

Getting the Most from Your MA

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Objective

To improve your capacity to understand what and how you are learning and to review, plan and take responsibility for your own learning/your own future

This will help you to:

- become a more effective, independent and confident self directed learner;
- understand how you learn best and relate that learning to a wider context;
- improve your career management skills (which includes preparing for a PhD)

Exercise 1: ***Seeing your 'bigger picture'***

- Why are you doing an MA? Why this MA? Why the University of Manchester?
- What do you expect from the next year (or two for p.t. students)?
- Are there any other ambitions you hope to achieve during this time?
- What do you expect from your lecturers, the University and yourself?
- What obstacles or difficulties do you anticipate during your MA?
- What are you most looking forward to?
- Do you know what job you might like to do when you finish your MA? What industry you might work in? What career path you might follow?
- Would you like to study for a PhD? If so what programme? Do you intend to apply for funding? Who might supervise you?
- What do you want to be able to say about yourself, your abilities and your plans for the future at the end of the MA?

No 'one size fits all' answer!

What you get out of your MA will depend on your own unique ambitions, experience and skills

Keep the **bigger picture** in mind

But you are wise to keep a written record of your progress in the next year or so

- skills acquired and required
- progression and experiences through your MA
- key contacts and resources

PLP & SEQ

So, what *do I* think an MA is?

- A bridge/stepping stone...not 'the end of the line'
- Deeper engagement, but brings more responsibility
- A chance to develop & practice transferrable skills
- Opportunity to build professional profile & networks and work with professionals (academics, support staff & outside visitors/institutions)

You will need to be:

- self-managed, self-directed
- prepared, plan for meetings & seminars: **organise your time wisely!**
- AND develop your own agenda, growing out of where you want to get to

Some agility required and always remember that you are an important, integral member of the...

**SALC: The
School of
Arts,
Languages
and
Cultures**

**The largest
collection of
arts /
languages
scholars in
Europe**

**Home to
500+
Masters
students**

**20+ separate
discipline
areas and 25
master's
courses**

**An unparalleled
opportunity for
intellectual
enrichment (with
careful planning
and time
management)**

The Graduate School

Offering creative and professional development, events, conferences and seminars, as well as workspaces and facilities dedicated to PG students.

The School has an exceptional record of generating and sharing new ideas, and the quality, breadth and volume of its activity is unparalleled in the UK.

PGT *and* PGR students form an exciting SALC PG community



The Intellectual Leap

What are the 'horizons' of your discipline?

What is epistemology, and what are the big epistemological issues in your discipline?

What have been the main methodological innovations recently? How have they challenged and changed the practice of your discipline? With whom are they associated?

Resources: Divisional Research Seminars, Journals, CIDRAL, PGT Skills Training, Artsmethods



Don't lose sight of the bigger picture though! Be Multi/Interdisciplinary
SALC gives you a rich mix of subject matter and valuable opportunities to collaborate directly across fields of interest.

The Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Languages (CIDRAL)

Designed to facilitate cross-disciplinary activities and exchanges within the School.

www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/cidral



The Practical Leap

- Using electronic resources, search engines
- Finding your subject's key publishers (book series?) and journals
- Working with primary sources more intensely (Deansgate Special Collections)
- Building research networks
- Avoiding plagiarism
- Planning & executing an innovative research project

Resources: John Rylands University Library, 'Google Scholar', JSTOR, PGT Skills Sessions, artsmethods, Electronic Databases

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester Library is one of only five National Research Libraries. With more than 4 million printed books, over 41,000 electronic journals and 500,000 electronic books, as well as several hundred databases, the library is one of the best-resourced academic libraries in the country.

Our primary aim is to support students and staff of The University of Manchester in all areas of their study. But we are also fully committed to widening participation, and providing access to many of our services to a wide range of public audiences.



“Special” Collections?



- The Special Collections of the University of Manchester Library contain some of the rarest books ever produced alongside archive collections and objects of significant artistic, cultural, literary, historical and religious significance.
- Together these resources form a research library of global significance and are housed in the neo-gothic splendour of The John Rylands Library, one of Manchester’s finest public buildings.
- It is an important part of the strategy of the Library to make these unique collections as accessible as possible – both to the students, academics and the wider public.

Rare Books & Maps

These collections date from the ancient world to the present, and their scope is international. They are especially rich for the following subject areas:

- English Literature & World Literatures
- History of the book, publishing, writing and printing
- Visual & Performing Arts
- Social, Political, Economic History
- Military & Colonial History
- World Religions, Theology & Non conformist Christianity
- History of Science & Technology
- History of Medicine
- History of the University of Manchester

Manuscripts & Archives

These collections date from the 14th century to the present, and their scope is international. They are rich in a spectrum of subjects especially:

- Theology
- Economic, Social & Political History
- Military & Colonial History
- Travel & Exploration
- Art & Architecture
- Drama
- English Literature
- World Literature
- History of Science & Medicine

The Personal Leap

- What are you going to get out of the MA *in addition* to the qualification? What other skills are you going to develop? What skills do you need to develop to achieve your ambitions?
- Where do you think you're most likely to encounter difficulties or stress, especially with your dissertation/project? Think well outside the classroom...
- How will you make the most of yourself and the opportunities you have in the next 12 months?
- **Transferrable skills: PLP & SEQ**

Professional development – examples from our graduate school calendar

Academic study and research

skills Academic writing workshops
Research ethics training
Creative thinking and originality in dissertation writing

Careers and professional progression events

CVs and applications
Job search strategies
Teamwork challenge – two day workshop experience

