Doctorate in Clinical Psychology

Research and Thesis Handbook

2019 / 2020
This handbook is for the academic session 2019/20. The University may make changes for future sessions. The date of publication for this handbook is September 2019.

If you require this document or any of the internal University of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format please contact Kirsty Gardner on Kirsty.Gardner@ed.ac.uk or 0131 650 3889.
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SECTION 1 - Overview of DClinPsychol Research

1.1 Research Training
A key aim of research training on the DClinPsychol is to facilitate the development of transferable research competencies which trainees will be able to use in practice beyond the programme. Research competencies sit alongside clinical competencies as core elements of Doctoral training. These competencies include systematically searching research literature, report writing, project management, collaboration, critical appraisal and presentation skills. Research training is provided throughout the programme, with the majority of classroom/group teaching occurring in years 1 and 2. Throughout the programme, trainees receive project supervision from an academic and a clinical thesis supervisor, who provide assistance with the particular requirements of each thesis. Trainees are encouraged to think about their thesis from the start of training, and the first year research assignment is designed to facilitate this process.

1.2 Research - Who to Contact
The following DClinPsychol team members have responsibility for specific areas of research training. To avoid delays, please direct any queries about research matters to the relevant person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Query About</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>In Role in Sept 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Research Queries</td>
<td>Research Director</td>
<td>Angus MacBeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research related admin (e.g. forms, expenses)</td>
<td>Programme Administrator</td>
<td>Kirsty Gardner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Resource Database</td>
<td>Programme Administrator</td>
<td>Kirsty Gardner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research 1 and Thesis Proposal</td>
<td>R1 Course Organiser</td>
<td>Paul Morris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research 2 and Small Scale Research Project</td>
<td>R2 Course Organiser</td>
<td>Suzanne O'Rourke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Ethics</td>
<td>Section Ethics Tutor</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-R1 Thesis Proposals</td>
<td>Research Director</td>
<td>Angus MacBeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Data Archiving and Storage</td>
<td>Research Director</td>
<td>Angus MacBeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Database</td>
<td>Research Director</td>
<td>Angus MacBeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Assessment</td>
<td>Thesis Coordinator</td>
<td>Suzanne O'Rourke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis &amp; Publications Database</td>
<td>Research Director</td>
<td>Angus MacBeth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3 Research Culture
The University of Edinburgh has a strong research culture, with many departments holding regular research seminars. Seminars which may be of interest to trainees are held within
our own School of Health in Social Science and within the departments of Psychology and Population Health Sciences. There may be opportunities to access seminars organised by the School’s Postgraduate Research Student group.

The academic team within Clinical and Health Psychology specialises in particular programmes of research, which facilitate and benefit from research projects undertaken by trainees. These programmes involve collaborations between different NHS regions and members of the academic team. Our three research groups are: Health and Behaviour, Forensic Psychology and Applied Developmental Psychology.

Further information about our three research groups and associated programmes of research can be found on our website.

Many clinical psychology staff are part of the School’s research Centre for Applied Developmental Psychology

There is also an online database of theses and publications arising from our DClinPsychol programme.

1.4 Research Assignments
Trainees complete three research assignments during their DClinPsychol training. The first of these is a detailed research proposal for the intended thesis project. The requirements for this assignment are outlined in the Research 1 course handbook.

The second assignment is a small scale research project (SSRP). The SSRP may involve service relevant research, a service evaluation or an audit and is outlined in the Research 2 course handbook. Trainees on the RPL route do not have to complete the SSRP.

The third, and main, assignment is the doctoral thesis project, which is outlined in Section 4 of this handbook. At completion, the thesis is examined under viva conditions.

SECTION 2 - DClinPsychol Ethics Process

2.1 Introduction to Applying for Ethical Approval
It is a requirement of the University and the NHS that all research projects seek and acquire appropriate ethical approval. This applies to your thesis project and your Research 2 assignment (SSRP). You must not start data collection until ethical approval has been granted. There is specific guidance for projects taking place in the NHS via the IRAS process. Please note that ethics and governance guidance is subject to rapid change. Substantial changes in practice will be communicated to staff and students via the Section and/or Programme.
All projects must also receive ethical approval through the University. Guidance on the Ethics process can be found on the School's Research Ethics and Integrity website. This is an entirely online system.

Note that all projects are reviewed by the School with the level of review dependent on the complexity of the ethical issues raised. Projects with NHS approvals also require completion of the University online form, although in practice, having the existing NHS approval will usually mean that the University application can be promptly ratified. Empirical projects without any NHS involvement (e.g. online samples) will receive their full review and approval from the University.

The University also provides sponsorship and governance oversight for projects conducted by trainees. During preparation of your ethics forms you should also contact the College Research Governance team (charlotte.smith@ed.ac.uk) for support.

Research 2 assignments (small scale research projects) typically involve less complex ethical issues, but may require NHS governance processes (eg. Caldicott approval and Quality Improvement - see section 2.3 below). Proposals for SSRPs that require a Level 2/3 ethical approval should be considered carefully with your supervisor.

All projects are logged electronically. Queries about University ethics submissions can be sent to the Section Ethics and Integrity lead at: submitting.ethics@ed.ac.uk.

You should also be aware that for all projects there may be implications of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) for the use of potentially identifiable data. Please refer to the Records Management website for more detail. University ethics also requires you to confirm that you have completed appropriate Data Protection Training.

2.2 Projects Taking Place in the NHS

In the first instance, consideration should be given to whether NHS ethical approval is required. There is a single system for applying for the permissions and approvals required for health and social care / community care research in the UK. Information to guide you through the process is available online.

The process requires that supervisors have seen and agreed to the proposal prior to its submission and that any necessary formal signing off for indemnity purposes has been sought from the University. In the case of your thesis, this will be your Academic Supervisor. For the SSRP, this is likely to be an NHS supervisor. It is important that you allow plenty of time for this process and take into consideration that your supervisors may work part time.

Projects may also need ethical approval from other local bodies’ panels or organisations and students should seek advice from their supervisors on this matter. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that any relevant ethical approvals are obtained prior to
commencing the project and that ethical approval is maintained throughout the course of the research.

If there is any uncertainty as to whether the project requires full NHS ethical approval, the student should contact the local NHS ethics committee for clarification. If the local ethics committee indicates that the study does not require ethical approval, written confirmation should be obtained by the student (in the form of a letter or email from the committee). This confirmation can accompany your application for University ethical approval and should be included as an appendix to the final thesis write-up.

As noted above, where a full IRAS application has been completed and approved, the University still requires you to complete the University online ethics form.

