign them off.

Virtual Learning Environment

Moodle is the University of Portsmouth's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This is where you will find the Graduate School Hub site, containing a wealth of information in relation to every aspect of your time as a research degree student at Portsmouth.

Internet

Whilst undertaking your PhD remotely, you may be required to download files and software, and interact with media-rich information and audio-visual content. It is recommended that you have a minimum internet speed of **5Mbps** or more to allow for reasonable online experiences.

VPN

The University of Portsmouth Virtual Private Network (VPN) will allow you to access University services as if you were on campus. You will find more applications will be available through AppsAnywhere (see below) and you can connect to your network drives and library resources more easily.

Internet browsers

We would recommend that whatever device you are using, you install at least two different web browsers, such as Google Chrome and Firefox, or Safari and Firefox. This will ensure that you are easily able to overcome any issues if websites or applications are incompatible with certain web browsers.

File storage

You have access to network storage space on the University's computer system and your University Google account gives you access to Google Drive for storing your files. The N-drive is your own personal network storage area, and can be accessed when you connect to the University's VPN. Google Drive offers you cloud-based storage through your University account (the same as for your email), and includes Google Docs, Sheets and Slides, allowing you to create, share and collaborate on a range of documents.

Software and applications

AppsAnywhere is the University Apps store which allows students and staff to download software and apps for study and work, including Free Microsoft Office 365 for all current students

Remote access to University computers

You are able to use one of the University computers remotely and any of the software installed on that computer, or via AppsAnywhere. There are approximately 450 computers available for use which can work across many platforms, including Windows, macOS, ChromeOS, iOS and Android. You must be connected to the VPN to remotely access a University PC.

Your Student View

Your Student View is the place for your course information, registration and to make requests to the University.

LinkedIn Learning

This provides over 14,000 online courses covering business, creative, employability and technology subjects and skills.

Support

Find information on:
- research degree regulations and guidance for the registration and examination of your programme, including important deadline information and the Research Degrees Operational Handbook;
- the Graduate School Development Programme and what workshops are available to you online;
- further training and development for PGR students;

- additional Graduate School and University events available to you via [Eventbrite](#);

- University [research seminars](#);

- [Health and Wellbeing](#) support available online;

- [IT help](#) and [training](#);

- [library support](#);

- [academic support](#).

In addition to this site, you can also access [MyPort](#), where you will find information on all University of Portsmouth student services, support and information, including information to support you as you [Study Anywhere](#).

Appendix B: Useful links

Useful Links	
[Welcome to Postgraduate Study at Portsmouth](#)	☐
[MyPort Website](#)	☐
[Registration via Student View](#)	☐
[Research Degrees Operational Handbook](#)	☐
[Research Ethics](#)	☐
[The Graduate School](#)	☐
[The Graduate School Development Programme Brochure](#)	☐
IT Induction for PGRS - Available via [Induction Resources](#) Moodle page	☐
[Graduate School Hub Site](#)	☐
[Health and Wellbeing](#)	☐
[Health and Safety](#)	☐
[MyPort Information Hub](#)	☐
[Regulations](#)	☐
[Student Finance Support](#)	☐
[Library Website](#)	☐
[International Students](#)	☐
[ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES](#)	☐

Appendix C: Student support

Academic support

Please visit the [Support Tutors and Advisors](#) page of the website to see the range of support available in your Faculty. If you are looking for support with general academic skills such as time-planning, writing and referencing, please visit the [Academic Skills Support](#) page. If you are looking to boost your English skills, you can study short modules alongside your degree with the [In-Sessional English](#) programme.

Library

Please visit the [Library](#) website for information about the electronic books, journals, theses and other resources available to you. We would encourage you to arrange a meeting with the relevant [Faculty librarian](#) to discuss your research and explore the full range of support the Library can provide including guidance for [distance learners](#).

The Library can also support you with referencing: once you have agreed with your supervisor which referencing style you will be using, please refer to the Library's [Referencing](#) page.

Faculty

You can contact your Faculty via the [Myport Information Hub](#).

If you change your address or contact details, you can update them on Student View. These are vital as they are used for communicating key information and sending out results. Any change in personal details must be updated on Student View or notified to the Faculty with supporting evidence.

Wellbeing

Working remotely can leave students feeling isolated, and this can lead them to overlook the mechanisms we have in place to support people with physical and mental health issues. Our colleagues are very happy to schedule telephone calls or one-to-one video conferences to talk through things with you. In some instances, where we may not have access to physical services that are local to you, we will still be able to offer advice, or accommodate you in ways which give you the opportunity to look after yourself and succeed with your research. The [Student Wellbeing Service](#) offers a range of opportunities for remote learners to speak confidentially with someone who can help.

