

School of Psychology



MPhil in Behavioural and Neural Sciences

2011-2012



University
of
St Andrews

Introduction

Welcome to the University of St Andrews. This handbook contains essential information for postgraduate students in the School of Psychology enrolled on the MPhil in Behavioural and Neural Sciences programme. Below, you will find information regarding the requirements for study, important deadlines, information on people who will be assisting in your training and a description of the resources of the School. Please read the handbook carefully. Further information can also be located via the School of Psychology website (<http://psy.st-andrews.ac.uk>) and the University website (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk>).

A whole network of people are devoted to supporting your training, including your primary supervisor, secondary supervisor, the Director of Postgraduates, the Course Controller, the Postgraduate Tutor, the Head of School, the School's support staff and various University officials outwith the School. The roles of these people are described below. The main point is that we are all here to help you and that you should exercise initiative in seeking information and assistance with your training and research. We hope that your MPhil will be a productive and rewarding experience.

Staff and student representatives involved in postgraduate training

Title	Role	Name
Primary supervisor	Student's sponsor and mentor in the School, responsible for supervising research and monitoring student progress	To be appointed in advance
Secondary supervisor	Student's second mentor in the School, responsible for advising and monitoring student progress	To be appointed within first three months
Director of Postgraduates	Strategic management of postgraduate training, admissions, progress review and student welfare	Dr Sue Healy sdh11@st-andrews.ac.uk
MPhil Course Controller	Handles the delivery of the course and can advise about assessments	Dr Gillian Brown grb4@st-andrews.ac.uk
Postgraduate Tutor	Provides support and advice for postgraduate students; ensures student concerns are noted during progress reviews	Dr Barbara Dritschel bd9@st-andrews.ac.uk
Head of School	Overall responsibility for operation of the School of Psychology	Prof Verity Brown vjb@st-andrews.ac.uk
Postgraduate Committee	Reviews the progress reports and approves progression through degree	Convener: Dr Sue Healy sdh11@st-andrews.ac.uk

Secretary to the Postgraduate Committee	Keeping and organising postgraduate training records	Helen Sunderland hes1@st-andrews.ac.uk
Convenor of the School Ethics Committee	Convenor of the committee and advises on ethics applications, advises on health and safety procedures	Mary Latimer ml4@st-andrews.ac.uk
Postgraduate Statistics Tutor	Holds 'drop-in' clinics for postgraduate students who have questions about statistics	Dr Eric Bowman emb@st-andrews.ac.uk
Psychology Disabilities Coordinator	Provides advice and support for students with disabilities	Dr Dhanraj Vishwanath dv10@st-andrews.ac.uk
Postgraduate Representative	Represents the postgraduate community at School Council	To be announced
Internal examiner	Member of academic staff who will read and assess the six-month report and final MPhil thesis	To be appointed after three months
External examiner	Member of academic staff from another institution who is suitably qualified to assess the final MPhil thesis	To be appointed after six months

Programme overview

The IBANS MPhil degree consists solely of an independent research project, conducted over a 12-month period (or an equivalent period of part-time study) under the supervision of one or more members of the Institute of Behavioural and Neural Sciences. Your primary supervisor will already be known to you and will have supported your initial application to the programme. Your secondary supervisor can be allocated either before or after your arrival in St Andrews and would ideally have expertise in your area of research. The secondary supervisor will monitor your progress, provide input to your project and comment on your written reports. The MPhil degree does not require students to enrol on any taught courses (i.e. no credits from taught courses are required).

- i) **On arrival in St Andrews** When you arrive at the University, you will need to matriculate. You should also contact your primary supervisor to arrange a meeting to discuss your research project and your training needs. You are encouraged to undertake a *Development Needs Analysis* that will lead to an agreed skills training programme (http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/gradskills/skills_analysis/development_analysis.php). Your training can be recorded in the *Postgraduate Logbook* at the end of this handbook.
- ii) **The two-month report** Two months after your start date (i.e. **Friday 25th November** for students starting on 27th September 2011), you must submit a written report (maximum **1,500 words**, including references) that i) briefly describes your area of research, ii)

summarises your academic achievements since starting at the University, and iii) presents a planned research programme for the remaining ten months of the MPhil degree. Please provide both your primary and secondary supervisors with the opportunity to read and comment upon the report prior to submission. Submit two copies of the report to Helen Sunderland (School of Psychology main office) by the deadline. The primary and secondary supervisors also independently complete student progress forms, which are submitted to the Committee. The student and supervisors are required to nominate an Internal Examiner at this 2-month point. All of these reports will be read by the Postgraduate Research Committee, and a meeting will take place involving the student, the two supervisors and the Convenor of the Postgraduate Committee to discuss your progress and provide formative feedback to yourself and your supervisors. The student is expected to bring a completed *Developmental Needs Analysis* table to the meeting.