2.3 Caldicott Approval
Where patient records or patient identifiable information is accessed for the purpose of audit or any reason other than normal clinical care, this requires approval from the Caldicott Guardian. This applies to both the Thesis project and the Small Scale Research Project in Research 2. The exact procedures vary between health boards and in some cases Caldicott approval can be granted by an NHS Boards R&D Office. The board you work in may also require you to register the project with their local Quality Improvement Team (or equivalent). Please check what arrangements are in place in your Trust.
Your Trust’s Caldicott Guardian can normally be contacted by email or via the Trust R&D Department. An email or equivalent detailing their approval, or confirming that it is not required, must be logged along with your ethics application to submitting.ethics@ed.ac.uk

2.4 Applying for University Ethical Review
Where thesis proposals do not require ethical approval from an external organisation, such as Social Work or IRAS, students must complete the School’s research ethics form. The form will guide you as to which sections you are required to complete. All applicants are required to complete the online application form. The process for ethics applications is detailed in the flow chart overleaf.
Ethical review by the University involves increasing levels of scrutiny depending on the ethical complexities of the proposed project – use of personal identifiable data, sensitivity of procedures/questions, risk of harm to participants or researchers, likelihood of bringing the University into disrepute, and conflicts of interest will all increase the level of risk attached to a project and increase the level of review required. These will be reviewed using trigger questions on the ethics application (see flowchart above). More complex ethical issues will require a greater degree of scrutiny, including independent review, and will take longer for an ethical opinion, and ultimately approval to be issued. You should factor this in to the timeframe for seeking ethics approval. Further information and up-to-date guidance is available on the School Ethics Pages and via email to submitting.ethics@ed.ac.uk if you have additional queries.

**Amendments**
Ethical review is a time consuming process and it is recommended that you confirm your methodology prior to submitting your application. If you need to make changes to an IRAS NHS approval changes can be submitted via IRAS. It is recommended that you contact the College Research governance office for advice as to the level of amendment (minor or substantial) and for the most-up to date guidance.

2.4.1 Submitting Applications for Ethical Approval
All applications should be submitted using the online form. Correspondence regarding ethics applications, should be sent to the Section Ethics and Integrity lead using the online system.

2.4.2 Feedback and approval of your Application
Initial feedback will be provided via email and an electronic copy of your letter of approval will be forwarded soon afterwards. Please keep a copy of this for inclusion in your research submission.

SECTION 3 - Research Data & Storage

3.1 Data protection and Storage of Anonymised Research Data
Throughout this section on storage of anonymised data, the term ‘partially anonymised’ is used to refer to data where all personal information has been removed, but where information that would enable such data to be associated with personal data is still available. The term ‘anonymised’ is used to refer to data in which it would no longer be possible to identify individuals.

Active and responsible management of data is fundamental to contemporary research, and is required by most funders and journals. There is also a substantial legal and policy framework underpinning Research Data Management (RDM). Applying robust RDM principles ensures that the rights of data subjects/owners are protected. In addition, archiving of research data at the end of a study increases transparency (open science) and enables both validation of results, and potential future re-use (given appropriate
permissions). ‘Data’ can refer to qualitative, quantitative, numeric, text, or audio-visual information and materials.

Personal data and associated partially anonymised research data should be kept separately at all stages of a study. Once personal data is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was collected, it should normally be destroyed as outlined within the associated ethics application. The remaining partially anonymised data should then become anonymous. This document outlines proposals for storage of such anonymous research data once the associated personal data has been destroyed. Further advice is available from the University Research Data Management pages.

3.3 Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
When storing or processing data, trainees are required to abide by the requirements and principles of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and its predecessor the Data Protection Act (1998). University GDPR information is available here. Students should familiarise themselves with the differences between issues relevant to personal data and those relevant to research data which is no longer identifiable. The GDPR applies to personal data. It still has some applications to anonymised data if the materials needed to re-identify that material are still accessible by anyone (i.e. partially anonymised data). However, it does not apply to data which could no longer be identified by anyone (i.e. anonymised data). Remember that it still may be possible to identify individuals through triangulation of individually anonymised elements of data.

Personal data includes all recorded information about a living, identifiable individual. Students using personal data as part of their studies must comply with the responsibilities as outlined in the linked guidance. Before using personal data as part of their studies, students must become familiar with the linked guidance, discuss implications with their supervisor and seek appropriate written approval. Failure to comply with the responsibilities is an offence against university discipline, and could lead to a breach of GDPR, which leaves the Data Controller of that data liable for a significant fine. A data protection breach can cause distress to the people the information is about, and can harm relationships with research partners, stakeholders, and funding organisations. This applies to all aspects of the research process including information sheets, consent forms, management of your data; and to the storage, transfer and archiving of your data.

For further general guidance on data protection and GDPR, please visit the Records Management website.

3.4 Retention of Data
The movement towards greater retention of research data is reflected in requirements from funding bodies for retention. The Joint Training Committee has agreed the following actions. A data management plan should be discussed and agreed early in the project planning stage. This should include the clear separation of personal data and partially
anonymised research data, a plan for deletion of the personal data and a plan for the retention and review of anonymised research data. Projects should normally retain anonymised research data for 10 years from the end of the project, with a review then and every subsequent 5 years to determine whether data should continue to be retained or whether it should be securely deleted. Data should be collected and stored in a well labelled and indexed manner which ensures that others could review the data. The Chief Investigator and another named member of the research team (e.g. Academic Supervisor) should check the anonymised data to ensure that it has been fully anonymised and suitably indexed. Named custodians should be agreed for all anonymised research data, at least one being an employee of the NHS board in which the project was based and at least one being an employee of the University of Edinburgh. Arrangements should be agreed for the appropriate secure storage of this data within both the NHS board and the University of Edinburgh. All members of the immediate research team (i.e. trainee, Academic and Clinical Supervisors) should have access to the final dataset. The research team should agree early in the project a process for any subsequent requests to use the data. If the trainee wishes that the anonymous dataset be available for analysis by others in the future, the possible further use of data must be made clear in the information sheet and consent form.

**Costs of Data Retention and Data Archiving at the University of Edinburgh**
The University of Edinburgh has a repository for data that provides a suitable archiving facility for the majority of DClinPsychol research in which data sets contain anonymised data. The rights of data held within the repository remain with the original owners, such that this may enable a suitable mechanism for the secure storage of anonymised research data. The repository option simply involves a non-exclusive licence to hold, manage and preserve the data. Alternatively, for data sets that contain sensitive data, or for projects which have not obtained clearance for University repository storage, a secure sensitive data sets folder is available on the shared drive of the Clinical Psychology section. Further details on how to prepare data for storage and how to archive it at the University are available through the [Datashare website](http://mantra.edina.ac.uk/index.html). Your supervisor can also store the data in his or her personal disk space (via Onedrive and DataVault).

