



UCD School of Geography

Research Degrees Programme

Guidelines for Postgraduate Research Students

2023-24

Introduction

Welcome to the UCD School of Geography. The purpose of this booklet is to provide a useful source of information for those embarking on a Postgraduate Research degree. The booklet outlines what is expected of you during your time here as a postgraduate research student and provides guidance on successfully completing a research degree. We believe our Research Degree Programme offers a structured and innovative approach to postgraduate study aimed at maximising the potential benefits of undertaking a research degree. The School is committed to providing excellent facilities and training for research students, including a well-equipped research suite with state-of-the-art computing facilities, on-site library services, an Induction Programme for new students, research methods training, and regular student and staff seminars. Research students are normally supervised by two staff members- each a recognised expert in their field.

When you choose to study for a research degree in Geography at University College Dublin, you are joining a School with an outstanding record in research and teaching with established links with universities throughout Europe, North America, and Asia. All the School's staff are active researchers. Research in Geography focuses on better understanding of complex relationships in the social and natural worlds, as well as between them, as they undergo significant transformation and adaptation. The School of Geography has an active research culture and agenda with the goal of delivering research excellence in human and physical geography by sustained specialisation, emergent international exploration, and interdisciplinary collaboration within and beyond UCD.

The nature of postgraduate research

Being a research student is different from being an undergraduate or undertaking a taught Master's programme. To succeed, you must make an original contribution to the body of knowledge in your chosen field of research. This requires the acquisition of certain skills such as initiative, independence, the capacity for critical but constructive thinking, as well as a thorough understanding of the academic discipline and competence in the relevant methods and techniques. These abilities should be present in all research students and should be developed by the combined efforts of the student and the supervisor. The results of your endeavours will be expressed primarily in the thesis, which you will write and then defend in an oral examination.

The ideal programme of study for a research degree will seek to achieve the following:

- You will have the opportunity, over a sustained period, to enlarge your view of the broad subject area you have chosen to investigate and the theoretical foundations and specific research techniques employed in this field. You will be stimulated to develop originality and creativity in your research.
- You will have an opportunity to develop skills in constructing and testing hypotheses, developing new theory, undertaking research to discover new facts and contribute to new understandings of your chosen research field.
- You will have an opportunity, through critical scrutiny of written work and written presentations, to develop skills in writing and in communicating the results of your research in high-quality international journals and at important national and international conferences.

It may be helpful to think of your research degree as training to becoming a fully professional researcher in your field. This suggests several key features:

- At the most basic level it means that you have something to say and, to which, your academic peers wish to listen.
- To do this, you must have command of recent academic developments in your subject area, so that you can evaluate their significance.
- You must have the intellectual astuteness to identify where you can make a useful contribution.
- You must be aware of the ethics of research and always abide fully with these.
- You must have sufficient mastery of appropriate methods and techniques that are currently being used in the research area and be aware of their strengths and limitations.
- You must be able to communicate your results effectively in the academic and professional arena.
- All these activities must be carried out in an international context, i.e., your professional peer group is worldwide.

Main components of the PhD Programme

The UCD PhD Programme is designed to provide all research students with a structured framework to undertake and manage their research project. The Programme aims to enhance your training towards becoming a professional researcher, maximise the outcomes of your research degree and thus assist with your career development, and to foster a sense of belonging to the research community within the School and the wider university.

The Programme comprises the following elements:

1. **Induction:** All students are required to attend an induction which is provided by the College. Note that this may not be at the very start of the trimester and details will be circulated to all incoming research students by email.
2. **Taught Component:** PhD students are required to enrol for AT LEAST 30 credits of taught modules at graduate level, taken from within the School or from across the university. Students are required to enrol formally for these modules, which includes undertaking end of module assessment. The taught credits can be taken over a three-year period and relevant options should be discussed with your supervisor. Information on registration is available here: [UCD College of Social Sciences and Law | Information for Current PhD Students](#)
3. **Research Seminars:** These are held twice a year and are mandatory for all students. Each student is expected to present an aspect of their work to their peers and staff, in addition to submitting a written paper. These research seminars play an essential role in monitoring your progress throughout your research degree. In addition to the formal seminars, research students are expected to attend the School research seminar series where distinguished scholars are invited to the School to present their own work.
4. **Doctoral Panels:** Each of you will be allocated to a Doctoral Studies Panel (DSP) for the duration of your PhD, which comprises your supervisors and additional staff. The DSP will play a key role in the monitoring of your progress.
5. **Research and Professional Development Plans (RDPD):** New students are required under university regulations to keep detailed research plans and records of meetings with their supervisors.