- iii) **The six month report** Six months after your start date (i.e. **Monday 26th March 2012** for students starting on Tuesday 27th September 2011), you must submit another written report (maximum **3,000 words**, including references). This report should contain i) a brief literature review your research area, ii) details of the research carried out in St Andrews so far, including data collected and analysed, and iii) a detailed plan of your remaining research programme. Please provide both your primary and secondary supervisors with the opportunity to read and comment upon the report prior to submission. Submit two copies of the report to Helen Sunderland (School of Psychology main office) by the deadline. The report will be read by the Convenor of the Postgraduate Committee and the Internal Examiner, and the student will be assessed by oral examination. At this stage, the Postgraduate Committee will either recommend that the student is allowed to progress with the MPhil degree and complete the final six months, or recommend that the student writes up the research for a Postgraduate Diploma (the Diploma thesis would be submitted 9 months from the start date and examined by an internal committee, usually consisting of the second supervisor and Convenor of the Postgraduate Committee, via oral examination).
- iv) **The final assessment** At the end of the 12-month period (i.e. **Wednesday 26th September 2012** for students starting on Tuesday 27th September 2011), you will be required to submit an MPhil thesis (maximum **40,000 words**) which will be examined by the Internal examiner and the External. Your final thesis deadline will be **12 months** from your start date and will normally be examined within 3 months of submission.
- v) In **December**, you are expected to present a **poster** at the annual School of Psychology Postgraduate Poster Session (date to be confirmed).
- vi) **Undergraduate or postgraduate taught courses** can be taken by the student, if the student and both supervisors agree. Such courses can help to cover any skill gaps that are revealed by the *Developmental Needs Analysis*. For example, SS5014: 'Quantitative skills in the social

science' and PS5005: 'Methods of data analysis in psychology' would be particularly useful if you are lacking statistical training.

- vii) You are **encouraged to attend** the weekly School of Psychology Seminar Series that runs on Friday afternoons during the semester in the Old Library, plus the Psycholoquia Ph.D. student talks that run on Thursday lunchtimes in the Seminar Room.

Policy and procedures

The University's Policy for supervisors and students in research postgraduate programmes (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/tlac/postgraduate/research/#d.en.53733>) contains lots of useful information on topics such as periods of study, appointment of examining committees, and fees. Information about School policies and procedures are available via the PICTS system on the School website (<http://psy.st-andrews.ac.uk/admin/index.shtml>).

Academic misconduct and plagiarism

The University website provides up-to-date information for postgraduate students on a variety of issues (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/pgstudents/>), including academic misconduct and plagiarism. You should be aware that the University takes academic misconduct and plagiarism extremely seriously. Please read both of the following carefully:

- i) the student academic misconduct policy

<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/tlac/academicmisconduct/academicmisconduct/>

- ii) the student guide to avoiding academic misconduct allegations

<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/tlac/academicmisconduct/avoidingallegations/>

Ethical review and risk assessment

All research conducted by postgraduate students of the School on human or animal subjects must be approved by the appropriate ethics committee. Each student must be aware of the procedures required to apply for ethical approval of their proposed research. Most research projects will require approval from the School of Psychology ethics committee, convened by Mrs Mary Latimer (ml4@st-andrews.ac.uk). More details are available in the Ethics folder on the PICTS webpages. Research proposals with significant ethics considerations will be considered by the University's Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC, <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/utrec/>) or the Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/research/animalsinresearch/>). Any MPhil thesis that includes research that required ethical approval should have the approval letter bound into the thesis before submission. In addition, all projects must also be risk assessed by the researchers. More details are available in the Safety folder on the PICTS webpages. For further information, please contact Mrs Mary Latimer (ml4@st-andrews.ac.uk), as the School Safety Co-ordinator.

Supplementary training within the University

The University offers a range of training programmes that are relevant to postgraduates:

SALTIRE

SALTIRE is the University's central point for assistance with learning (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/saltire/>). It aims to encourage excellence and innovation in learning and teaching by providing support and guidance for students and staff.

