



Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

Research Student Orientation 2016-2017

Welcome from the Dean of Graduate Studies

On behalf of the Graduate Studies Office I would like to welcome you all to DCU, both those recently graduated and those returning to study after a long break. This step represents a significant one in your career.

You have joined a postgraduate research student community which now numbers over 700. The research student community is now spread over DCU's three teaching campuses: DCU Glasnevin Campus, DCU All Hallows Campus and the DCU St Patrick's Campus which is home to DCU's fifth faculty, the Institute of Education.

The experience of being a research student will be very different from that of undertaking a classroom-based taught programme, in that your study is less structured, relies more on you to take the initiative and, even for those joining large research groups, involves individual, sometimes lonely endeavour. This may sound daunting, but remember that study at this level is also challenging, rewarding and worthwhile for the level of skills it imports to you, and the knowledge and insight it generates.

As you embark on and pursue your degree, it is helpful to get a sense of the broader DCU context, and to engage with the wider research community. There will be many opportunities to do this during the course of your research degree, and we encourage each of you to participate in the extensive range of seminars and events organised for researchers.

We have compiled this booklet to give an idea of what life at DCU entails for a research student and it should be read in conjunction with the comprehensive Graduate Research Guide also available in e-book format at: www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/marketing/digitalmedia/graduate-guide-2016-2017/issue1/index.html. This will be an important resource for understanding all aspects of the research experience at DCU.

As well as the annual Orientation Day there will be an extended induction programme for all new research students, with sessions running from mid-October. Students must pre-register for sessions they wish to attend see: www.dcu.ie/phdgraduate/eventregistration.shtml

Attendance is strongly recommended and the associated 'Certificate of Attendance' is a very good way to begin your training portfolio.

As a new DCU postgraduate research student you are joining one of the most diverse groups on campus in terms of nationality, age, experience and subject discipline. Spread across three campuses, it is also the most dispersed group. DCU GSO will keep in touch via Loop and emails that we may send to the generic pgr student email address. Always quote your student ID in any correspondence with us and make sure you “like us” on Facebook and “follow us” on Twitter to stay in touch with what is going on in DCU and the postgraduate research community beyond.



I wish you every success with your studies,

Professor Lisa Looney

BA BAI PhD CEng



Graduate Studies Office

The Graduate Studies Office (GSO) supports the development and delivery of research and taught postgraduate programmes across the University and provides a range of support services for its graduate students, including maintaining the information available to you on our website, and coordinating the provision of training opportunities for research students.

Day-to-day information that you may require on your research study is available via Loop (Moodle) which you can access by going to loop.dcu.ie and entering your Novell login details. The GSO will also notify you of events that are happening and that have been added to the Loop pages.

The GSO is located in the Albert College Building, just across from the main student restaurant. This is your office, so please, call in at any time if you need advice. Also if contacting us by email, please remember to always quote your student ID in the subject heading.

There is a range of central support and administrative units that deal with research students' specific queries - these include Registry, Fees, and Student Support and Development.

It is worth noting that Registry specifically deal with any queries you will have in relation to online or hard copy PGR forms. (*R103 Change of Supervisory and/or Panel Member Arrangements* are not processed by Registry and must be submitted to the relevant Faculty Office). Queries on the forms can be addressed to the postgraduate research team in Registry:
postgraduate.research@dcu.ie

Faculties, schools and research centres/groups also provide additional supports. Take a look at the contacts page on our website (www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/contact.shtml) or ask one of the GSO staff who will be happy to point you in the right direction.

The GSO team consists of Prof. Lisa Looney (Dean of Graduate Studies), Ms Grainne Curran (Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies), Dr Tracy Dixon (Senior Research Administrator), Dr Stephen Carroll (Senior Research Administrator), Ms Rachel Keegan (Research Administrative Officer) and Mr Jonny Hobson (Research Administrator). www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies

Graduate Studies Office Team



Ms Rachel Keegan

The Research Administrative Officer is responsible for the University's postgraduate research training and orientation programme, research student internships, and GSO's internal and external communications and reporting. Also supports the development of graduate programme funding proposals and policies and procedures relating to the University's postgraduate provision.