6. **End of Year 1 Transfer:** You will initially be registered as a Stage 1 PhD Candidate. PhD students will undergo a formal review process at the end of their first year before they can be transferred to the status of Stage 2 PhD Candidate. See Monitoring Progress section below for details.

In addition, research students may attend any relevant modules currently taught within the School (relevant to your research topic) and those organised by the Teaching and Learning Centre and IT Services in UCD – these courses should be identified in consultation with your supervisor(s). These may be taken outside of your formal 30 credits coursework. You may formally register to such courses for audit if you wish, which means that they will appear on your final transcript; you do not have to complete the assessment of a module that you are taking for audit.

This booklet should be read in conjunction with UCD guidelines and regulations for postgraduate research. These are available on the UCD website at www.ucd.ie/pgstudy/ and include advice on preparation of a thesis and on its submission and examination.

Main Components of the Research Masters (MSc and MLitt) degree Programmes

The Research Masters programmes share many of the goals and objectives of the PhD Programme and operate under similar regulations. The induction and research seminar are also mandatory for Research Masters students, and you will be assigned to a Research Masters Panel fulfilling the same function as a Doctoral Studies Panel for a PhD student. Research Masters students do not have a formal requirement to complete a set number of taught modules for credit, but are, by regulation, required to complete taught modules mandated by one's primary supervisor. It would be customary, for example, where a student has not already completed Research Methods training, for the supervisor to require the student to complete a designated Research Methods module. The supervisor also has discretion to mandate whether these modules should be taken for credit or whether it would be permissible to take them for audit purposes only.

Your supervisor/Research Studies Panel will monitor your progress throughout the course of your study.

Your Responsibilities – the Postgraduate Student

A clear understanding of individual responsibilities between the supervisor and student needs to be agreed at an early stage. The understanding must accord with all University, College, and School regulations. This understanding will also incorporate details of the nature of supervisory guidance recognising fully that the thesis must be the student's own work.

In summary, the responsibilities of the research student include:

- Complying with postgraduate and university regulations and any other College or School procedures.
- Discussing with the supervisor the type of guidance the student finds helpful.
- Agreeing a schedule of meetings with the supervisors and attending all arranged meetings.
- Taking the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they may seem.

- Attending training and any forms of instruction as required by the supervisor.
- Attending and presenting at seminars as required by the School.
- Maintaining the progress of the work in accordance with the milestones agreed with the supervisor, including the presentation of written material as required in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage of the research project.
- Presenting written material as requested by the supervisor by agreed dates.
- Becoming familiar with, and complying with, University and School safety and ethics requirements.
- Postgraduate students may be required to take part in School activities as an integral component of their responsibilities (e.g., School research days).
- Full-time students should not normally be engaged in employment outside of the University, unless compatible with their duties and does not impede their academic progress (such as part-time employment, etc.)

School of Geography policy on second supervision of graduate research students

[The UCD Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Degree Students](#)¹ states (section 4.4) that:

The nature of the role of the second or additional supervisors should be agreed between the student, the Principal Supervisor and the Research Masters or Doctoral Studies Panel (where relevant)¹. Activities of a second or additional supervisor may include, but are not limited to:

- *the provision of specialist subject area expertise or methodological advice.*
- *the provision of academic and/or supervisory support to a Principal Supervisor where the latter is assuming the role for the first time.*
- *reviewing student's progress reports and providing feedback on draft chapters.*

Academics at the start of their careers might be encouraged to act as a second supervisor to a research student to gain valuable supervisory experience.

Appendix 2 of the same document suggests that the second supervisor would be appointed where appropriate within the first 3 months of the student beginning the course of study.