GRADSkills

The University include GRADSkills provides award-winning professional development training for postgraduate students (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/GRADskills/>).

Maths Support Centre

If you are having difficulty with a statistical problem, your first points of contact should be your supervisors. The School's Postgraduate Statistics Tutor provides a backup when the student and supervisors want an extra opinion or perhaps a fresh perspective. However, if you have more general maths questions, the Maths Support Centre can provide additional tuition (<http://www.standrews.ac.uk/students/academic/Studysupport/MathsSupportCentre/>).

English language support

The English Language Support Service provides tutorials and formal classes in all aspects of the English language for students whose first language is not English (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/elt/students/support/>).

The UK GRAD programme

The funding councils and other organisations that support research have established a website for postgraduate training (www.grad.ac.uk). Although the material on the web site is aimed at PhD students, there is a wealth of information on general issues for postgraduates. This currently includes a section entitled "Just for Postgrads", in which there are useful checklists for evaluating your strengths, weaknesses and training needs. Also, there are links to various web sites that are designed to enhance postgraduate training.

Student services

Careers Centre

The Careers Centre provides information about employment opportunities and about strategies that can be used to search for employment once you have graduated (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/careers/>).

Library facilities

The main University library is located on North Street, and an additional library is located in St Mary's Quadrangle (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/library/>). Numerous on-line resources are also available, including a large database of scientific journals and search engines, such as Web of Science. Your matriculation card will enable you to borrow items from the library and to use the inter-library loan service to obtain items that are not available in St Andrews.

Student Support

A range of support is available to students from the University's Student Services (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/admissions/ug/Studentlife/Studentsupport/>). Students may wish to obtain advice and guidance from within the School in the first instance. If so, you should contact the Postgraduate Tutor who will identify the most appropriate person to speak to you. Personal matters will be dealt with in confidence, and information will only be passed to other members of staff in accordance with the University's confidentiality policy (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/rules/dataprotection/studentconfidentialitycode/>).

Students with special needs

Students with special needs or disabilities should contact the School Disabilities Coordinator. Additional information is available on support and assistance available from the University (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/admissions/ug/Studentlife/Studentswithdisabilities/>).

Sickness absence reporting

Students are responsible for providing information about medical or personal conditions affecting their study promptly and fully through submitting a self-certificate to the Academic Support Office, Old Union Building. These will be monitored, and frequent absences will result in a request to see Student Support Services.

School of Psychology Postgraduate Representative

Postgraduate students in the School have an elected representative to put forward their views both within the School and within the University. The major forum in which postgraduate issues are discussed is the Postgraduate Committee. The Postgraduate Representative sits on this committee by right (except in instances when confidential information about students is being discussed) and is therefore able to raise concerns of postgraduates.

Office Accommodation

The University does not require that accommodation is provided for postgraduate students within the individual schools. In the School of Psychology, we try to provide postgraduate students with quiet workspace, including when possible a desk and network access. However, the School's requirement for office space fluctuates over time and we might not be able to offer desk space to all students or might ask students to share desk space. The coffee room is available for the use of both postgraduate students and staff.

Computers

The School of Psychology aims to provide access to a desktop computer to postgraduate students enrolled in the School. In the case of Master's students, shared access is likely. Postgraduate computers are provided by the School for the purposes of writing and basic data analysis. Computers for data collection, additional software, or storage devices for large amounts of data will need to be purchased by the supervisor.

Security

Given the expensive equipment in the School and the nature of research that we perform, security in the School is very important. The School building is locked i) after 5pm on weekdays, ii) throughout weekends and iii) on certain public holidays. You will usually be able to gain access out-of-hours by swipe-card, if you need to work outside of normal office hours. **Never** lend your card to another person, and do not let other people into the School building when it is locked.

If you are working outside of normal hours (9am to 6pm), you must 'sign-in' using the book on the janitors' desk in the main foyer for fire regulation purposes, then sign out again on exit. An 'out-of-hours' University janitor service is provided for anyone carrying out lone working in a situation where there is increased risk (as highlighted in your risk assessment, e.g. unavoidably testing human subjects during weekends or working with animals). For the 'out-of-hours' service, call 0 from a university phone line or call 01334 476161.

Postgraduate logbook

Title of course/training experience: Location: Date attended:
Comments on course in relation to DNA:

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