### 3.5 References and Further Reading

- **Data Protection ACT (1998)**

- **Department of Health (2007) Research involving the NHS: retention of records**

- **University’s Research Data Management Training online course (MANTRA)**
  [http://mantra.edina.ac.uk/index.html](http://mantra.edina.ac.uk/index.html)
SECTION 4 - DClinPsychol Thesis

4.1 Learning Outcomes and Competencies Targeted

On completion of the thesis trainees should be able to:

1. Under supervision, exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in developing, designing and conducting a clinically relevant research project leading to a systematic review and research article.
2. Demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate applied psychological research.
3. Recognise ethical issues and apply for and obtain appropriate ethical approval.
4. Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices.
5. Be capable of communicating research findings in a journal at the standard expected of academic peer-reviewed work.

The thesis project targets the following competencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Competence</th>
<th>Knowledge development, knowledge application, knowledge transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical / Professional / Practitioner Competence</td>
<td>Theory-practice links, communication, evaluation and research, personal and professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Competence</td>
<td>Analytical thinking, ethical practice, organisational ability, data preparation and management, research reporting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Key Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne O’Rourke</td>
<td>Thesis Course Organiser</td>
<td>Suzanne.O’<a href="mailto:Rourke@ed.ac.uk">Rourke@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angus MacBeth</td>
<td>Research Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Angus.MacBeth@ed.ac.uk">Angus.MacBeth@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Ethics Tutor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Submitting.Ethics@ed.ac.uk">Submitting.Ethics@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirsty Gardner</td>
<td>Programme Administrator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Kirsty.Gardner@ed.ac.uk">Kirsty.Gardner@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All members of the Clinical Psychology academic team provide thesis supervision. Their availability for supervision of DClinPsychol theses will be indicated in the Project Handbook. Contact details for all academic staff can be found on the Clinical Psychology website.
4.3 Thesis Supervisor Allocation

4.3.1 Thesis Allocation Forms

The thesis allocation form (D-R1) is designed to enable the Programme Team to allocate projects to a suitable Academic Supervisor who can help you to develop thesis ideas and evaluate their viability. Please note that you can choose to pursue an alternative project at any stage. The allocation form only needs sufficient detail for us to be able to determine who would be well-placed to advise on the project. Most projects are allocated to the requested Academic Supervisor, but occasionally that supervisor is not available or another member of the team has more experience in the proposed area.

The form (D-R1) is available to download from the DClinPsychol website.

The form asks for two project ideas in order of preference. Please ensure that you complete details for two broad ideas, to ensure that you can be allocated to a supervisor even if your main project is deemed unviable. Note that projects, rather than individuals, are allocated to thesis supervisors. Thus whilst some amendments to the project are expected, if the project changes substantially (e.g. to a new area), your supervisor may advise you to submit another thesis allocation form.

Trainees are encouraged to discuss ideas for thesis projects with clinical and academic staff as early as possible during training. Information about potential supervisors’ research interests are available from the research database (see link from Learn), the research projects booklet and from staff pages on the Clinical Psychology website. Time is available within one of the Research 1 teaching days to meet with staff and discuss project ideas before the allocation form is submitted.

Thesis allocation forms can be submitted at any time, though in first year a date will be set in January by which allocation forms must be submitted for an initial allocation process. All of the projects will be allocated to suitable Academic Supervisors who can meet with you regularly to discuss the project and help you to prepare the thesis proposal and ethics forms.

4.3.2 Research Supervisor Representatives

Research supervisor representatives (Research Reps) have now been established for most NHS Boards involved with the DClinPsychol programme. A key aim of the new Research Rep roles is to help enhance communication between Clinical Supervisors in our stakeholder NHS boards and Academic Supervisors. The Research Rep may be able to help you identify a Clinical Thesis Supervisor, and address any difficulties with completing the thesis in the relevant health board. The current research reps are shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NHS Board</th>
<th>Research Rep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borders</td>
<td>Sonya Campbell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4 Thesis Proposals

In order for us to provide feedback on the viability and methods of your project, all trainees need to submit a research proposal form. For those completing a proposal for the first time as part of their Research 1 assessment, this will be the D-R3: Thesis Research Proposal (for Research 1 assessment). Please also refer to details in the Research 1 course handbook.

If you have already completed a Research 1 assignment but have since decided to do a new project and need to have this new project evaluated for viability, then complete the D-R4: Thesis Research Proposal (for methodological review only). The only difference between the D-R3 and D-R4 forms is that one (D-R3 Research 1) is an assessed item of work and the other is not – thus one will be marked blind, be moderated and receive a grade and the other will not. Both forms will receive feedback on methodology and viability.

These forms are intended to enable the Programme Team and Thesis Supervisors to provide feedback on the viability of projects at a reasonably early stage and prevent projects from proceeding if they are likely to have significant difficulties. The forms are designed to help you to structure your project and undertake a risk assessment. In some cases this process may highlight changes that would be needed to make the project viable within the time and resources available. Arrange in advance to submit a draft of the proposal to your supervisors so that they can provide you with feedback on your proposal prior to you submitting it for assessment. **Please note that your supervisors can only provide one set of feedback before the proposal is submitted.**

Submit the forms in the format indicated at the top of the relevant form. The research proposal forms will then be processed as indicated in the Thesis Proposal Flow Chart (downloadable form D-R5).

At the same time as preparing the R1 Thesis Proposal, we also ask you to coordinate your academic and field supervisors to complete and sign a feasibility assessment (form on LEARN space). These are emailed directly to Kirsty Gardner, at the same time as the R1 assignment. This does not contribute to the R1 assignment mark, but is assessed by the Research Director and Programme Director to ensure that projects are viable. The feasibility assessment is **Not uploaded** to Turnitin, and is not anonymised. Feasibility assessments are reviewed by the Research Director and Programme Director, alongside
the thesis proposals. Forms which have not been fully completed will be returned. The review process happens after the R1 assignment mark is released, to ensure blind marking of the R1 proposal. You will then be emailed a formative opinion on the practical implementation of the project described in the assignment. The possible opinions are detailed below.

If the Project Feasibility falls into either Opinion 3, you should submit a revised version of your thesis proposal with tracked changes noted and a cover note to clarify the changes you have made. This will need to be submitted to the Programme Administrator and will be reviewed by the Research Director. There is no timeframe for this resubmission, although it is in the trainee’s interests to proceed this quickly. Once the revised form is received, a further opinion will be given, with a target response time of 15 days. Opinion 4 is very rare, and in this case the Research Director will liaise with the trainee and supervision team to support the development of a new project.