In other comparable institutions, the appointment of a primary and second supervisor is the norm. While the primary responsibility lies with the Supervisor, the second supervisor will:

1. Provide valuable support or mentorship to the supervisor, particularly where there is limited experience in supervising previously.
2. Be an additional and complementary source of expertise, advice, and encouragement to the student.

¹ Academic Regulations now refer to both Research Masters and Doctoral Studies Panels as the Research Studies Panel (RSP)

3. In the unlikely event that issues may arise in the relationship between the student and primary supervisor, play an important initial intermediary role.
4. Provide continuity where a primary supervisor falls ill, is on research leave, or is otherwise unavailable for a limited period.

The School of Geography adopts a policy of second supervision of all graduate research students in which the second supervisor and DSP is appointed within the first 3 months of a student's first registration to the programme. This is formally recorded on the student and faculty record.

Second supervisors should **normally** be drawn from within the School but where there is insufficient relevant expertise the second supervisor may be drawn from another School within UCD. Whether there may be an FTE implication should be discussed with the Head of School in advance of this decision. DSP members may be drawn from outside of UCD and there is usually no financial implication.

The appointment of second supervisors and the membership of DSP's should be formally noted by the School graduate committee.

You and Your Supervisor

It is important that you see your supervisor on a regular basis if you are to benefit from the supervisor-student arrangement. The duration and regularity of such meetings will depend to some extent on the nature of your research and your academic progress. You should agree with your supervisor the frequency with which meetings should take place. It is also important that you prepare in advance for prearranged meetings and that you keep any appointments that have been made. You are also expected to meet all deadlines and to submit work on time. You should consult your supervisor about any difficulties, academic or personal, which may be affecting your studies.

Your supervisor's role is essentially to give advice, help and encouragement so that you receive a good training in research and produce a successful thesis. The thesis is, however, to be your own work, and you must accept the responsibility for its eventual success or failure.

In general, postgraduate students in the School will be appointed two supervisors; however, interaction between research students and all staff is encouraged.

Establishing a relationship with your supervisor

You will be told, when you first enrol, who your supervisor is. To establish a good working relationship, you and your supervisor should agree at the outset how to proceed and what each of you expects from the other. Your supervisor will explain to you what kind of guidance you can expect to receive from him or her, and you in turn must ensure that you know exactly what your supervisor expects of you. If you are not sure about your respective responsibilities, you should ask your supervisor for clarification.

Meetings with your supervisor

You and your supervisor must meet regularly, and you are both responsible for ensuring that this happens. The nature of these meetings will vary depending on the subject matter of the thesis and the stage of the research. You and your supervisor should draw up a schedule of

meetings in advance. You should confirm the date of the next meeting at the end of each supervisory session. Neither you nor your supervisor should cancel scheduled meetings without good reason, and if a meeting is cancelled you should re-arrange it as quickly as possible.

Contacting your supervisor between meetings

You will be able to contact your supervisor for advice and assistance at other reasonable times outside your planned schedule if this proves important in order to progress the research. You must ensure that you know your supervisor's work telephone number and work e-mail address in case you need to get in touch. The onus is on you to contact your supervisor quickly if you run into difficulty, without waiting for the next planned meeting.

In summary, the responsibilities of the supervisor include:

- Giving guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected, the planning of the research programme, advice on appropriate literature and sources, and compliance at all times with research ethics.
- Maintaining contact through regular meetings; the schedule of which should be agreed with the student and reviewed periodically.
- Requesting written work as appropriate and returning such work with constructive criticism within a reasonable time frame.
- Ensuring that the student is made fully aware of any inadequacy of progress or in the standard of work.

Equality in the Workplace

All members of the University community are expected to always behave responsibly, to observe and abide by the Regulations of the University, and not to engage in an activity which might bring the good name of the University into disrepute.