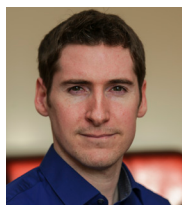
Mr Jonny Hobson

The Research Administrator is responsible for the support and administration of IRC postgraduate scholarship schemes and internal DCU postgraduate scholarship schemes. Also responsible for the processing of scholarship payments, conference and travel grants, Card Fee applications while working closely with the University Fees office with respect to postgraduate research fees.



Dr Tracy Dixon, Dr Stephen Carroll

The Senior Research Administrative Officers are responsible for the broad range of activities arising from DCU's external graduate research engagement projects including incorporation, relationships with linked colleges, regional Graduate School partners, government agencies, national sectoral bodies and international partners. Also supports strategic planning of the University's postgraduate provision.



Ms Grainne Curran

The Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Also provides support to the Dean of Teaching and Learning/Deputy Registrar.

DCU Incorporation Programme

In 2016/17, as part of the DCU Incorporation Programme, all postgraduate research students of St Patrick's College Drumcondra (SPD) and Mater Dei Institute of Education (MDI) will be registered as DCU students. This is a very important and historically significant step for all institutions involved.

Notably the Institute of Education on the St Patrick's Campus has its own faculty administration and is the first faculty of Education in an Irish university. It offers the full range of teacher education, from early childhood through to further education.

DCU's three academic campuses:

DCU Glasnevin Campus:

DCU Business School

Faculty of Engineering and Computing

Faculty of Science and Health

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences:

- School of Communications
- School of Law and Government
- School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies (SALIS)

DCU St Patrick's Campus:

DCU Institute of Education

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences:

- School of History and Geography
- School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music

DCU All Hallows Campus:

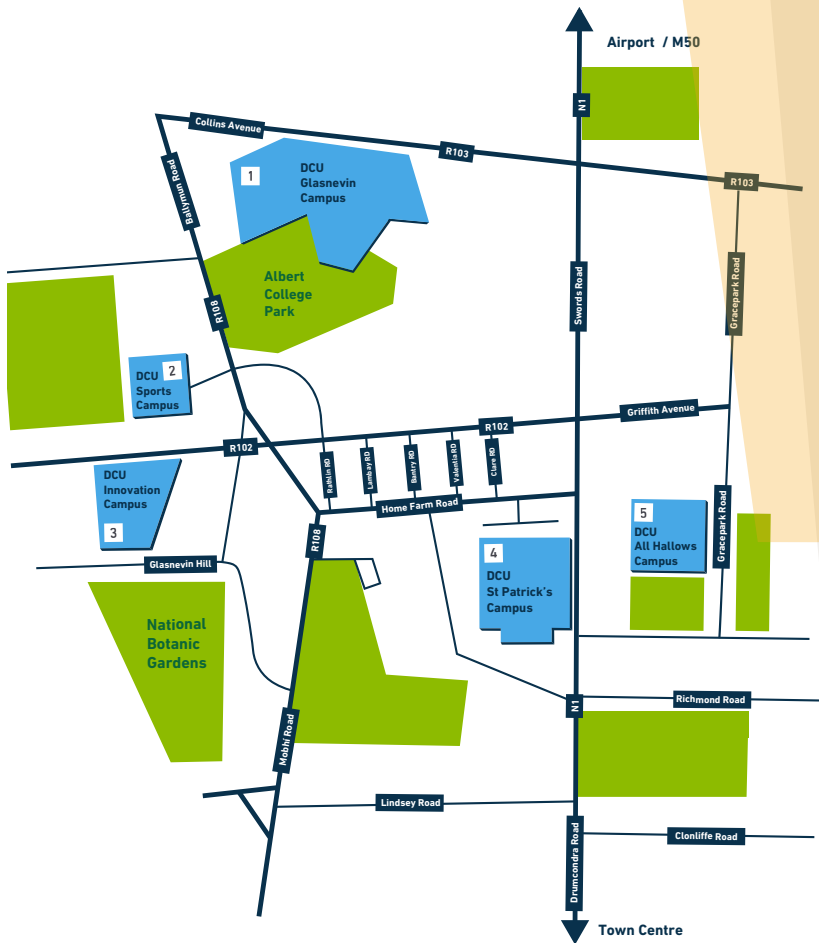
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences:

- Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge,
- School of English

DCU /DkIT Graduate Research School

The Graduate Studies Office works closely with colleagues in Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT). Since 2014/15, incoming research students based in DkIT have been pursuing DCU research awards and there is representation from both Institutions on each other's boards.

