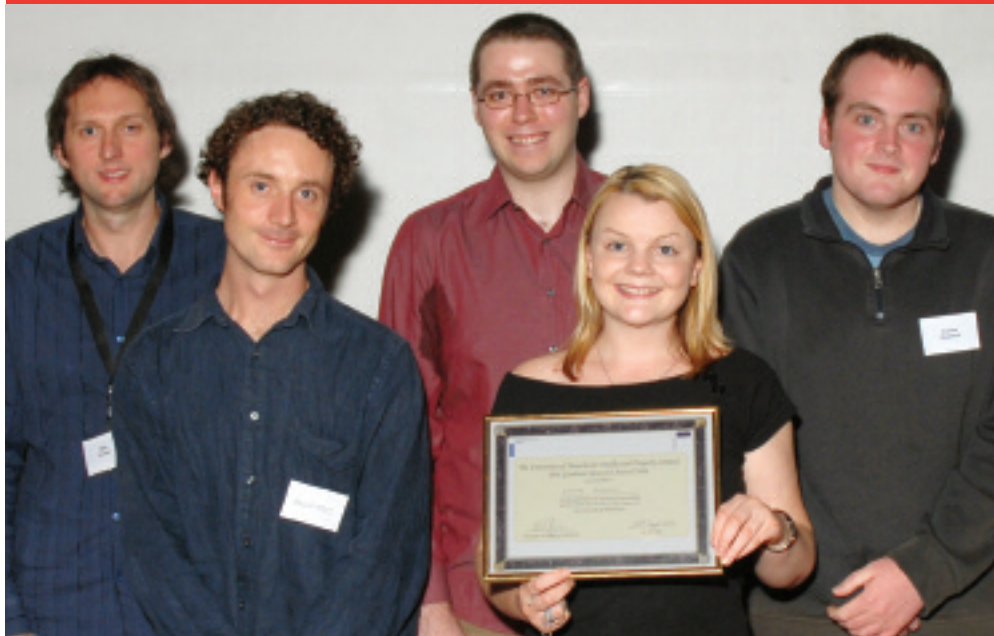


Faculty of Life Sciences Research Symposium



The Faculty of Life Sciences Research Symposium took place at the end of September. Proving even more popular than last year, the day was attended by over 800 people, from graduate students through to PIs and Professors.

The symposium showcases the breadth and quality of research in the faculty, and gives graduate students the feel of attending a scientific meeting. Six short-listed graduate students and six post-docs all gave oral presentations. Topics ranged from RNA-protein interactions in the ribosome to the use of cannabis as a therapeutic to protect the brain from injury.

A judging panel, composed of senior faculty members and representatives from industry including, Astrazeneca and Lily, had the difficult task of selecting the best presentations overall. The competition for the post-doc prize proved so close that the judges couldn't separate Natalia Sánchez-Soriano and Matthew Hardman for their talks on neuronal path-finding and the role of estrogen in wound healing.

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Faculty of Life Sciences Research Symposium

...continued from cover:

The post-grad prize was clearer cut with Lindsay Gleghorn emerging as the winner for her excellent work on an inherited form of osteoarthritis. All three prize winners were presented with a lap-top computer.

Another highlight was the lunchtime poster session, where all second year PhD students presented their latest and hottest findings and discussed them with fellow students and faculty members. The range of topics was incredibly diverse from Egyptian mummies, sweet taste receptors to facial development. A prize for the best poster, sponsored by the Biochemical Society, went to Mary Jones for her fascinating work using Zebra fish to screen for novel anti-cancer therapeutics. The tremendous buzz about the session reflected the genuine interest of the whole faculty in the excellent range and of quality posters.

The symposium forms a vital element of the graduate training programme, providing students with the opportunity to present and discuss their research in the context of a real scientific meeting.

All in all, the event proved to be a highly enjoyable day, celebrating the very best life sciences research in Manchester.