Policy on Dignity and Respect

UCD is committed to the promotion of an environment for work and study which upholds the dignity and respect of the individual, and which supports every individual's right to study and/or work in an environment which is free from any form of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

The University recognises the right of every individual to such an environment and requires all members of the University community to recognise their responsibilities in this regard. The UCD Policy on Dignity and Respect is available here: [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion | Dignity & Respect](#)

Monitoring Progress

Monitoring your progress is essential to the timely completion of a research degree and procedures for monitoring are as follows:

- At some time between months 12 and 18 of your PhD Research (months 24-36 in the case of part time PhD students) you will be assessed for progression by your Doctoral Studies Panel. By this time, you will be expected to have completed at least 20 out of the taught credits required. The assessment will be based on an in-depth research proposal (c.10,000 words) which must include the following components: Introduction, Literature Review, Research Objectives, Methodology, References

- Following the assessment your panel will make one of the following recommendations:
 - Transfer from a Stage 1 to a Stage 2 PhD student status.
 - Transfer to another postgraduate research programme
 - Remain in your current status pending a reassessment at a later date decided upon by the panel.
 - Termination of registration
- At the end of each successive year, all research students' progress will be assessed by the Board of Graduate Studies.
- Research Masters students are assessed on their progress on a semester basis by their Research Studies Panel.

Research Studies Panel (RSP) and Stage Transfer Panel

In compliance with UCD Academic Regulations ruling since September 2019, and to avoid the prospect of PhD students' abandonment or excessive delay in submission, the School of Geography adopts the following policy in matter of assessment and progression of research students.

As for RSPs, the supervisor(s) should propose to the Graduate Committee the composition of the panel within the first three months of registration, following UCD regulations: "The panel comprises the principal supervisor/co-supervisor and at least two (but normally no more than four) advisers, one of whom must be a UCD faculty member. The RSP will appoint a chair independent of the supervisor/co-supervisor. The purpose of the RSP is to provide advice, monitor the progress of the student, and support the supervisor(s)-student relationship. Research Studies Panel Advisers may include faculty, adjunct, visiting or research staff or relevant professional staff of the University or external to the University." The panel should meet at least twice in the first year of the student's registration, and at least once during each of the following academic years. The Graduate Committee should be informed of any changes in the panel's composition throughout the student's registration period. It is the student's responsibility to forward the meeting's final recommendations duly signed by the panel members to the School Manager.

Regarding the Stage Transfer Assessment Panel, UCD Regulations state that: "Schools will establish appropriate processes and procedures to monitor the progress of individual PhD students registered in the School, and to assess each student formally at the end of Stage 1 doctoral studies". To this end, a Stage Transfer Assessment Panel whose members are nominated by the School must meet with the Student within the fifth trimester of registration. In the School of Geography, each supervisor will propose the composition of the panel to the Graduate Board for the Head of School's approval, which will abide with the paragraphs 7.42 to 7.48 of UCD Academic Regulations laid out in the following section. As a further requirement, the School of Geography requests all supervisors to submit to the graduate committee a motivated statement demonstrating that the student is ready to proceed to the stage 2. This should confirm that:

- Definitive clarity has been achieved about the research project, whose extent, research aims, and timelines are not subject to major changes in Stage 2. Therefore, Stage 2 should be essentially operational, involving the accomplishment of fieldwork activities when relevant and of the writing phase, without any substantial re-discussion of the research project.

- An adequate and definitive theoretical and methodological framework has been put in place for the research project, and the construction of the final dissertation has begun in earnest (e.g., a solid introduction and literature review have been already written or substantially prepared).
- There are solid grounds (to be detailed by the supervisor(s)) to claim that the student has the skills, maturity, motivation, and the adequate institutional support to advance toward successful completion of the dissertation without major delays.

The School Graduate Board should approve this documentation without delay, adding specific recommendations if and where appropriate. In cases where the Graduate Board identifies any relevant issues, which can negatively affect the success of the Stage Transfer meeting, it can propose to the Head of School to delay the Stage Transfer Assessment Panel or to request the supervisor(s) to provide further clarifications on the case. Where such issues may exist, the relevant supervisor(s) can request the assistance of the Graduate Board or seek the advice of appropriate colleagues.