DCU Multi-Campus Map



Maps of the DCU campuses can be found at the following link: www.dcu.ie/info/campus.shtml and you will find copies in your orientation packs.

Significant building work is ongoing on the DCU St Patrick's Campus and as a result of Incorporation there has been very recent movement of staff and units, so please look locally for the most-up-to-date information.



Academic Supports for Graduate Research Students

All DCU research students are registered to an academic school (irrespective of affiliation to a research centre, institute or college). This means that, in addition to the frequent practical support students receive from administrative and technical staff, they are also supported by a number of academics in their area, by their supervisor and other supervisory panel members, the Head of School, the Executive Dean of the Faculty and by the Dean of Graduate Studies.



The roles and responsibilities of each of these stakeholders are defined in DCU's Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis: www.dcu.ie/registry/regulations/postgraduate_regulations.shtml

While not easy reading, the regulations are very important in that they govern the entire process of undertaking postgraduate research at DCU. Their purpose is both to safeguard the academic standards of the University and the interests of individual students.

Some of the sections (such as how to lay out your thesis) you may consult only when you 'need to know', but others are important at the outset. The regulations offer a clear communication on what is expected of you as a research student and what you in turn should expect from the University. As you start out, at least read the booklet on 'Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research'.

The Regulations are reviewed periodically and the Regulations in place for 2016-17 will be on the web from Sept 19th 2016.

Official Monitoring of Your Progress

There is official paperwork to be submitted on both an annual basis and as you progress through particular milestones in your study. All such official progression paperwork (otherwise identified as “PGR forms” or PostGraduate Research forms) comes from, and is processed via, Registry, the central administrative unit of the University based in the Henry Grattan building. (There will also be a Registry presence on the St Patrick’s Campus). You can call into the Student Information Area in Registry for advice during their opening hours.

The full list of PGR forms is outlined on Registry’s website:

www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml#research

The flowchart on the next page illustrates your administrative journey in relation to PGR form submission. The flowchart can also be found at the following link (PGR Form submission flowchart):

www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/registry/pdfs/AtaGlancePGRforms_2016.pdf

Queries on PGR forms can be emailed to Registry at:

postgraduate.research@dcu.ie

Useful links

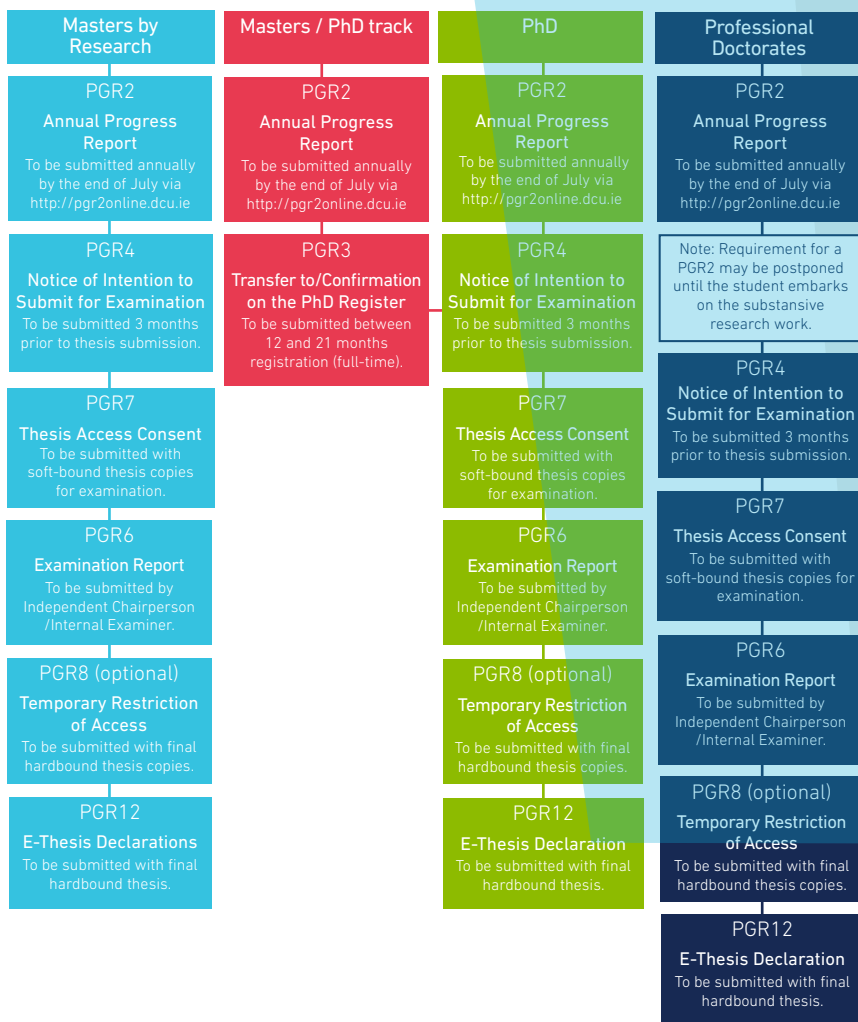
Submission dates for each PGR form:

www4.dcu.ie/registry/postgraduate/submission_dates.shtml

Academic regulations for postgraduate research students:

www.dcu.ie/registry/regulations/postgraduate_regulations.shtml

'At a Glance' Postgraduate Research (PGR) Form Submission Stages



Note: Only typed and current versions of the forms will be accepted. Up-to-date versions are available at: www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml#research

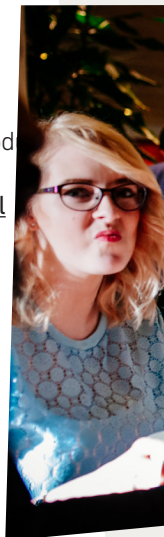


Graduate Training

The award (masters, PhD or professional doctorate) that you are pursuing will be based exclusively or largely on your research project, and you will do most of your learning through undertaking the project. However, research graduates are also expected to have gathered a range of skills which may require some formal or specific training to develop. The annual review process which all research students undertake in July each year includes a requirement that they sign off on the fact that they have undertaken an analysis of their skills needs and have developed a plan for their professional development. You should keep track of any training you undertake, and, in conjunction your supervisor, be proactive in planning what training you will prioritise.

The GSO oversees graduate training opportunities for research students. In DCU, 'Graduate Training' refers to credit-bearing, discipline-specific and generic modules, as well as shorter one-off events and training classes which are taken in agreement with your supervisor. The aim is to give you the right skills at the right time to optimise your performance in research and to augment your research qualification with skills transferable outside the academic and research arenas. Each Faculty has its own discipline-specific list of modules. There are also generic skills modules (modules offered by the GSO), including ones on tutor and demonstrating skills, research methods and research integrity. GSO will also publicise workshops and talks relevant to research students as they arise throughout the year.

For details on how to find out what's on offer and how to register for modules attend the induction session on training and visit the Graduate Training section of the GSO website: www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/training.shtml



Look After Yourself

Graduate Researchers tend to be individuals who are highly motivated and academically strong. However, these characteristics do not insulate them from the pressures everyone feels and can sometimes even intensify them. Negative results, investigative cul-de-sacs and critical appraisal are inherent in research, and this can be difficult to get used to. The timeframe for a research degree is long, and it is not unusual to run out of persistence or energy. And then there is normal life, which can bring its own challenges.

The university has supports which are available to you, so please talk with your supervisor(s), or approach the counselling service or engage with short courses aimed at developing coping skills. Researchers are no different to other students and staff. Key help at the right time can make all the difference to staying on track, and the smart thing to do it is to look for that help.

See Student Support and Development website for further details:
www.dcu.ie/students/index.shtml



Conference and Travel Grant, Fees, Scholarships

Postgraduate Research Conference and Travel Grant

Each postgraduate research student, full-time or part-time, can apply in the period of his or her studentship for a Conference and Travel Grant from the DCU Research Committee. The scheme is administered through the GSO and applications, approved by research supervisors, are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year.

There is a cap of €500 per student over the period of their registration as a research student. There are 2 types of application in the Conference and Travel Grant scheme, linked to the location and purpose of the application, with separate funding levels:

- Type 1: Application to go to a conference, or travel to use research facilities outside of Ireland (capped at €500, but could be €250 if a student has previously been awarded a type 2 grant).
- Type 2: Application to go towards costs associated with presenting a paper at an international conference being held in Ireland (capped at €250).

