

Developing the Postgraduate Manager Events



Taking place on Tuesday 27th March – Thursday 29th March '07 and Tuesday 19th June – Thursday 21st June '07 these three-day workshops are FREE for all, with half the places available for research-council funded and half available for all other research students.

These workshops seek to develop team working, project planning, presentation skills and negotiation. They offer students the opportunity to understand the key features of teams and their roles along with the importance of this to future employment; demonstrate effective team working; practice oral and written presentation skills; apply decision making and problem solving skills in a safe environment, and analyse strengths and weaknesses with the ability to give and receive constructive feedback. Based on the UK GRADSschool model these workshops mix experiential tasks with intensive reviews of team and individual performance.

To book a place or for further information please visit:
www.eps.manchester.ac.uk/graduateschool/graduatedevelopment/workshops.html

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Roberts Policy Forum 2007

Much progress has been made by the sector over the last three years in taking forward the Roberts recommendations on training requirements for postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers. There is evidence from the QAA Special Review that skills training provision is being embedded in research degree programmes. However, there is general concern over the rate of progress in increasing the UK skill base. The interim Leitch Report highlights that while the skills profile of the UK has improved, the UK doesn't yet have a world-class skills base, which could seriously damage our future global economic position.

The forum explored the challenges of achieving a knowledge-based economy by capitalising on skills development to achieve better employability, knowledge transfer, innovation and enterprise.

The full policy forum report will be available soon at;
www.grad.ac.uk

Leitch Review of Skills Final Report

The final report of the Leitch Review of Skills, Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills, published 5 December 2006, states that;

"Postgraduate, or level 5 skills, such as MBAs and PhDs, can provide significant returns to organisations, individuals and the economy as a whole. These higher level skills are key drivers of innovation, entrepreneurship, management, leadership and research and development." (p.73)

The report goes on to say that a target for level 5 skills is not considered appropriate at this stage, but stock and flow of such skills in the economy should be monitored.

To read the report in full please visit;
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/523/43/leitch_finalreporto51206.pdf



Editor's Note

Happy New Year and welcome to the first issue of STEPS for 2007. In this issue we hear about the recent presentation given on managing and supervising international research students, how researchers can get involved with a new interdisciplinary teamwork project, and how researchers can build support networks. This issue also sees the first in a new feature entitled 'In the limelight this issue...' which looks at individual School skills training activities.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this edition of STEPS, in particular to Vicky Absalom and Angela Rylands from the department of Clinical Psychology.



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

Best wishes

Claire Atherton

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A Strategy for Success' Research Careers Diversity Unit



The Research Councils have now agreed a new strategy to advance the goals of the Research Careers and Diversity Unit. This document sets out the five strands of the strategy describing how they will build on past achievements and work towards future goals. It also highlights examples of activities that have proved particularly successful and profiles some of the talented people who are carving out a research careers in this country.

Strand 1:

Attract the most creative minds into research

In seeking to achieve this, RCUK want their training to be the best on offer, relevant and up-to date. Recognition is also given to the importance of helping new researchers understand the variety of career options and how they can use the skills gained through research in other arenas. RCUK want to prompt researchers to think about how their career can move forward and not leave it to chance. To facilitate this, RCUK are developing the **Research Career Mapping Tool** which is a website aimed primarily at postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers, and provides information on different research career paths and the variety of career structure available.

Strand 2:

Encourage researchers to get the training they need

Analysis from the 2006 Roberts institutional reports have shown ongoing development of programme and practices across the sector, particularly for research staff where an emerging theme of careers services assisting with the development of programmes.

Strand 3:

Help research organisations manage their staff and develop their careers

Future plans involve working with other funders of research, such as the royal society and the Wellcome Trust to refresh the 1996 Concordat for contract research staff with an updated code of practice for researchers. This code will outline how funders of research, such as the Research Councils, expect employers, such as universities, to manage their contract research staff.

Strand 4:

Encourage people from all groups of society to take up research careers

RCUK are keen to work with stakeholders on gaining a better understanding of the factors influencing participation within research careers, particularly in relation to women in science and minority ethnic groups.

Strand 5:

Enhance the international reputation of UK research training

RCUK want to make the UK the best place to undertake research and research training. In future, the Research Councils will try to persuade the government to allow them to award their own studentships to candidates from outside the UK.