Stage Transfer Assessment Panel (from Section 7 of [Academic Regulations](#))

7.42 Schools will establish appropriate processes and procedures to monitor the progress of individual PhD students registered in the School, and to assess each student formally at the end of Stage 1 doctoral studies. These processes and procedures will comply with the regulations and policies of the University and such guidelines as may be agreed from time to time by the University or the Governing Board and should be reviewed at appropriate intervals by the Governing Board.

7.43 The School will establish a Stage Transfer Assessment Panel or Panels to assess the progress of the student and their competence and capacity to complete a doctorate at the end of Stage 1 and at any other point in the programme.

7.44 The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel must have the experience and disciplinary expertise to conduct the assessment. The Panel will normally consist of three members of the permanent faculty of the University. The Panel may include a member of the adjunct or visiting staff of the University. The student's Principal supervisor and/or Co-supervisor(s) will not be a member of the Panel.

7.45 The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will base its judgement on:

- a written statement of progress and a research plan from the candidate.
- review of the student's RPD
- a written progress report from the Principal Supervisor; and
- an interview with, and presentation by, the candidate.

7.46 The Stage Transfer Assessment Panel will make one of the following recommendations to the Governing Board:

- that the student should progress to the next stage or year of the doctoral programme.
- that the student should not progress to the next stage or year of the doctoral programme, and that:
 - the student should re-submit for assessment within six months (with an indication of the month/year in which the subsequent formal assessment of progress will take place).
 - the student should apply to transfer to another graduate programme utilising, where appropriate, any credits already accumulated within the doctoral programme.
 - In line with the University's continuation policy and procedures, a recommendation be made to the Governing Board that the student's registration be discontinued.

7.47 The Governing Board will either approve the recommendation; request that a School reconsider their recommendations or, following consultation with the School, make a decision, which differs from the recommendation. Where the latter occurs, it will be reported to the Academic Council or its relevant committee.

7.48 The Governing Board may recommend one or more additional formal assessments of progress and competence within Stage 2 of the structured PhD, or such an assessment may be a normal element of a PhD programme. The Governing Board will recommend the nature and timing of any such assessment.

Dealing with Difficulties

Delays in your progress

If you run into difficulties which cause you to fall behind in your research, it is essential that you act as quickly as possible before too much time is lost. The first thing you should do is to speak to your supervisor, who may be able to suggest a solution. For example, if you are being hindered by difficulty in getting access to source material, it may be possible to make other arrangements to enable you to progress your work. If your supervisor cannot help, he or she should advise you as to what you should do next, or you can approach the Director of Graduate Studies or Head of School if necessary.

You should keep a written record that you have spoken to your supervisor about the problem, as this will be important if you need to apply for an extension at a later stage. You should also refer to it in your Progress Review.

Difficulties with your supervisor

If you and your supervisor cannot establish an effective working relationship, it is important that you act as quickly as possible. You should, if possible, talk to your supervisor about the problem in the first instance. If you feel unable to talk to your supervisor or if talking to your supervisor does not resolve matters, you should talk to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will seek a solution agreeable to all parties. It is in everyone's interests for such problems to be sorted out within the School and as informally as possible.

Suspending your research

If a specific problem is affecting your research (ill-health, personal or financial circumstances, for example) it may be possible for you to suspend your research temporarily until the problem has been resolved. This is better than struggling on, missing deadlines, and eventually failing to complete on time. You should discuss the situation with your supervisor, who will - if he or she agrees that suspension is the best option – ask the appropriate School and College Postgraduate Committee for permission for you to suspend your research. You must tell your supervisor if you are in receipt of an award from a funding body, as its approval will also be needed for you to suspend. Your supervisor will assist in seeking this approval, but this may not always be obtainable.

Your suspension will be for a fixed period of time. It is essential that you contact your supervisor before your suspension runs out, either to make arrangements for you to return to your studies or to seek a further suspension. While any request for a further suspension will be considered sympathetically, you must make the request rather than assuming that your suspension will automatically be extended if you do not return to work. If you are in receipt of a studentship, it is particularly important that you keep the University, through your supervisor, informed about your intentions.