Conference and Travel Grant awards in any given year are dependent on resources being available. Full details at the following link: www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/scholarships-opportunities.shtml under 'Other postgraduate funding schemes'

Fees

Incoming EU students who are responsible for paying their own fees (if not paying these in full at registration) are required to pay a first instalment of 60% with the balance to be paid by 27th January 2017. Payment in full is required prior to registration for all self-funding non-EU students. Research fees are paid to the Fees office:

www.dcu.ie/fees/studentfeeprotocol/index.shtml

The Fees Booklet for 2016/17 is also available at the following link: www.dcu.ie/fees/fees_booklet_2016-17.shtml

The GSO liaises with the Fees office in respect of students who are in receipt of funded scholarships administered through DCU, and whose fees are covered by the funding body. Such information is given to the GSO and passed to the Fees office via the Scholarship Authorisation Form (SAF).

Scholarships

Some research students have secured a scholarship which offers financial support while they are studying. If administered through DCU, scholarships are paid directly into students' bank accounts on the last Thursday of each month – irrespective of when that falls - except for December when payments are made before Christmas. In order for the first payment to be processed, the following forms have to be submitted to the GSO by your local scholarship administrator:

1. Scholarship Authorisation Form (SAF) - to be submitted at the beginning of EACH academic year
2. Bank Details Form (must incorporate BIC and IBAN numbers)
3. Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form (tax exemption form)

All scholarship forms are available at the following link:
www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/how_to_apply_forms.shtml



Libraries and Study Spaces

Following incorporation, students from all three teaching campuses can freely use the two libraries which are based on the DCU Glasnevin Campus and the DCU St Patrick's Campus and are accessible with DCU student cards.

Please also note the following:

DCU Glasnevin Campus: DCU has a dedicated space for postgraduate research and taught students. The Patrick J. Wright Research Commons is fully equipped with computers, Wi-Fi, printers, desks, a meeting room and a soft seating area. You must register online to gain access to this area:
www.dcu.ie/library/services_and_facilities/postgraduateroomform.shtml

DCU St Patrick's Campus: Cregan library. DCU also has a Graduate Research Centre at the heart of the St Patrick's campus and it provides space and resources for quiet study and collegiate activity.

DCU All Hallows Campus: Research students from the School of English and Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge do not have access to separate library facilities on the All Hallows campus but can freely use those on the Glasnevin and St Patrick's Campuses.

Some research centres and schools also have small common areas open to postgraduate students - you can find out more information about this by contacting your school secretary.

Graduate Research Studies Board

Postgraduate researchers have representation on the Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB), the University committee responsible for policy formation in relation to graduate research, as well as on Academic Council and Governing Authority. Most Faculties also have their own postgraduate research representative who sits on their Faculty Research Committee. There is also a Postgraduate Officer within the Students' Union. The current team of representatives is listed on the GSO website:
www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/contact.shtml

Other Important Sources of Information

DCU Student Support and Development has an A-Z guide to facilities and services for all students on the three teaching campuses:

www.dcu.ie/students/index.shtml

In addition to this booklet, you should ask in your school/unit for:

- any information it has for its own research students
- a copy of the school's policy on learning support duties for postgraduate research students
- a 'terms and conditions' letter if you are going to be receiving a stipend while you study. GSO has provided a template for this on the staff information webpage and the template can be obtained by contacting our office. Students in receipt of internally funded scholarships (eg. from their School) can provide a copy of this terms and conditions letter at the start of the academic year with their Scholarship Authorisation Form.

Links to most of the information you may want is gathered together on the GSO webpage, so bookmark it on your browser:

www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/index.shtml

This is a flavour of some of the links you will find there:

Graduate Training:

www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/training.shtml

Guide to PGR forms:

www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml#research

Postgraduate research contacts including scholarship administrators:

www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/contact.shtml

2016/17 Fees Booklet:

www.dcu.ie/fees/fees_booklet_2016-17.shtml

Postgraduate Research Conference and Travel Grant (at the bottom under 'Other postgraduate funding schemes'):

www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/scholarships-opportunities.shtml

Academic regulations for research degrees:
www.dcu.ie/registry/regulations/postgraduate_regulations.shtml

2016/17 Academic Calendar:
<https://www4.dcu.ie/staff/timetables/index.shtml>

Student Learning skills/workshops:
www.dcu.ie/studentlearning/index.shtml

Office of Student Life
www.dcu.ie/student-life/index.shtml

Student Charter:
www.dcu.ie/students/docs/student_charter.pdf



How to stay in touch with us:

 /DCUGraduateStudiesOffice

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