

Statement of Provision for Graduate Research Students 2008-09

The purpose of this statement is to indicate what a graduate research student might expect to be offered in the Department of Statistics.

At present the Department is in the process of developing a more formal framework for graduate research student training, particularly for first year research students, namely the Oxford Graduate School in Statistics (OGSS). As a consequence of this, the details of the provision described in this statement may change for future years. The intention is that a structured programme of training in modern statistical methodology be available via courses in the OGSS and the Academy for Postgraduate Training in Statistics (APTS) of which the Department is a founding member. The first year of the APTS programme was 2007-08 and details of the programme are available at <http://www.aps.ac.uk>

It is expected that during a graduate's first term at Oxford, each graduate student and their supervisor will discuss the statement of provision. The departmental Director of Graduate Studies will confirm to the Division that these discussions have taken place. The provision should be reviewed by the supervisor with the student at least once a year.

For research students joining the Department of Statistics after three terms in the Life Sciences Interface or Systems Biology Doctoral Training Centres, provision offered within the Department will be made available to fill out their training as necessary.

Further information and guidance about research degrees may be found in the University's *Notes of Guidance for Research Degrees* at

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/epsc/guidance/index.shtml>

1. What arrangements will be put in place for supervising the graduate's work?

You will have a named supervisor or supervisors, normally as indicated in your offer letter, who will have overall responsibility for the direction of your work on behalf of your department. Typically, you should expect to have meetings with your supervisor or a member of the supervisory team with a frequency of at least once every two weeks averaged across the year. The regularity of these meetings may be subject to variations according to the time of the year, and the stage you are at in your research programme.

The Division's Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students is available at <http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/intranet/teachingandlearning/graduateprog.html>

2. What induction arrangements will be made?

You will have departmental induction before the beginning of your first term. The main induction to the department is provided at the start of Michaelmas Term. Other arrangements will be made for students starting at other times of the year. Your supervisor(s) will arrange more specialised induction subsequently.

3. What workspace will be provided?

You will be offered a computer and desk space in a shared office.

4. What IT support/ library facilities/ experimental facilities will be available?

You will have access to the Department of Statistics computing facilities and support, the Department of Statistics library (in addition to the Radcliffe Science Library and other university libraries, and the centrally provided electronic resources) and other facilities appropriate to the research topic. The provision of other resources specific to your project should be agreed with your supervisor as a part of the planning stages of the agreed project.

5. Which research seminars will be available?

You will have access to the weekly departmental seminars that individual research groups or groups with common areas of interest organise for their own members and all other departmental seminars and colloquia. You will also be expected to attend the weekly seminar/lecture series that is organised specifically for postgraduate students.

6. What access to research funds will be available?

You will find that limited departmental funds are available to assist with attendance at conferences, in addition to any allocated funds via individual research group/supervisors.

7. What formal graduate skills training will be provided?

You will have the opportunity to attend a variety of skills training sessions offered by the department, (e.g. LaTeX, class teaching) as appropriate to the different stages of your graduate career. In your first year you will normally be expected to take advantage of the wide range of research training offered by the APTS. The departmental skills training webpage is

http://www.stats.ox.ac.uk/current_students/research_degrees/transferable_skills

Students are encouraged to attend the Annual Conference of Research Students in Probability and Statistics, organised nationally, and to give presentations there. They are also expected to give a research presentation each year in the department.

The MPLS Division organises courses and career planning events, details of which are emailed to students via their departments. Information about transferable skills training can be found in the Division's skills training webpages at

<http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/skillstraining/index.html>

Information about divisional training and other courses offered across the University is also available through the Skills Portal at

<http://www.skillsportal.ox.ac.uk>

This site provides information about transferable skills development for research students and research staff at Oxford University, and includes a searchable database of skills training opportunities, links to articles on subjects such as project management, teaching and career planning, and message boards for asking questions and discussing issues with other researchers. An online Personal Development Planning System also is available through the Skills Portal.

8. What opportunities will be available for developing and practising teaching skills (for second and third year graduates)?

The University has established a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), which will support the development of research students who wish to follow an academic career, including training in teaching skills. Information about the department's CETL activities in collaboration with the Mathematics department can be found at <http://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/current-students/graduates/training>

There will normally be opportunities to act as teaching assistants in undergraduate intercollegiate classes.

9. What arrangements for accommodation, meals and social facilities, will be made, on a year round basis?

Department:

Free tea and coffee facilities are provided in each of the four buildings currently occupied by the Department of Statistics. Special social times are: Medawar building (level 50, 11 am Tuesdays), HWCGF building (10:30 Thursdays), 1-2 South Parks Road (Meeting room 2 SPR, 10.45 am Wednesdays). There are also opportunities for sporting interaction, e.g. OCGF inter-departmental table-tennis competition, football on Wednesdays at the University Club. This encourages interaction between research groups in the department. Departmental seminars and colloquia bring research students together with academic and other research staff in the department to hear about on-going research, and provide an opportunity for networking and socialising.

College:

Many colleges will be able to provide you with at least one year's accommodation. Generally speaking your college will provide meals throughout the year, but provision will vary from college to college, especially during vacations, and you will need to familiarise yourself with your college's detailed arrangements. In addition there are usually self-catering facilities available in graduate accommodation. You will be a member of the Middle Common Room, or equivalent, of your college, which is the main social centre for graduates. The MCR provides a common room and usually organises a programme of social events throughout the year. The college will also provide a bar, some computing facilities and a library, and may often have dedicated funds for research (conference and field grants). It also represents the interests of its members to the college through an elected Committee or through elected representatives to College Committees. Again, details will vary from college to college. Graduates are also welcome to participate in all other social and sporting activities of the college. Please see individual college websites for further details about all aspects of college provision.

Central:

Graduate Research Students may become members of the University Club in Mansfield Road, and participate in the range of sporting activities provided by the University.

10. What arrangements are in place for pastoral and welfare support?

Department:

Within the department, your supervisor, secondary adviser, Director of Graduate Studies and Academic Administrator are all available to offer support. The Graduate Liaison Committee provides a channel through which graduate students' views and concerns can be brought to the attention of the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. The Department has two harassment advisors whose names are displayed on the departmental noticeboards.

College:

There is an extensive framework of support for graduates within each college. Your college will allocate to you a College Advisor from among its Senior Members, usually in a cognate subject, who will arrange to see you from time to time and whom you may contact for

additional advice and support on academic and other matters. In college you may also approach the Tutor for Graduates and/or the Senior Tutor for advice. The Tutor for Graduates is a fellow of the college with particular responsibility for the interests and welfare of graduate students. In some colleges, the Senior Tutor will also have the role of Tutor for Graduates. Each college will also have other named individuals who can offer individual advice. The University also has a professionally staffed confidential Student Counselling Service which offers assistance with personal, emotional, social and academic problems.

Central:

The University provides a Student Counselling Service (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/shw/counserv.shtml>) and Careers Service (<http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/>).