Prize winning post graduate students: L-R
Prof. Alan North (Dean FLS), Mark Dunstan, Phillip Astles, Craig Blomeley,
Lindsay Gleghorn, Andrew Shepherd, Luke Hakes, Prof. Martin Humphries
(Associate Dean for Research FLS)

Editor's Note

In this issue we hear about the recent publication of the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, which is a must read for all researchers, find out useful tips on how to get ahead if your thinking about a career in academia and how you can benefit from attending one of the forthcoming GRAD Schools taking place throughout 2007.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this edition of STEPS, in particular to George Booth from AstraZenca who kindly gave his thoughts on the skills they seek when recruiting postgraduate research students.



The next edition will be available in February 2007 and I welcome any ideas you may have for future editions.

Best wishes

Claire Atherton
Claire.l.atherton@manchester.ac.uk

Code of Practice for Research Degrees



The Research Office has recently published the Code of Practice for Research Degrees on the following website:

www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/researchoffice/graduate/code

The Code of Practice sets out the University of Manchester's framework in relation to the management and coordination of postgraduate research degrees and defines minimum requirements to safeguard high standards of postgraduate research degree activity. The Code is divided into the following sections which provide or direct users to policy and guidance on all aspects of postgraduate research activity:

- Research Environment
- Applications and Admissions
- Registration and Induction
- Skills Training
- Supervision
- Progress and Review
- Changes to Degrees
- Submission and Examination
- Quality Assurance
- Collaboration

The University's Code is an evolving document and some sections are still under development. It has been compiled in full consultation with Faculties and Schools and is in accord with national policy and international trends. In particular, it follows the framework set within the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) **Code of Practice**. Compliance with the QAA code is linked to HEFCE and future funding and the University has therefore ensured that its Code of Practice fully supports the QAA's vision for the delivery of high quality graduate education.

The Code is intended for use by academics, administrators and postgraduate research students and is revised on a regular basis in consultation with its users and the University's Graduate Education Group (GEG).

If you require any further information or have any feedback relating to the Code of Practice or policies and procedures in graduate education, please contact Helen Baker (helen.baker@manchester.ac.uk) in the Graduate Education team within the Research Office.

What Skills do Employers Seek when Recruiting Postgraduate Researchers?

George Booth, a Graduate Recruiter from AstraZenca offers an insight into the skills that they look for when recruiting postgraduate researchers;



The skills we look for are;

- Ability to work in a team
- Analytical thinking, particularly the ability to make logical decisions
- Ability to influence others in an inclusive way
- Good planning and organisational skills, which is particularly important when working to tight deadlines.

The transferable skills outlined above really help the individual to deliver against their individual objectives and those of the team in which they are a member.

To stand out from the crowd postgraduate researcher should be able to describe;

- When they have delivered against objectives that they have been set either throughout their degree or in their personal life
- How they went about achieving their objectives.

I would also encourage researchers to get as much practical experience of presenting / lecturing as possible. This really helps with influencing in their later careers.

UK GRAD – PGR tips: Thinking of a career in academia?

Academia is a competitive field to work in – the following experience can help you to stand out from your peer group:

Focus on trying to publish your work in as many high impact journals as you can. Collaborations with researchers in other places are a good way to get into more publications.

Take on opportunities to supervise undergraduate students who are doing research as part of their final year studies. This gives you a chance to learn how to manage research effectively and to develop your mentoring and communication skills.

Get out there and present your work at conferences, seminars, poster competitions. Networking at conferences is your opportunity to develop potential collaborations and better understanding the context of your own work.

Try to gain experience of applying for and securing research funding.

National Skills Training Events

Postgraduate Researchers in Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (PRASH), University of Liverpool

Monday 2nd April 2007

This FREE conference is an ideal opportunity for those working in Arts, Social Sciences or Humanities to meet at a regional level. The UK Grad NW Hub and the University of Liverpool Interdisciplinary Forum are pleased to invite you to attend the second annual Postgraduate Researchers in Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities Conference.

This conference will offer an opportunity to present work in progress, meet with like minded researchers from across the region and attend tailor made workshop sessions.