The feasibility assessment does not alter the summative assessment of the assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The project should proceed in broadly its current form.</td>
<td>No further action needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The project should proceed broadly in its current form subject to outlined revisions (these should be clear from feedback above and the trainee should discuss these suggestions with his/her supervisors, ensuring that these are implemented or that there are good reasons for not implementing these).</td>
<td>Take into account feedback, but no response required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The project should not proceed in its current form and a revised version should be reviewed further by the original marker/s (trainee should discuss with supervisors and submit a revised form to Kirsty and the marker, or refer on to R1 co-ordinator for advice).</td>
<td>Trainee should discuss with supervisors and submit a revised form to Kirsty for review by Research Director. In addition, you can contact the Research Director for further advice. There is no compulsory timeframe for resubmission of the work (see above).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The project should not proceed in its current form. A new project is required.</td>
<td>A new project should be proposed in collaboration with supervisors. Programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If there are no significant concerns about viability, you will be invited to proceed and will be provided with feedback / advice. In many cases it will be recommended that the project proceeds in broadly its current form subject to consideration with supervisors of outlined suggested revisions. In some cases there may be concerns about the project’s viability. In these situations, we will contact you for further information and revisions may be required to ensure that your project is viable. Again, this does not impact on the R1 assignment grade. In very rare circumstances, the Programme may decide that the project should not proceed. This option would only be taken if it seemed probable that the project could not be adapted to make it sufficiently viable within the time and resources available.

To reduce the potential for employment difficulties after training or lengthy extensions to training, thesis projects will not be supported by the Programme Team unless they have been invited to proceed following review of a thesis proposal form and are deemed viable by both thesis supervisors. Some NHS Boards also require that the proposal is agreed by the relevant Head of Service.

We recommend that you submit the thesis proposal form before submitting NHS IRAS or other ethics forms, so that our feedback can help inform your ethics submissions and reduce the potential of having to return to the ethics committee with amendments. The thesis proposal pathway also provides an independent review of the proposal, which is one of the questions asked in the IRAS form.

The above checks and balances are designed to reduce the risk of thesis projects encountering serious difficulties, although some difficulties are unforeseen. Most research projects involve an element of risk and even some low risk projects will suffer difficulties. At doctoral level the trainee ultimately has the responsibility to explain and justify the project to examiners.

4.5 Thesis Supervision
To facilitate the process of designing, carrying out and writing up the research, trainees consult a Clinical Thesis Supervisor (usually practitioner psychologists who have an interest in the research area) and are allocated an Academic Thesis Supervisor from the Programme Team. Aligned trainees normally have to undertake their thesis project in the general area of their alignment, though they can choose any viable topic within this area. The aim of this section is to set out the types of help that Clinical and Academic Supervisors are expected to provide the trainee.

Academic Supervisors should attend training and CPD events provided by the College or School. All Academic Supervisors should ensure that Clinical Supervisors and trainees are aware of the university's Code of Practice for supervisors and research students.
4.5.1 Supervision and Planning the Thesis Project (Pre-Project Allocation)
Many research ideas are generated from health board research events, informal discussions and teaching. Trainees also have access to the Clinical Psychology Projects Wiki, which lists staff research interests and potential projects. The wiki space also includes some potential thesis ideas submitted by supervisors and Experts by Experience. Supervisors and Experts by Experience are invited to submit ideas for projects using the Thesis Ideas Form (D-R7), which is available to download from the website.

Once a trainee has an idea of a research area and a project to carry out or hypothesis to test, it is useful to discuss this with others working or researching in that area. Trainees can arrange to discuss thesis ideas with any of the academic team, subject to their availability. Potential thesis supervisors can suggest project ideas, though the final choice of thesis topic is made by the trainee. Thesis supervisors may suggest useful background reading and should warn the trainee if the chosen area seems either too vague or too ambitious in scope or seems too high risk for the limited time and resources available.

Supervisors are encouraged to develop research programmes and trainees’ projects may contribute to such programmes. Research programmes enable one project to expand upon and potentially utilise findings from preceding projects. Importantly, they also facilitate the development of expertise in specific areas of research amongst Clinical and Academic Supervisors and help the development of collaborating teams, which can support projects. However, it is important that trainees have ownership and responsibility for their thesis projects.

4.5.2 Research Agreement/Contract (Post Project Allocation)
Thesis supervisors should liaise with the trainee at the start of the project to prepare a research contract that outlines the respective responsibilities of the trainee, clinical thesis supervisor and academic supervisor. A sample research agreement is provided as form D-R2 (available to download via website) which outlines some normal expectations of supervisors and trainees, though any amendments can be made which are mutually agreed by the trainee and supervisors. It is advisable for supervisors and the trainee to also agree dates on which drafts of proposals and chapters will be sent to supervisors for feedback and to agree which chapters Clinical Supervisors are willing to feedback on. We recommend that a copy of the Research Agreement is submitted directly to Kirsty Gardner via email (Kirsty.Gardner@ed.ac.uk).

4.5.3 Supervision and Data Collection
Access to Participants
The quality of a research project is often affected by sampling issues. Clinical Supervisors can be very helpful in suggesting a target population and ways in which the trainee might access this group, e.g. referral sources for the sample. Clinical Supervisors may be able to provide introductions to potential referrers and should offer help in case of difficulties in
obtaining a sufficient number of participants. Consideration should be given to a realistic appraisal of the size of the sample that will be available during the recruitment period of the project, taking into account ALL inclusion and exclusion criteria and then determining whether sufficient numbers are likely to be available to meet the requirements of the project. All projects should consider at an early stage whether to recruit from more than one region.

Organisational Support
Some aspects of the data collection process may require organisational and/or technical support (for instance, working with particular populations or using particular technical apparatus or procedures). While trainees have access to technical support in the University, there may be other specialised sources of technical support that thesis supervisors can call on or refer the trainee to. By virtue of their experience in the research field, the thesis supervisors may be able to advise on other issues, such as dealing with administrative parts of a service or institution.

4.5.4 Supervision and Writing Up, Assessment and Publication
Reading the Thesis and Commenting on Draft Papers
It is expected that both thesis supervisors will read draft papers from the thesis and make comments or suggestions where appropriate. It is envisaged that most feedback will be provided by the Academic Supervisor, who is required to provide detailed feedback on a draft of each chapter and upon a second draft (which may be in the final draft version of the thesis) where given sufficient time. The Academic Supervisor will also advise on the presentation of statistical analyses and other aspects of the thesis where appropriate. Trainees should agree in advance with Clinical Supervisors which papers or sections of papers they are willing to provide feedback on and when such feedback will be provided. Supervisors are encouraged to provide feedback via email and to copy in the other supervisor(s). Trainees should keep in mind that supervisors will require sufficient time to read material given to them in the context of other competing demands and will need advance notice of submission of chapters in order to set aside time to provide feedback. Consequently immediate or short notice help is often not possible.

Assessment of the Thesis
The thesis is examined in a viva voce examination by an Internal examiner and an External examiner. Thesis supervisors do not normally attend the viva, though supervisors may help trainees prepare for this final stage. Details on the assessment process for the thesis are provided in Section 8.