For a hard copy of this publication please contact Claire Atherton at
Claire.l.atherton@manchester.ac.uk

Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences Training Activities

Final Year Plan	1 March 2007
Academic Paper Publication	13 March 2007
Careers Conference	14 March 2007
Teaching in Higher Education	15 March 2007
Starting a Business	15 March 2007
Academic Paper Publication	20 March 2007
Critical thinking	22 March 2007
Teaching in Higher Education	22 March 2007
Developing the PG Manager	27 – 29 March 2007
Introduction to Research EPS	23 April 2007

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

Faculty of Humanities Training Activities

I'm a PhD get me out of here	5 March 2007
What makes a great PhD?	6 March 2007
Writing Workshop 3	8 March 2007
Psychometric Questionnaires	15 March 2007
Writing Workshop 4	22 March 2007
Part-time Students Training Days	19 April 2007

Academic German for researchers

Do you need German for your research? Would you like to brush up your German skills? If so, the Faculty of Humanities are running a 12 week course which offers a great opportunity to increase your language proficiency.

The aim of the course is to allow participants to develop academic reading and writing skills in German and is aimed at the non-German specialist.

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

Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences Training Activities

Academic Writing in English – Unit 16 (International Students)	7 March 2007
Academic Writing in English – Unit 17 (International Students)	14 March 2007
Academic Writing in English – Unit 18 (International Students)	21 March 2007
Optimising your Scientific Poster	16 April 2007
Speed PhD	17 – 18 April 2007
Radiation Protection	18 April 2007
Endnote Course	19 April 2007
Reference Management	20 April 2007

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

Faculty of Life Sciences Training Activities

Personal Development Planning Workshop

Tuesday 27th February 2007

FLS postgraduate students who wish to register should visit;
www.cal.man.ac.uk/gtppilot/eGTP2/genericForms/PDPwsRegForm.html

For further information on the Life Sciences Graduate Training Programme please visit; <http://www.ls.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/gtp>

Managing and Supervising International Research Students

Dr Julie Reeves and Ms Esme Dodson gave a presentation on 15th January 2007 entitled 'Managing and Supervising International Research Students'. The presentation was put together after Dr Reeves and Ms Dodson attended a UKCGE conference in December.

The information session focused on the needs of international research students, what they wanted from their supervisors, and gave practical advice on what staff in HEIs could do to help. The information given was supported by research conducted by academics in universities in the UK, US and Australia.

The presentation was well-attended by staff from across the Faculty of Humanities, and the University in general including Professor Nigel Vincent, Associate Vice-President for Graduate Education.

If anyone would like any more information or a copy of the presentation then please do not hesitate to contact Esme Dodson, Research Training Officer in the Faculty of Humanities at esme.dodson@manchester.ac.uk.

Faculty of Medical & Human Sciences Lone Worker Training

Do you as part of your research programme have to go out into the community to interview people? Do you feel confident, supported and safe?

Within the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences we have Lone Worker training in place to highlight the complex issues of undertaking field research. Last October and November we ran a series of events with a fantastic trainer from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust. The Trust is a Charity which has at its core a focus on the safety of individuals going about their everyday work. As part of the course we highlighted issues of personal safety and dealing with violent and aggressive behaviour. We looked at risk factors relating to working with the public, explore ways to calm situations and developed ideas on improving our own personal safety. It was an interactive training course with the participants driving forward the outcomes of safer practice. After the initial events with the researchers we feedback to senior managers and held a review session for the managers in order to address the outcomes from the researchers training.

Feedback from the participants was extremely positive, with students saying 'I really feel better prepared', 'it was great and I'm going to practice the techniques we learned', 'I really feel supported and it's great that my managers are involved'. This programme was very well received so if you are undertaking lone working and want to feel that you are prepared please look out for further training dates or contact FMHS training team mhspg-training@manchester.ac.uk



Faculty of Medical & Human Sciences Research Ethics Study Day

Back in October 60 research students from across the Faculties of Medical and Human Sciences and Life Sciences took part in a research ethics study day. The goal of the event was to make researchers more aware of the ethical issues surrounding medical research and to provide information and support about how to apply for ethical approval.



Taking part we had Ethics Review Committees members, Senior Staff who are responsible for getting ethics approval on major projects and the Faculties' Research Governance Coordinator.

We started with the University 'Research Governance' Challenge which gave you the opportunity to determine your knowledge on research governance and highlights areas to work on for the day. This started the event on a fun and informal note that continued through out the day, with a high level of student participation and practical support.