To find out more information visit

<http://www.postgradtalentnw.co.uk/prash2007>

Salford Postgraduate Annual Research Conference (SPARC)

Thursday 10 and Friday 11 May 2007

The University of Salford would like to invite research students from across the North West to participate in its annual postgraduate conference. This thriving multi-disciplinary conference gives new researchers an excellent opportunity to present and meet researchers from across the North West region.

For further information visit

<http://www.postgradtalentnw.co.uk>



Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences Training Activities

Introduction to Research	29 January 2007
Introduction to Research	30 January 2007
Introduction to Research	31 January 2007
Academic Writing	12 February 2007
Effective Presentations	13 February 2007
Academic Writing	14 February 2007
Effective Presentations	15 February 2007
Effective Presentations	16 February 2007
Academic Writing	19 February 2007
Effective Presentations	20 February 2007
Academic Writing	21 February 2007
Planning the Final Year	27 February 2007

For further information on the above please visit
www.eps.manchester.ac.uk/graduateschool/graduatedevelopment

Faculty of Life Science Training Activities

Statistics and Data Handling	Commences December 2006
Academic Literacy for new postgraduate students	Commences January 2007
Personal Development Workshop	Commences February 2007

Specific details of the above events will be communicated via the Faculty of Life Sciences announcements.

Postgraduate research students who would like to register an interest in attending one of the above events should visit the below web page and complete the online form;

www.cal.man.ac.uk/gtppilot/eGTP2/genericForms/GenericSignUpForm.html

Faculty of Humanities Training Activities

Psychometric Questionnaires	14 December 2006
Intellectual Property Rights: Online Course	1 January 2007
Psychometric Questionnaires	18 January 2007
Intellectual Property Rights: Online Course	1 February 2007
Endnote: Online Training	1 February 2007
Word: Online Training	1 February 2007
Getting Published	6 February 2007
Psychometric Questionnaires	15 February 2007
Introduction to PowerPoint	26 February 2007
Further Excel	27 February 2007
I'm a PhD get me out of here	5 March 2007

For further information on the above please visit
www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/training

Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences Training Activities

Third Year Workshop Your Thesis & Beyond	18 January 2007
Welcome Event	22 January 2007
Introduction to Research 'Speed PhD'	29/30 January 2007
Academic Writing in English – Unit 11	31 January 2007
Academic Writing in English – Unit 12	7 February 2007
Academic Writing in English – Unit 13	14 February 2007
Academic Writing in English – Unit 14	21 February 2007
Mini First Year workshop	27 February 2007
Academic Writing in English – Unit 15	28 February 2007

For further information on the above please visit
www.mhs.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/pg/research/gtp

UK GRAD Programme



What are GRADschools?

GRADschools are three to five day courses designed specifically for postgraduate researchers. The number of participants on a GRADschool is normally between 40 and 90, and participants work through a variety of activities in groups of between 5 and 10 people. GRADschools include a mix of;

- Skills awareness and development exercises (e.g. creativity, communication, project management and presentation)
- Career sessions (e.g. improving your CV, defining your career goals and interview practice)
- Case studies (to practice skills while increasing your awareness of career options)

Why should you attend a GRADschool?

A GRADschool is an ideal opportunity to:

- gain new perspectives on your research
- consider your future development and career
- compare experiences with other PhD researchers from a range of institutions and disciplines
- learn how to get ahead in academia by developing your networking skills
- gain insights into how to enhance working relationships