Publication of the Research
Submission of the systematic review and key research findings to suitable journals for publication is strongly encouraged in order to disseminate findings that may enable improvements to services and patient care. Studies usually involve notable investments of time and other resources from health care professionals, supervisors, and patients – most
of whom participate on the understanding that the findings might benefit others. The portfolio model thesis is designed to facilitate this process and a teaching session focuses on the publication process. Additionally, trainees have two study days per week in August and September to give them time to edit and submit papers after the viva examination.

Dissemination may take many forms, such as the presentation of results to local health care professionals, patient groups or other interested parties, talks or posters at relevant meetings or conferences or publication as journal articles. The trainee, all supervisors and any other relevant research collaborators should be recognised as authors in any publications or other outputs (e.g. posters / presentations) derived from the project where their involvement would meet criteria for authorship. The trainee should be first author and should prepare the manuscript, receiving suitable advice, assistance and encouragement from supervisors and other collaborators as relevant. All such publications / presentations should be circulated to all authors for comment prior to being submitted / presented. It is suggested that if the trainee is unable to prepare work to a standard suitable for submission to relevant conference(s) or journal(s) within one year of completing the project (or another agreed time-frame), then with the agreement of the student / trainee and the other authors the Academic or Clinical Supervisor may endeavour to prepare and submit findings that would make a reasonable contribution to the literature. In these circumstances, particularly if substantial rewriting is required, the relevant supervisor may become the first author and the trainee would be an author on the paper. It is recommended that supervisors and trainees discuss dissemination and agree respective roles / expectations regarding dissemination of results early in the supervision process. This conversation should involve all others contributing to the project and aim to reach a clear agreement about authorship or acknowledgment.

* Note that the term collaborator is used here to refer to someone who has given substantial intellectual contribution to the project which would warrant recognition as co-author in relevant outputs. Others might contribute to the project in other ways that might be more appropriately recognised as an acknowledgement. Guidance on authorship and order of authors can be found on the thesis Learn space.

4.5.5 Frequency of Supervision Meetings

It is important that regular contact is maintained between the thesis supervisors and trainee, to maintain trainee morale and ensure that the trainee is making adequate progress. Whilst this may vary across the course of the project, a general expectation would be for full time trainees to be in contact with their Academic Supervisor around once per month whilst undertaking their thesis project. This contact can be in person, by phone or via the internet. Clinical Supervisors should provide supervision time for the thesis project, which is separate from any time allocated to the separate role of Placement Supervisor.
At any stage during the thesis project the trainee or either supervisor can request a three-way meeting in which all relevant parties meet together to discuss the progress of the thesis. Such meetings should normally be held at the academic base in Edinburgh, though it may be possible to arrange these via videoconference, Skype or teleconference. We recommend that a three-way meeting should be held in first year with trainee, academic and field supervisors, around the time of submission of the Research 1 assignment. It is important to keep all supervisors up to date with how the project is progressing and any decisions made or discussions held with one supervisor where the other is not present.

The trainee is required to record all meetings with the Academic Supervisor on EUCLID (accessed through MyEd). These can be marked as confidential if the trainee would prefer. In addition, trainees should email all meeting notes (i.e. with either the clinical or academic supervisor) to the full supervision team.

4.5.6 Supervision and Thesis Project Ethics
All research projects need to obtain appropriate ethical and governance approvals before any data can be collected. Guidance on ethics is provided in Section 2. Both Clinical and Academic Supervisors should provide guidance on ethics and feedback on drafts of ethics submissions.

4.5.7 Drafts and Feedback
Supervisors and trainees should review workload and agree dates on which drafts of the individual thesis chapters will be submitted to supervisors for comment. Suitable notice of submission dates for chapters should be provided to enable supervisors to set aside time to provide feedback. It is important to adhere to this plan for submission. This allows you to receive detailed feedback on chapters and make amendments prior to submitting the whole thesis for review.

A full draft of the thesis must be submitted to the Academic Supervisor at least one month prior to the final submission date.

4.6 Study Time and the Thesis
In general terms, trainees have one day a week dedicated to study time in first year. For full time trainees this continues as one day a week in second year and increases to two days a week for most of third year. This is sometimes reduced during full teaching weeks or when attending APS seminars, however it still amounts to a substantial amount of study time.

Those trainees on the 2.5 years training route do not complete a small scale research project in second year, as this is already credited as part of prior learning. It has been agreed that this time (0.5 days per week for one placement in second year) are still granted to the 2.5 year trainees and the days are to be used as thesis study time, to support the shorter timeframe of thesis completion.
Full details of study time are outlined in the NHS and Clinical Practice Placements Handbook. A significant proportion of the study time available earlier in training should be dedicated to the thesis, with the programme having made substantial reductions to other assessments during the earlier years partially to enable this time to be dedicated to the thesis.

4.7 Research Resources and Funding
4.7.1 Research Resource Database
Research resources that can be borrowed from the department are managed by the Clinical Psychology Lab Technician, Susannah Johnston (Susannah.Johnston@ed.ac.uk). All trainees will be given access to the online Ragic database which catalogues online and hard-copy psychological measures that are available to borrow from the department. If you have not received an email with your Ragic account details, please contact Susannah directly and she will set up and account for you.

The department also has a number of audio recorders, tablets, iPads, video cameras, etc. which can be used for research purposes.

If there is a particular resource that you require for your study that is not available from the current departmental resources you can submit an application for research funding, as outlined in the following section.

4.7.2 Applying for Research Funds
Some limited funds are available to support DClinPsychol thesis projects each year, though all reasonable efforts should be taken to either avoid such costs or seek funding for them from other sources. Requests for funding of postage, travel (trainee only) and stationery should be requested in advance from relevant NHS department(s), with applications for other research resources being applied for from the university. In exceptional cases, the university may share postal or other costs, but the university funds are generally intended to meet the costs of other items (e.g. measures, manuals, software, hardware etc.).

Applications up to £350 will usually be accepted if supervisors agree that the requested resources are essential for the thesis project and where the requested resources are items that we would normally fund. Applications for higher sums will be considered on their merits and are more likely to be successful if they are for materials that are likely to be reusable in subsequent projects. It is likely that we will receive some applications for funding that we either are not able to fund or can only fund in part.

Any reusable materials (manuals, software, etc.) purchased from these funds will be registered on the Clinical Psychology research resources database and will remain property of the University of Edinburgh. These materials must be returned at the end of the project in order for them to be available for other trainees to borrow. Items funded will usually need to be purchased via the university.
Applications for funding should be made using downloadable form D-R6 (Application for Research Funds for Thesis) and emailed to the Programme Administrator. Feedback on outcomes and how items will be purchased will be provided by the Programme Administrator.