Finance

Postgraduate research students may be self-funded or supported in a number of ways financially to enable them to complete their studies. Issues may arise during your registration, so it is important to know who to contact if you need advice and guidance.

The [Student Finance Support](#) team can be contacted at the email address below or, if you'd prefer to talk through your financial concerns, a member of the team can give you a call.

The team includes advisers who are members of the Institute of Money Advisers and the National Association of Student Money Advisers. Everything you tell them will be kept in the strictest confidence.

International Students

For advice and support, including visa and immigration advice for [International students](#), contact the International Student Advisers at international.student.adviser@port.ac.uk.
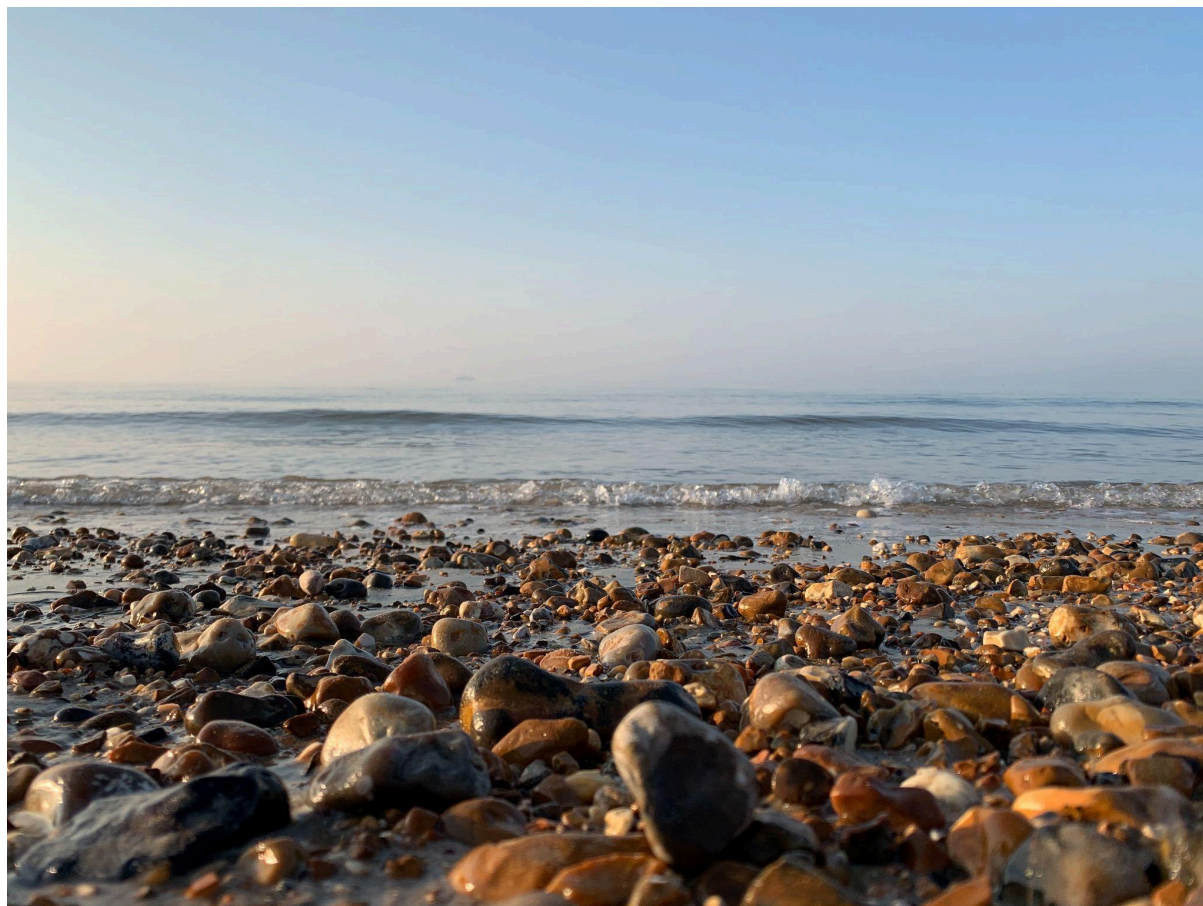
Appendix D: Characteristics of doctoral graduates

The [Quality Assurance Agency](#) (QAA) informs Higher Education practice and states that doctoral graduates should be able to:

- search for, discover, access, retrieve, sift, interpret, analyse, evaluate, manage, conserve and communicate an ever-increasing volume of knowledge from a range of sources
- think critically about problems to produce innovative solutions and create new knowledge; plan, manage and deliver projects, selecting and justifying appropriate methodological processes while recognising, evaluating and minimising the risks involved and impact on the environment
- exercise professional standards in research and research integrity, and engage in professional practice, including ethical, legal, and health and safety aspects, bringing enthusiasm, perseverance and integrity to bear on their work activities
- support, collaborate with and lead colleagues, using a range of teaching, communication and networking skills to influence practice and policy in diverse environments
- appreciate the need to engage in research with impact and to be able to communicate it to diverse audiences, including the public
- build relationships with peers, senior colleagues, students and stakeholders with sensitivity to equality, diversity and cultural issues.

Furthermore, doctoral researchers are increasingly being encouraged to develop their foreign language and enterprise skills, and to cultivate business acumen.

All doctoral graduates will have developed during the course of their research additional specialist knowledge within their discipline, while those who have studied a professional doctorate are likely to have been required to have particular professional experience that informs the topic of their research studies. They may well also have been required to engage in further study related to that professional field as part of their doctorate.

Finally, doctoral graduates are able to prepare, plan and manage their own career development while knowing when and where to draw on support.

Appendix E: Research contacts

This section summarises the main people and departments who will support you during your research. There are many job titles and details to remember, so it will be helpful to make a note here.

Your School and Faculty

The University of Portsmouth is organised in five faculties, each containing a number of schools and/or departments.

Your School	
Your Faculty	

Supervisors

Your first supervisor will be your main point of contact throughout your registration and will put you in touch with other University support departments where necessary. You will usually have a second supervisor and possibly a third, and it will be useful to get a clear picture of their specialisms in your initial meetings so you know who to contact about the various elements of your research. As a distance or part-time learner, regular meetings with your supervisors are strongly recommended.

Role	Name	Email
First Supervisor		
Second Supervisor		
Third Supervisor		

Departmental Director of Postgraduate Research (DDPGR)

Each school or department has a DDPGR who is there to support you and your supervisory team. They are members of the Faculty Research Degree Committee and may become involved with arrangements for events such as Annual and Major Reviews. If, for any reason, you cannot contact your supervisors, you should contact your DDPGR. Your supervisor will give you the name of your DDPGR during induction. Full list of DDPGRs

Role	Name	Email
DDPGR		

Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research (FDPGR)

Each of the five faculties has a FDPGR who chairs the Faculty Research Degree Committee and is responsible for overseeing the operational processes for PGRSs in accordance with the regulations. FDPGRs and DDPGRs will also invite you to attend training and social events, and will put you in contact with faculty networks.

FDPGRs		
Business and Law	Dr Jana Ries	jana.ries@port.ac.uk
Creative and Cultural Industries	Dr Yael Friedman	yael.friedman@port.ac.uk
Humanities and Social Sciences	Dr Charlotte Boyce	charlotte.boyce@port.ac.uk
Science and Health	Dr Alessandra Fasulo	alessandra.fasulo@port.ac.uk
Technology	Prof Robert Crittenden	robert.crittenden@port.ac.uk

Faculty Librarian

You are strongly advised to contact your faculty librarian at an early stage to discuss access to online resources, collections and archives that may be useful to you. They are very happy to make appointments to meet you and discuss your research.

Faculty Librarians		
Business and Law - Law and Criminology	Mystery Beck	mystery.beck@port.ac.uk
Business and Law – Business School	Hannah Porter	hannah.porter@port.ac.uk
Creative and Cultural Industries	Greta Friggens	greta.friggens@port.ac.uk
Humanities and Social Sciences	Anne Worden	anne.worden@port.ac.uk
Science and Health	Hannah Britcher	hannah.britcher@port.ac.uk
Technology	Timothy Collinson	timothy.collinson@port.ac.uk

Department of Academic Services (DAS)

The Research Degrees section of DAS can help you with any matters related to the regulations.

DAS	Email
Regulation and examination queries	researchdegrees@port.ac.uk

Graduate School

[The Graduate School](#) key contact details:

Type of query	Email
Graduate School Development Programme	gsdp@port.ac.uk
General queries	graduate.school@port.ac.uk

PGR Student Reps

Each school has up to two PGR student reps who are members of the Faculty Research Degree Committee. They can discuss any issues you would like to raise at committee or at the Super Rep Group, a meeting of all PGR Student Reps from across the University. Your supervisor will give you the name of your student reps during induction, and you may have the opportunity to become a rep during your time at Portsmouth.

PGR Student Rep Name	Email

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