Submission of Thesis

Upon completion of the research, the candidate should prepare a thesis, with the advice of the supervisor(s) and in accordance with the guidelines published by UCD Registry, UCD PhD Regulations and those provided by the School, and should submit the thesis for examination. The candidate must be registered as a student at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination.

The School of Geography has also adopted a policy for the alternative thesis format (PhD by papers) in line with Academic Regulations 7.53 which allows a student to be examined on “a collection of papers of publishable/peer reviewed standard describing a coherent programme of research, accompanied by a critical and theoretical overview of the work presented in the papers”. The School’s policy can be found in further detail [here](#).

The e-Thesis Exam System is UCD’s secure online system through which research students can submit their research thesis for examination. The system enables electronic thesis submission, author verification, programme compliance check, and progress tracking through all stages of the process. Information regarding the process can be explored [here](#).

Examination Process

The thesis is sent to internal and external examiners, the latter being recognised as international experts in the subject matter of your thesis. The Examiners undertake a preliminary examination of the thesis. It is the policy of the university that every postgraduate research candidate is then examined orally by the board of examiners. The objectives of the *viva voce* examination are to provide an opportunity for the examiners to clarify any issues of fact which may have arisen in examining the thesis, to test the candidate’s knowledge of the thesis topic and related areas of research and, as far as possible, to establish the originality of the candidate’s work and ideas. The *viva* also provides an opportunity for the candidate to elaborate on aspects of the research which may not have been included in the thesis and to defend the arguments presented and the ideas developed therein.

Where the examiners are in agreement, they submit a joint report to the University indicating their opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based, and recommending whether the degree should, or should not, be awarded. Award of the postgraduate research degree is only recommended by the examiners where they consider that the thesis, in whole or in part, is worthy of publication as a work of serious scholarship. The report also indicates whether, in the opinion of the examiners, major or minor corrections to the thesis are required. If so, it will assign the responsibility of ensuring that such corrections have been made to the main internal examiner. The internal examiner must approve the corrected thesis before it can be lodged for final University approval of the award of the postgraduate research degree.

The report of the examiners may recommend:

1. Award postgraduate research degree - no corrections to the thesis required.
2. Award postgraduate research degree - subject to corrections to the thesis.
3. Do not award postgraduate research degree - revision and re-examination of the thesis required.
4. (PhD degrees only) Do not award PhD - consider award of an appropriate Master’s degree.

5. Do not award postgraduate research degree.

Ethics in Research

UCD maintains the highest standards of integrity in its research activity. Ethical standards are given paramount importance in the University's Research Policy and Strategy and imbue its research culture: "All research should be conducted within an ethical framework consistent with the traditional principles of academic freedom".

UCD aims to promote and promulgate ethical research practice, emphasising integrity and rigour and seeks to sustain a culture in which the following general principles are understood and observed; honesty; openness; leadership and cooperation; supervision and training; guidance from professional bodies; best practice in the ownership, recording and storage of primary data samples; best practice in publication. For further details, see the Office for Research web pages (<http://www.ucd.ie/research/>).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism refers to using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. You should realise that your thesis must be your own work and all quotations from other sources, whether published or unpublished, must be properly acknowledged. Plagiarism is a very serious offence and, when proven against a student, may result in disqualification from the examination for their degree and exclusion from all future examinations of the University. Some joint work is permitted, provided it is properly acknowledged as such. For further information regarding what constitutes plagiarism, see the UCD library website where you can download a Guide to Plagiarism ([Introduction - Academic Integrity - Referencing, Citation & Avoiding Plagiarism - LibGuides at UCD Library](#)).

Dissemination of Research

The writing of papers and articles is one of the measures of research. The primary indicator of quality research is the publication of papers in peer-reviewed international journals. The writing of high-quality publications is considered an integral and essential component of your training in research. Indeed, your research is not considered to be complete until it is available to the wider scholarly community through publications.

As a general rule, it is expected that a *minimum* of three published articles should result from a PhD. Your supervisor(s) may advise you on structure, style, content, and potential journals to target. You are also encouraged to make every effort to attend and to present your work at conferences. This is an excellent way for you to become familiar with contemporary developments in your field, and presenting your work enables the wider community to be informed of its (and your) existence.