4.8 Guidance for Writing the Thesis
It is natural for trainees to seek a step-by-step guide to completing the thesis and this section and associated teaching endeavours to provide guidance on typical sections and chapters of doctoral thesis projects. However, this is presented as guidance rather than as prescriptive instructions for preparing the thesis. Each thesis is different and it is for the trainee ultimately to decide upon a format which provides a cohesive and suitably structured presentation of their systematic review and empirical project(s). Submission dates for papers or sections of papers should be agreed with Academic Supervisors early in the thesis process. Academic Supervisors will then monitor adherence with these agreed dates and provide guidance and feedback tailored to your project. However ultimately it is the trainee’s doctoral project and he or she is responsible for its management. The portfolio represents a whole body of work and is assessed as such. While in most cases the original research paper is the larger piece of work, for some projects, the systematic review may be the larger piece of work associated with a smaller original research project paper.

4.8.1 Portfolio Thesis initial pages
The thesis must contain the following pages prior to the main chapters of the thesis. These must be bound in the submitted thesis, not enclosed as separate loose sheets:

**Title Page**
The thesis should have a title page which includes the thesis title, author’s name, the name of degree (i.e. Doctorate in Clinical Psychology), The University of Edinburgh, and the month and year of presentation (e.g. May 2016).

**Declaration of Own Work**
The thesis must include a completed and signed ‘declaration of own work form’. Copies of this are available via the website.

**Dedication / Acknowledgements**
The thesis may contain a dedication and/or an acknowledgements page. These are optional.

**Table of Contents**
An accurate Table of Contents will assist readers when navigating the thesis. MS Word can prepare a Table of Contents which will update itself when page numbers change.
Abstract
Although placed at the start, abstracts are invariably written at the end and are essentially a brief summary of your study and its findings. Portfolio format thesis projects will have three separate abstracts in total. The main one provides an abstract for the entire thesis (i.e. for the systematic review and any empirical projects). There will then be an abstract for the systematic review at the start of the systematic review chapter and an abstract for the journal article at the start of the journal article chapter. Abstracts should be self-contained, such that they can be understood fully without the need to refer to the rest of the report. These abstracts will be indexed by the library and are generally read by a considerably larger audience than the main report, thus it is important to ensure that the abstract conveys key elements of your study.

4.8.2 Systematic Review
A systematic review enables a literature to be carefully reviewed and critically evaluated, using criteria which reduce the potential for bias and thus increase confidence in the review’s conclusions and recommendations. Such systematic reviews bring the same level of scientific rigour to reviewing research evidence as should be employed in generating research evidence. There is a growing literature of published systematic reviews and it is recommended that you read through a few reviews to get an overview of the typical formats and styles. There is no single standard template for systematic reviews, though there are general guidelines and factors that can increase the strength of such reviews.

It is recommended that you discuss the review question(s), search criteria and potential quality criteria with your Academic Supervisor. The systematic review will be in the anticipated area of the thesis project and should be publishable once completed, so that the work undertaken can inform others. It is recognised that some trainees may need to change their thesis topic at a late stage due to reasons beyond their control. In these circumstances the systematic review chapter will remain valid even if the subject area of the thesis subsequently changes.

The systematic review should be written in the format of an appropriate peer reviewed journal (i.e. one that accepts systematic reviews), adhering to the journal's author guidelines and including these in the appendix. The only exception is that we recommend that tables, figures etc. be inserted alongside corresponding text for the thesis, whereas journals often ask that they be appended or submitted separately. There will be some variation depending on the topic of the review and the guidelines for the selected journal. However, guidelines for peer reviewed journals or other means of dissemination usually enable the review to cover the following areas: An appropriate, clear and focused area or question/objective for the review; a clear description of the search strategy (this will include searches of databases, including clear descriptions of search terms used and the time-frame); clear and appropriate inclusion and exclusion criterion for identified studies; critical appraisal of the studies included in the review; a synthesis of the findings from the
individual studies, taking into account ‘weighting’ of their value based on the stated quality criteria; conclusions and recommendations based upon the evidence reviewed.

4.8.3 Bridging Chapter
If the systematic review does not cover all of the literature or concepts that are essential in order to provide a suitable rationale and background to your empirical project, then an option is to include a brief second chapter, which outlines this material. This is not usually required.

4.8.4 Original Research Article(s)
The original research project should be presented in the format required for submission to one or more peer reviewed journal article(s). The only exception is that we recommend that tables and figures be inserted in the text for the thesis, whereas journals often ask that they be appended or submitted separately. Trainees are advised to seek advice from their supervisors regarding the results that would be most suitable for publication and the journals that might be considered. The most relevant journals may be those in which related articles have been published.

The journal’s own guidelines for authors will usually be available via the journal’s website. These should be followed carefully, paying due attention to formatting, referencing style, and word length. The author guidelines for the selected journal should be included in the appendix of the thesis. Subject to the approval of supervisors, work can be submitted for publication prior to submission of the thesis or the viva. Whilst most theses are anticipated to involve one such journal article, where appropriate a trainee may opt to have two or more separate journal article chapters, which focus on separate publishable findings from the project.

A typical quantitative methods section would include sections on participants, measures, procedure, ethics and statistical analysis, including power analysis. The section on measures should provide evidence that the measures are valid and reliable tools suitable for use with the type of population that your study is based upon. If your analyses involve subscales, then the psychometrics for these subscales should be outlined. A qualitative methods section should include detailed information on the interviews, the selection of participants, the qualitative method adopted (e.g. grounded theory), the transcribing process, and the steps taken to enhance the quality of the analysis. Where relevant, it is recommended that a software package is used to assist with the process and to provide an audit trail for this analysis. If an interview schedule is used, this should be outlined and a copy included in the appendix. A page or two of unidentifiable transcript should be included in the appendix to demonstrate the style and steps of analysis undertaken. The methods section should include a statement about ethical approval.

The discussion section is where you interpret your findings in the light of your hypotheses and the previous literature, explaining possible meanings and implications e.g. for clinical
application and future research. Highlight strengths of your study whilst also discussing the methodological constraints and limitations of your study, with appropriate conclusions.

4.8.5 Other Chapters
In previous years we outlined the option to present further results or discussion which could not be included in the journal article within ‘Additional Results’ and / or ‘Additional Discussion’ chapters. However, the experience of examiners was that these chapters all-too-often included undue repetition of materials contained within the journal article or included unnecessary content which risked diluting the overall quality of the thesis. Consequently we now advise against such chapters, though trainees are at liberty to present any chapters which they consider would enable an optimal presentation of the thesis. All chapters, and the purpose they serve, should be discussed fully with supervisors.