Areas that were covered included:

- Key steps in getting your research study up and running
- How to please a research ethics committee
- Getting to grips with research ethics as a group exercise
- IT workshop focusing on online COREC forms

The next course is running on the 25th May 2007. If you are interested in attending please contact FMHS training team by e-mail: mhspg-training@manchester.ac.uk or by telephone: 0161 275 1454 to book a place, further information is available on the faculty intranet site www.mhs.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/pg/research/GTP/ethics

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.

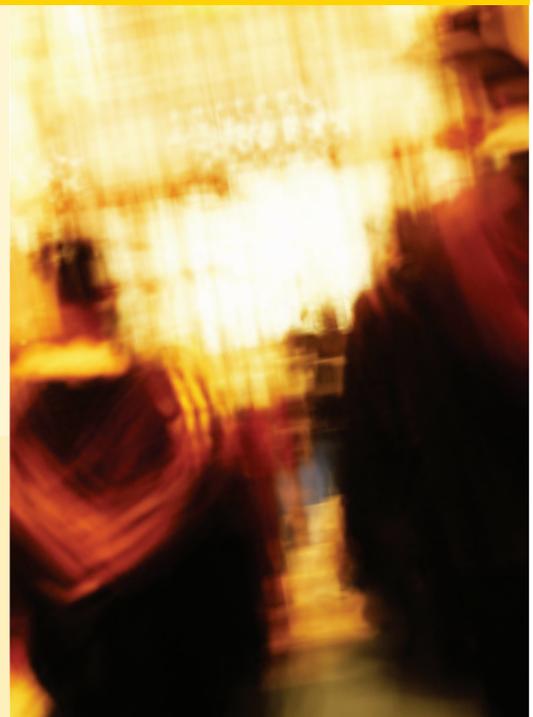
To find out more information visit
<http://www.postgradtalentnw.co.uk/prash2007>

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>



In the limelight this issue... Skills Training in the School of Arts, Histories and Cultures



The **purpose** of the SAGE (Skills Awareness for Graduate Education) programme is to provide a variety of opportunities through which postgraduate researchers can meet their 10 day training requirement.

On completion of the Skills Audit and after commencing the PDP researchers then select sessions which they will find most beneficial or are most interested in.

In the coming year the majority of the SAGE programme has been split into 5 main SAGE Conference & Training weeks' spread throughout the year. There is no expectation for researchers to attend all the sessions offered or even all 5 weeks. Rather, we hope researchers will choose the elements of most interest or use to them for their own development. These SAGE Conference & Training Weeks will include student organised conferences, master classes led by visiting and Manchester academics and 'How to...' sessions delivered in conjunction with some of our partners in various cultural assets in Manchester, as well as formal training workshops on a wide variety of topics.

In completing the SAGE programme the School expects that all PhD students will attend the Postgraduate Research Festival in September, complete the 2 day 'Speed PhD' and Research Governance and Ethics training, all of which contribute to the 10 day training requirement.

There are also other opportunities to get involved in the SAGE programme as a student conference organiser, giving a paper at a student conference or helping with the organisation during the training weeks. Postgraduate researchers can also be involved in the SAGE MA programme as a facilitator for the Skills and Experience Action Plan (the MA equivalent of the Skills Audit and PDP) or the Enquiry Based Learning sessions. Both of these positions require training beforehand and are usually open to 2nd and 3rd year students (and their part time equivalents).

The **SAGE Conference & Training Weeks** for 2007 will be held in weeks commencing

- 26 March 07
- 4 June 07

For more information about SAGE please contact;
Emma Lowe – Postgraduate Training Officer
emma.lowe-2@manchester.ac.uk
www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/sage



UK GRAD – PGR Tips Building Support Networks

Building support networks – highlight case study

Strong networks can be a valuable resource, both when you are undertaking your doctoral research and when it comes to thinking through career decisions and establishing yourself in your chosen area of work.

Support for you as a researcher

Be aware of the support available to you, whether through your Institution, funding body or national support bodies, so that you know where to turn if you need help.

- Your supervisory team should be your main source of support in terms of completing your research project, and should be able to advise on further sources of support
- Your peer group including other postgraduate researchers should not be underestimated as a source of support, especially if you tend to work alone: join or start face-to-face or online communities based on research field, socialise with others from your Institution, or go on a GRADschool
- Postdoctoral researchers and other staff can be good additional sources of support
- The NUS or NPC might be able to help with specific queries or advice
- If your Institution has a graduate school, this is likely to be a first port of call for support your supervisory team cannot provide
- The University you are registered with are likely to have a Director of PG study, PG Tutor or Dean, as well as a service who can advise on deadlines and procedures (e.g. an Academic Office)
- Take advantage of training programmes, counseling services, and services for groups with specific needs
- If you have a support need unrelated to your status as a postgraduate (e.g. as an overseas researcher in the UK), look for relevant support groups or start one!