GRADschools 2007

Please visit www.grad.ac.uk for further information

19 – 23 February 2007	4 days, 1/2 day of outdoor activities	Windermere	Windermere Hydro Hotel
20 – 23 February 2007	4 days, local	Edinburgh	Edinburgh Business School
19 – 24 March 2007	5 days, 1/2 day of outdoor activities	Windermere	Windermere Hydro Hotel
2 – 5 April 2007	4 days, local	Edinburgh	Edinburgh Business School
23 – 26 April 2007	3 days, careers	Brighton	The Royal Albion Hotel
24 - 28 April 2007	3 days, local	Wales	Cwm Pennant Mountain Centre
29 April - 3 May 2007	3 days, local	Wales	Cwm Pennant Mountain Centre
2 – 5 May 2007	3 days, local	Wales	Bwlch, Nr Brecon, Wales
7 – 11 May 2007	4 days, 1/2 day of outdoor activities	Windermere	Windermere Hydro Hotel Mountain Centre
21 – 25 May 2007	4 days	Bournemouth	The Carrington House Hotel

The Skills Audit Faculty of Humanities



The Skills Audit is an online self analysis and benchmarking questionnaire. It is a useful tool which helps you establish your own training and development needs and enables you to check your own progress. If you are aware of the skills that you **have** and the skills that you **need** you can focus your training and development.

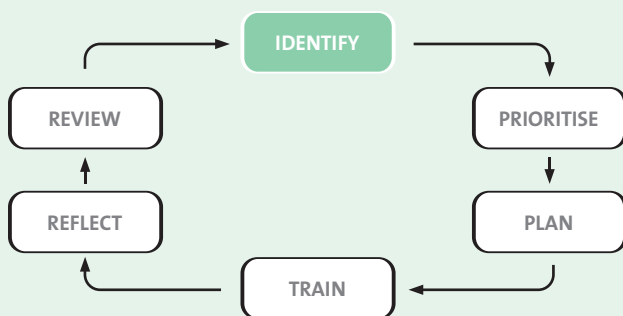
The Faculty of Humanities skills audit is based around the Research Councils Joint Statement of Skills and is organized into six main categories.

1. Bibliographic and Computer Skills
2. Communication Skills
3. Personal Effectiveness
4. Research Design and Techniques
5. Research Environment Skills
6. Career Management Skills

All students registered for a research degree must undertake a skills audit at the commencement of their studies and annually thereafter throughout their degree. Students are expected to;

- **Identify** their current skills by undertaking a skills audit
- **Prioritise** key skills development needs
- **Plan** how they will develop the required skills
- **Participate** in a suite of training workshops to develop the required skills, where appropriate
- **Reflect** on progress in specified skill development areas
- **Review** and re-establish future plans / goals

Continuous Review Process throughout the Research Degree



To view further details about the Faculty of Humanities Skills Audit and gain access visit

www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduateskillsaudit

Recommended Reading

Bourne, T. & Race, P.

How to win as a part-time student: London, Kogan Page

Burnham, P.

Surviving the viva: unraveling the mystery of the PhD oral.
Journal of Graduate Education, Vol 1

Cryer, P.

The Research Student's Guide to Success: OUP

Murray, R.

How to Survive your Viva: OUP

Murray, R.

How to Write a Thesis: OUP

Phillips, E. & Pugh, D.

How to get a PhD: OUP

Rugg, G. & Petre, M.

The Unwritten Rules of PhD Research: OUP

Tinkler, P. & Jackson, C.

The Doctoral Examination Process, A handbook for students, examiners and supervisors: OUP

Faculty Skills Training Contacts

Faculty of Engineering
and Physical Sciences

Dr Jim Boran – Graduate Development Manager
jim.Boran@manchester.ac.uk

Faculty of Humanities

Dr Julie Reeves – Research Training Officer
Julie.Reeves@manchester.ac.uk

Esme Dodson – Research Training Officer
Esme.Dodson@manchester.ac.uk

Faculty of Life Science

Davina Whitnall – eGTP Officer
Davina.Whitnall@manchester.ac.uk

Faculty of Medical
and Human Sciences

Dr Judith Williams – PGR Training Facilitator
Judith.Williams@manchester.ac.uk

Feedback

We would welcome all feedback on the content as well as ideas for forthcoming issues of STEPS.

The next issue of STEPS will be distributed in February 2007.

Please email any thoughts and comments you may have to Claire Atherton at Claire.I.atherton@manchester.ac.uk