4.8.6 References and Appendices for the Thesis
Correct use of referencing allows you to credit your sources and facilitates those reading your work to consult them. Appropriate referencing also allows you to illustrate awareness of the key texts in your field and your ability to use these to further advance your arguments. References for the systematic review and the journal article should follow the format of the selected peer reviewed journal(s) and be placed immediately following the systematic review / journal article. A separate, full reference list should be provided at the end of the thesis (i.e. this includes all references within the thesis). The referencing style for this final list should be consistent (e.g. using style British Psychological Society or American Psychological Association). Whichever method you use to ‘store’ references, keep it up-to-date throughout the project to avoid difficulties at the end.

If there are several appendices, label each appendix separately and include a Table of Appendices. Ensure that appendices are easy to navigate and contain only clearly relevant material. It is inadvisable to present large amounts of data or SPSS output. If you include any measures, please ensure that you have suitable consent from the copyright holder. In most cases such measures will not be included in the final published thesis, though it may be possible to include them in the soft-bound version submitted for examination. Please note that consent to include the measure in the final published thesis is separate from consent to use the measure for data collection. Any measure should be assumed to be protected by copyright unless there is clear evidence to the contrary. If you are unable to include measures in the soft-bound thesis submitted for examination, ensure that they are suitably described with references provided and bring copies to your viva. The appendix must contain evidence of ethical approval, and the most up to date protocol for the study, either the version submitted to the relevant ethics committee or the original thesis proposal form.
4.8.7 Presentation of the Thesis
In order to have a genuine impact, others need to understand and be convinced of your findings. Successful and influential pieces of research achieve this status not only by (usually) having excellent content, but by thoughtful presentation and communication of this material. Consequently, a reasonable well-presented study may produce a better thesis than an excellent study which is poorly presented. Although you should be thinking of the presentation (not just the content) throughout the thesis, it is essential to allow time to polish up the presentation at the end. Keep paragraphs in reader-friendly ‘bite-sized’ chunks. Try to avoid ‘list-like’ paragraphs, in which sentences have an ‘and another thing is’ feel about them. Whilst this might be present initially whilst gathering all of the relevant pieces of information together, once you’ve done this ensure that you integrate the information to form cohesive paragraphs. Remove any superfluous text (e.g. any excessive repetition, information that is not required). Ask others to read through sections of your thesis, asking for constructive feedback rather than reassurance.

4.8.8 Word Count
The thesis should be no longer than 30,000 words. The word count includes everything in the main body of the text: quotations, citations, tables, formulae, etc. The references sections are part of the appendix and are not included in the word count. Likewise, any other material included in the appendices is not counted towards the word count.

An exception to the stated word count may be considered if the Academic Supervisor agrees that the word limit needs to be exceeded in order to adequately communicate the material. In such circumstances, the supervisor should request a concession to exceed the word count from the College Postgraduate Research Student Office well in advance of submission. Should a trainee submit a project that exceeds the specified word count that has not been subject to a previously agreed exemption, the examiners may ask that the thesis be shortened as a required change.

4.9 Thesis Submission and Viva Dates
The onus is on trainees to ensure that they adhere to university regulations regarding the format, content and submission of the thesis. Trainees are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of and meet relevant requirements in terms of submission dates, format and style of written work.

4.9.1 Thesis Submission Process
Trainees should let their Academic Supervisor know when they are ready to submit their thesis. Before submitting their thesis, trainees must complete a Notice of Intention to Submit (NITS) form.

Trainees are also required to submit a copy of their thesis abstract when submitting the NITS form. The abstract template can be downloaded from the University website: https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thesisabstract.docx
The title on your NITS form must be the final thesis title. If the title changes after the NITS form has been submitted, you will need to re-submit the form, ensuring it shows the correct title.

Trainees are required to submit one electronic copy of their thesis to Turnitin (via Learn) and one electronic copy directly to the College Postgraduate Research Student Office (cahss.PGRExams@ed.ac.uk). Two soft-bound hard copies must also be submitted, each containing an abstract, lay summary and a signed declaration of own work page.

The hard copies of the thesis should be submitted to the DClinPsychol Programme Administrator. Trainees who are unable to submit in person in Edinburgh on their submission date are welcome to ask somebody else to submit on their behalf. Alternatively the thesis can be posted to the Programme Administrator at the following address:

School of Health in Social Science
University of Edinburgh
Medical School, Teviot Place
Edinburgh
EH8 9AG

Trainees who are unable to submit in person are responsible for ensuring the thesis arrives on or before the submission deadline.

Following the viva, and once all corrections have been approved, trainees are required to submit one final hardbound copy of their thesis, an electronic copy and an Access to Thesis form. It is typically expected that the final version of your thesis be submitted within one month of the corrections being approved.

The final version of the thesis is submitted in much the same way as the pre-viva submission. The electronic version should be uploaded to Turnitin via Learn and should also be emailed directly to the College Postgraduate Research Student Office to be uploaded to PURE (the University of Edinburgh’s research management system). Only one hard-bound copy is required and should be submitted to the Programme Administrator.
4.9.1 Thesis Submission Dates
There are three submission dates in the year – 1st March, 1st May and 1st August. Trainees following the full-time 3 year programme are expected to submit their thesis on 1st May in their final year. This submission date is intended to enable all aspects of the thesis examination, including thesis corrections, to be completed by the end of training and thus enable a smooth transition to eligibility for HCPC registration.
Trainees on the RPL route are asked to submit their thesis on 1st March in their final year. Again this is with the aim of allowing HCPC registration to take place at the end of the training contract.

Due to examining timetables trainees are expected to adhere to the submission dates. If you are unable to submit on time you will be examined in the next viva timetable – e.g. missed March deadline will be examined in June.

Trainees who submit their thesis later than the above submission dates in their final year are less likely to be ready to go on the HCPC list at the end of their training period due to the additional time needed to arrange ad-hoc viva examinations and for any post-viva corrections to be addressed and checked by examiners. Please note that we cannot guarantee HCPC registration by the end of the training contract, regardless of the thesis submission date.

4.9.2 Oral Exam (Viva)
The thesis is examined by an oral exam (viva) by an Internal and External examiner. The oral exam may be used to establish a trainee’s knowledge of the field of their research, to establish the extent of any collaboration and to confirm that the work is the trainee’s own. Through the oral examination, the examiners are assessing jointly whether the thesis and trainee’s defence of it satisfy the requirements and regulations for the award of the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

Further information and guidance on the viva examination process is provided in section 5 of this handbook. Additional information can be found in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.

4.9.3 Viva Dates
Vivas are scheduled to coincide with the official March and May thesis submission dates. Vivas will take place in April for RPL trainees and June for those on the full-time 3 year programme. For trainees who have had a formal extension approved for their thesis and submit before 1st August, a further round of vivas will be scheduled in September.

For any thesis submissions outside of these dates, the Thesis Co-ordinator and Programme Administrator will endeavour to arrange a viva within a reasonable timeframe, however this will be dependent on examiner availability and cannot be guaranteed.
It is strongly recommended that trainees use the official hand-in dates to ensure that they have a timely viva examination and are eligible for HCPC registration by the end of the programme.