From the beginning of your studies, you should make every effort to become familiar with international journals in your field. You should discuss with your supervisor(s) which are the acknowledged leading journals in your field.

Contacts

There are a number of different sources of help and advice on various aspects of postgraduate study. Your first point of contact should normally be your supervisor, who should be able to answer many of your queries or to direct you to another source of help.

Other sources of advice include:

Nature of Query	Sources of Advice
Academic problems	Your supervisors and doctoral panel Head of School: Assoc Prof Julien Mercille Director of Graduate Studies: Prof Alun Jones
Monitoring of progress	Your supervisors Director of Graduate Studies Head of School
Disability	UCD Access and Lifelong Learning
Enrolment and registration	Student Desk
Equipment and facilities	Your supervisors The Director of Graduate Studies The Head of School Dr Tine Ningal
Examination arrangements	Your supervisors The Head of School Student Desk
Financial difficulties	UCD Student Advisers
Graduation	Conferring Unit
Personal difficulties	Your supervisors and doctoral panel The Director of Graduate Studies The Head of School UCD Student Advisers UCD Chaplaincy Student Health Service Welfare Office, Students' Union Niteline
Submitting your thesis	Student Desk
Supervisory problems	Your supervisors The Director of Graduate Studies The Head of School
Tuition fees	Fees and Grants Office
International Students	UCD Global Office

General Information

1. Director of the Research Degrees Programme

The overall Research Degree Programme is the responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Alun Jones, alun.jones@ucd.ie. We welcome feedback on any aspect of your time in the School and your suggestions will, hopefully, assist us in continuously

improving the School's research and learning environment. Professor Jones is responsible for organising the Research Seminars.

2. Representing the School

Your research project will inevitably involve your interaction with persons external to the School and University. Thus, in these interactions, you will be regarded as a representative of the School. Therefore, you must ensure that you always conduct yourself in a professional manner. Further advice on professional communication will be provided during the course.

3. Attendance

A research postgraduate degree requires a very different approach to that which is involved in undertaking an undergraduate or taught postgraduate degree. Self-motivation and discipline are key requirements. One year is a short time in which to complete a Master's by research and 3 years also presents particular challenges. Students must therefore approach their work in a diligent manner. Research is not a sprint.

4. Duties

Your principal duty is to carry out research. However, each student may be requested to assist in certain School tasks. This could include acting as a Teaching Assistant etc.

5. Accommodation

The postgraduate research room is at the end of the Newman corridor. The rooms are for your use. However, you will be responsible for its upkeep. Those housed there should arrange a rota or the like to ensure the room is kept tidy and organised. In line with the rules of the University and the laws of the State, smoking/vaping is not permitted in any of the offices including the Research Room.

Subject to the opening hours of the building you will always have access to the Research Room via a fob key system which is available from Dr Tine Ningal, the School's Senior Technical Officer: tine.ningal@ucd.ie. The Rooms have valuable collections of equipment. Please ensure that the door is kept locked when unoccupied. In addition, the last person to leave in the evening should ensure that the equipment is switched off and the wall sockets are also switched off.

You should avoid having visitors into the Research Room when other Postgraduates are working.

6. School Office

The School office is based in E001 in the Geography corridor. Please e-mail geography@ucd.ie.

7. Computer, Photocopying, and Other Facilities

Each full-time PhD student will be provided with a computer by the School. A networked printer is available in the Research Rooms. Each student will be provided with a UCD email address. Part-time PhD students and Research Masters students will generally be allocated shared computing facilities, though individual facilities will be allocated where possible. If your project requires you to make long-distance or international calls you should consult with your supervisor.

Any requests for stationery beyond paper for shared printers should be made via your supervisor.

Bear in mind that the facilities are to be used for research purposes only. Few Schools provide such facilities to their postgraduates and the School has a limited budget for supporting them so please ensure you use them responsibly. Conversations on mobile phones are not permitted in the Research Rooms. Such phones should be kept off or on silent mode.

[Geography academic Staff List](#)

Details available on the [Geography School Website](#)