Practical and professional skills

Institute for Cultural Practices workshops including Reflective Practice; Evaluation; Social Media Practice; Facilitation; Curating; Writing Reflection

Theory bites

Reading Deconstructively: Derrida and Literature
Using Film Theory
Using Translation Theory

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures 2017/2018 Semester I

PGT Skills Training Programme, Partial List of Sessions

Date	Time	Title of session	Type of Session
18-Sep	2pm-3pm	Welcome Talk by SALC Director of PGT Programmes	PGT Skills Training
19-Sep	11am-12pm	Introductory Talk by SALC PGT Careers Consultant	Careers
20-Sep	1pm-3pm	Getting the Most out of Your Masters	PGT Skills Training
28-Sep	3pm-4.30pm	Discover Your Approach to Learning	Library Support
02-Oct	11am-11.50am	Postgrad Essentials: Making the Most of Manchester	Careers
03-Oct	11am-12.30pm	Reading Journal Articles	Library Support
03-Oct	4.15pm-5pm	Mindfulness for Concentration	Library Support
04-Oct	10am-11.30am	Critical Reading: Getting the Most Out of Your Reading	Library Support
04-Oct	1pm-1.50pm	Postgrad Essentials: Becoming an Academic	Careers
04-Oct	2pm-3.30pm	Academic Writing Skills for PGTs (Mature Students only)	PGT Skills Training
04-Oct	5.15pm-6.30pm	Media Club: Introduction to the Manchester Media Club	Careers
05-Oct	4.30pm-6pm	Academic Writing Skills for PGTs	PGT Skills Training
05-Oct	5pm-7pm	Meet the Professionals: Graduate Schemes	Alumni Event
09-Oct	11am-11.50am	Postgrad Essentials: Job-hunting Strategies	Careers
09-Oct	5.15pm-6.30pm	Media Club: Finding and Keeping a Job in Television	Careers
10-Oct	4.15pm-5pm	Mindfulness for Concentration	Library Support
10-Oct	10.30am-4pm	Careers Fair: Careers in Business, Finance, and Management	Careers
11-Oct	10.30am-4pm	Careers Fair: Careers in Engineering, Science, and Technology	Careers
11-Oct	1pm-1.50pm	Postgrad Essentials: CVs	Careers
11-Oct	3pm-4.30pm	Proofreading: The Final Stage Before Submission	Library Support
11-Oct	4pm-6pm	Who's Afraid of Jacques Derrida?	Using Theory
12-Oct	4.30pm-6pm	Academic Writing Skills Workshop 1	PGT Skills Training
12-Oct	5pm-7pm	Meet the Professionals: Financial and Consulting Careers	Alumni Event
16-Oct	11am-11.50am	Postgrad Essentials: Covering Letters	Careers
16-Oct	5pm-7pm	Meet the Professionals: Language Graduates	Alumni Event
17-Oct	5.15pm-6.30pm	Media Club: Introduction to Broadcast Journalism	Careers
18-Oct	1pm-1.50pm	Postgrad Essentials: Interviews	Careers
18-Oct	1pm-2.30pm	Managing Procrastination	Library Support
18-Oct	4pm-6pm	Introduction to Postmodernism/Postmodern Literature	Using Theory
19-Oct	4.30pm-6pm	Academic Writing Skills Workshop 2	PGT Skills Training
19-Oct	5pm-7pm	Meet the Professionals: Public Sector	Alumni Event
24-Oct	5.15pm-6.30pm	Media Club: Working in Publishing	Careers
02-Nov	4.30pm-6pm	Academic Writing Skills Workshop 3	PGT Skills Training
08-Nov	4pm-6pm	Using Space-Time Theory	Using Theory
08-Nov	5.15pm-6.30pm	Media Club: First Steps in Media workshop	Careers
09-Nov	5pm-7pm	Meet the Professionals: Legal Sector	Alumni Event
14-Nov	12.30pm-4pm	Careers Fair: Careers in Law	Careers
14-Nov	4pm-6pm	Speed Reading for PGTs	PGT Skills Training

Student Support & Guidance Office

Main office: **Room A15, Ground Floor, Samuel Alexander Building,**
**Open 10am-4pm Monday to Friday or email [salc-
StudentSupport@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:salc-StudentSupport@manchester.ac.uk)**

- **School support service for students in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures only**, offering professional advice, help and support on different types of issues and problems including:
Appeals; Attendance issues; Complaints; Disability support queries; Interrupting your programme of study; General support issues or concerns (e.g. health affecting your studies); Mitigating circumstances
- **They can also help you to access other University services:**
Counselling Service (5th Floor, Crawford House)
Disability Advisory and Support Service (2nd Floor, Uni Place)
The Atrium (1st floor, Uni Place)
Students' Union Advice Centre (Students' Union)
Student Services Centre (John Owens' Building) (council tax exemption, tuition fees, student loans)

Moving to the next level...

The intellectual leap involves exploring horizons, seeing the big picture of your discipline and beyond, being original, pushing boundaries, developing your own ideas and confidently using the ideas of others

The practical leap involves researching your essays, handling different types of sources & methodologies, getting to grips with an MA-level research project, bibliographies, quality of writing, IT skills

The personal leap involves developing your interpersonal and academic/study skills, managing your time, solving your own problems, career development

I WILL LEAVE THIS ROOM DETERMINED TO DO MY BEST AND

- **Start/participate in a reading group or a study group (GS space available for this)**
- **Attend training to develop my skills, horizons & thinking (Artsmethods/PGT Skills Sessions)**
- **Attend every seminar, research event, and public lecture possible!**
- **Network with the diverse body of PG students**

I WILL LEARN INDEPENDENTLY & SMARTLY!