4.10 Marking Scheme
The thesis and viva are assessed in accordance with the university's Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees. Please see Regulation 22 for recommended outcomes following the viva.

4.11 Recommended Reading
The thesis is linked to the Research 1 and Research 2 courses and much of the recommended reading for those courses are also applicable to the thesis. Details of sources for recommended reading are also provided alongside materials provided for individual teaching sessions on Learn. Some additional materials are provided below. Your thesis supervisors will be able to recommend materials that are tailored to the nature of your thesis project.

Web links are given where available, but naturally these may change over the year. If links change, the revised link can usually be found using a search engine.

4.11.1 Recommended Reading for Systematic Reviews
From the York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination:
http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd

Cochrane Reviewers' Handbook: http://www.cochrane.org/handbook


4.11.2 Recommended Reading for Effect Sizes and Power


4.11.3 Recommended Reading for Suitability of Measures (incl. Overview of Reliability and Validity)

4.11.4 Recommended Reading for Qualitative Research


4.12 Clinical Psychology Thesis Prizes
Two thesis prizes are available. For information please see the Programme Handbook.

**SECTION 5 - Examination of Theses and Exam Board Procedures**
This guidance to trainees and examiners should be read in conjunction with the *Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees*.

This does not replace or supersede any of the other guidance documents or regulations.

5.1 Allocation of Thesis Projects to Examiners
Trainees and staff are asked to familiarise themselves with the viva dates and to ensure they remain available on all of these dates. As far as possible, thesis projects are matched with examiners’ specialist subjects. Trainees are asked by the Thesis Course Organiser to submit an Abstract Submission Form at the end of the year *prior* to that in which they
anticipate submitting their thesis. The abstract of each allocated thesis is emailed to external examiners in advance of the thesis submission date.

5.2 Summary of Procedures and Paperwork
The thesis is examined by two independent examiners, one internal and one external. Due to the volume of theses being examined on the DClinPsychol it is not possible to have a non-examining Chair in every viva, though there may be a non-examining Chair for resubmitted theses or where the either the internal or external examiner does not have extensive examination experience. Where there is no non-examining Chair, the internal examiner has a duty to ensure that the examination is conducted according to the procedures and regulations.

Trainees may, if they wish, invite their Academic or Clinical Supervisor to attend the viva in a non-examining role. There is specific guidance regarding the role and expectations of supervisors attending the viva, set out in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.

Before the Viva Examination
After reading the thesis, both examiners must independently complete a pre-viva report. The report summarises in specific terms the examiner's opinion of the thesis, whether it meets the thesis requirements, and any areas of concern or query that the examiner wishes to raise in the viva. The report requires examiners to consider whether the thesis meets the requirements for the DClinPsychol. These requirements are based on the regulations for PhDs, which are set out in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.

Day of Viva Examination
Prior to the viva, trainees should report to the School of Health in Social Science reception where they will be directed to their designated waiting area. The internal examiner will collect the trainee from the waiting area and will bring them into the room where the examination is to be held. The internal examiner will make introductions and will outline the process of the viva.

The viva will then progress. The examiners can enquire about any aspect of the thesis or the trainee’s clinical training, in order to establish that they meet the requirements of the doctorate degree. The viva is usually led by the external examiner, however both the internal and external examiners will ask the trainee questions about the thesis. There is no specific time limit for the viva, but it is anticipated that it will last about an hour. It is up to the examiners to decide how much time is required to examine a particular trainee.

Once the examiners are satisfied regarding their questioning and discussion with the trainee, it is policy to ask the trainee to leave the room, and to remain nearby. The examiners make a decision concerning their recommendation to the College Exams
Committee. It is good practice (but not a requirement) for the trainee to be invited back into the room for the examiners to share the recommendation they will be making. It is important for trainees to know that this recommendation is not for discussion. The examiners may comment on the viva or thesis and may give some indication as to the extent of any corrections required, though the detail of the corrections will come later.

**After the Viva Examination**

After the viva has finished the examiners jointly complete a report for the College Exams Committee. The report spells out how the trainee performed in relation to the queries or areas of concern raised in the pre-viva reports and makes a recommendation for the outcome. The examiners’ recommendations are provisional until the College Exams Committee sends the official copy to the trainee.

### 5.3 Corrections to Thesis

The corrections period begins from the date the trainee is notified of their viva result by the College PG Office. The deadline for completing the corrections depends on the recommendation that was made by the examiners and approved by the College Exams Committee.

Corrections should be submitted to the internal examiner by the end of the corrections period. The deadline for submitting corrections is not the deadline for having the corrections confirmed, or the deadline for the submission of the final thesis.

Trainees receiving recommendation (b) should complete these changes without seeking further supervision. Under recommendation (d) or (e), supervisors are required to continue to provide supervision until the thesis is resubmitted. Trainees should expect to have ongoing involvement with their supervisors and the time taken to do these corrections should be commensurate with the scale of the corrections. For instance, if a trainee has been given 12 months to complete corrections, this is considered a major piece of work and will likely take that time. Under such circumstances it is highly unlikely that a trainee would complete the corrections in time to graduate with their starting cohort, though they would be able to graduate at a subsequent ceremony, once the thesis has met the requirements.

Trainees may ask to meet with their internal examiners to clarify the nature of any corrections, though the examiner need not provide the answer if this is felt to be counter to the nature of the corrections they are asking a trainee to undertake. Supervisors may also meet with the internal examiner to clarify any corrections, though the same caveat applies. For this reason, examiners must ensure that they describe the corrections in ways that are clear and unambiguous.

Examiners must satisfy themselves that the corrections meet the requirements and that the corrected thesis now satisfies the requirements for the DClinPsychol. The revised
thesis should be examined in accordance with the list of required corrections. Trainees should clearly indicate how they have met the corrections in a covering letter and make it straightforward for the examiner to find the corrected sections. Internal examiners should not approve corrections until the formal letter of the viva outcome and corrections has been received.

Trainees will be provided with current guidance for submitting the final version of their thesis once corrections have been received and approved.

5.4 Resubmission
Trainees are only required to resubmit their thesis for re-examination if they receive an outcome e) or h) in their viva.

In most cases the examiners for the resubmitted thesis will be the same as for the original submission.

Trainees should be aware that there is a fee attached to thesis resubmission.

Further information about resubmissions and current resubmission fees can be found on the College website.

SECTION 6 - Guidance for the Involvement of Experts by Experience in Thesis Projects
The Advisory Panel of Experts by Experience and Research Director have created a document to encourage the use of experts by experience (e.g. service users, carers, patients and survivors) in trainee research, particularly the thesis. Please refer to the separate guidance document available online. This document will help you at the research proposal stage.