2007 GRADschools

GRADschools offer you the opportunity to identify ways to develop yourself, to see the relevance of your skills in different environments and aim to support you in keeping your research on track. Details of the 2007 GRADschools can be found on our website so visit www.grad.ac.uk/courselist to book a place!

New Interdisciplinary Teamwork Project for Postgraduates

Are you interested in:

- Problem solving
- Project Management
- Applying your skills and expertise to important global, health, social and environmental issues
- Effective communication skills
- Negotiating

If so, we would like to invite you to participate in an interdisciplinary team-working project with students from across the University. You will be working with them on scenarios concerned with important global problems in order to devise strategies for solving specific dilemmas. The issues will relate to the effects of the Tsunami and water pollution in the Bangladesh and the Indian sub-continent.

The project will take place on Wednesday 27th June from 9.30 am finishing at 1.00 pm with lunch, and will be held in rooms 2.59-2.61, Stopford Building. To register for the workshop please contact the Graduate Training Team by email: mhspg-training@manchester.ac.uk or by telephone: 0161 275 1454.

Case Study - Research Assistants Support Group



What is RAS?

The RAS group was set up by two Research Assistants (Vicky Absalom and Angela Rylands) in the department of Clinical Psychology. The reason for establishing the group was to offer a forum of support for students, researchers and other academics, who work within psychological research and who perhaps, have an aim of a career in Psychology, either academic or clinical.

The group provides lunchtime monthly meetings for people to come along and interact with each other. Invited speakers are scheduled to attend each meeting, where there will be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and receive feedback. Following this, the group attends to and discusses any issues that researchers may be having. For each session, the group aims to include an individual case study from an attendee who is willing to talk about their own job description. The group want to use this to learn about and from each other, offering advice and support. At the end of each session the RAS organisers circulate the latest job opportunities. RAS also offers a journal review group.

The overarching aim of the group is to address the needs of researchers, and to help them feel that they are part of a community rather than stuck at their desk, isolated in their own individual research.

2007 RAS Meeting Dates for Diaries

- 21.02.07 - **Dr. Warren Mansell**: Clinical Psychologist and academia
- 28.03.07 - **Anne-Marie Brennan**: University Grants
- 25.04.07 - **Prof. Matt Lambon-Ralph**: Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience
- 30.05.07 - **Dr. Evan Kidd**: Language and Communication
- 28.06.07 - **Dr. Sara Tai**: A day in the life of a clinical psychologist
- 25.07.07 - **Dr. Ana Wittkowski**: Clinical & academic work as a CP
- 30.08.07 - **Andrea Rannard**: Manchester Student Volunteers Manager
- 26.09.07 - **Prof. Nick Tarrrier**: The clinical course at Manchester
- 25.10.07 - **Dr. Sam Cartwright-Hatton**: Child clinical psychologist & academia
- 28/29.11.07 - TBC
- 19/20.12.07 - TBC

All meetings will be held between 12.30pm – 13.30pm in the Thouless Seminar Room, Ground Floor, Coupland Building, University of Manchester.

For further information about RAS, please contact one of the team at rasmanchester@yahoo.co.uk

Everyone is welcome

‘Expanding Your Horizons’

The first ever conference for fixed term researchers working in the Faculty of Humanities took place on 9th November 2006 at Chancellors Conference Centre. Representatives from each of the schools as well as colleagues from both MHS and FLS attended the event, giving them the chance to discuss a number of important issues including their training and development needs. In the lively afternoon session delegates heard from a number of former FTRs from both inside and outside academia who were happy to share their ‘tips for success’ with the audience.



Photograph (L-R)

Kate Reading – RCUK
 Dr Maria Nedeva – Senior Lecturer and Associate Dean
 Dr Nikos Kastrinos – Senior Policy Officer, European Com.
 Dr Fiona Steinkamp – Medical Writer Envision Pharma Ltd
 Professor Nigel Vincent – VP for Research
 Dr Susan Hogan – Postdoctoral Research Training Officer

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Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences

Dr Judith Williams – PGR Training Facilitator
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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 April 2007.

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