

## MATHEMATICAL, PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES DIVISION

### Statement of Provision for Graduate Research Students in Physics

The purpose of this statement is to indicate what a graduate research student might expect to be offered in the Department of Physics. It is expected that during a graduate's first term at Oxford, each graduate student and their supervisor will discuss the statement of provision, and the departmental Director of Graduate Studies will confirm to the Division that the statements of provision have been discussed with research students in their departments. The provision should be reviewed by the supervisor with the student at least once a year.

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

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

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

You will have a named supervisor or supervisors, normally as indicated in your offer letter, who will have overall responsibility for the direction of your work on behalf of your department. Typically, you should expect to have meetings with your supervisor for at least one hour per week. The regularity of these meetings may be subject to variations according to the time of the year, and the stage you are at in your research programme. [Note that in some sub-departments assignment of a supervisor or supervisors for the specified project is only made on arrival in Oxford.]

#### **2. What induction arrangements will be made?**

You will have departmental induction, covering safety, IT, library access etc which takes place at the beginning of your first term. The main induction to the department is provided at the start of Michaelmas Term. Other arrangements will be made for students starting at other times of the year. Your supervisor(s) will arrange more specialised induction subsequently.

#### **3. What workspace will be provided?**

Workspace will be related to individual circumstances. If undertaking experimental work, you will be provided with bench space in a laboratory. If undertaking theoretical research, you will have shared office space.

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

You will have access to the Physics Computing Support Group, books and journals housed within the department (in addition to the RSL and other university libraries, and the centrally provided electronic resources). Experimental facilities are available as appropriate to the research topic. The Department also has a number of workshops. There is a Drawing & Design Support Group, which provides advice on design to research groups.

#### **5. Which research training and seminars will be available?**

For research students a range of courses are available. You will have access to the seminars organised by the physics sub-departments as well as the main physics colloquia. The Division is developing further cross-disciplinary provision for key research skills, to share research training expertise and skills across the Division.

The Graduate Academic Programme identifies a need to provide advanced courses in core techniques, e.g. in (non-linear) mathematical modelling, computer programming, and data analysis), in addition to courses introducing the specific area of research. Research seminars are available within individual research groups; department research groups; across the Division and in other Divisions.

You will have access to the seminars that individual research groups or groups with common areas of interest organise for their own members and others. You will also have access to the other departmental seminars and colloquia.

Information about all available research training and seminars can be found at <http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/gap/>

## **6. What access to research funds will be available?**

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

## **7. What formal graduate skills training will be provided?**

The Graduate Academic Programme brings together all the training available to graduate Research students in MPLS, which means that you have access to a very large number of courses. These include academic courses, research, teaching, transferable skills and career development training. With access to all these courses, you and your supervisor are able to tailor a training programme to suit your individual needs and interests.

You will have the opportunity to attend a variety of skills training sessions, e.g. computer courses including poster preparation, presentational skills as appropriate to different stages of your graduate career. There is also a teacher trainer course which is mandatory and is a prerequisite for any class/tutorial teaching or demonstrating offered through the department. The MPLS Division also organises courses and career planning events, details of which are emailed to students via their departments. These skills are taught in the context of the students' own current interests and needs. The Graduate Supervision System (GSS) allows students to reflect on their development and progress, and to record skills training needs and training attended.

Information about transferable skills training, and courses provided by your department, and the other departments in MPLS can be found at: <http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/gap/>  
A list of courses is also available in the Division's skills training handbook. These courses are organised by the MPLS Division and make up part of the MPLS Graduate Academic Programme (GAP).

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

You may be offered either class teaching in the department or tutorial teaching. There is also provision for a number of junior demonstrators on the practical course. The opportunities are advertised and co-ordinated through our academic administrator. There may also be opportunities to undertake tutorial teaching in colleges.

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

### **Department:**

Research students can use the departmental cafeterias on both sites (East and West of Parks Road). Departmental seminars and colloquia bring research students together with academic and other research staff in the department to hear about on-going research, and provide an opportunity for networking and socialising.

### **College:**

Many colleges will be able to provide you with at least one year's accommodation. Generally speaking your college will provide meals throughout the year, but provision will vary from

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

#### **Central:**

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

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

#### **Department:**

Within the Department, your supervisor, Director of Graduate Studies and Academic Administrator are all available to offer support. The Physics Graduate Joint Consultative Committee provides a channel through which graduate students' views and concerns can be brought to the attention of the departmental Graduate Committee.

#### **College:**

There is an extensive framework of support for graduates within each college. Your college will allocate to you a College Advisor from among its Senior Members, usually in a cognate subject, who will arrange to see you from time to time and whom you may contact for additional advice and support on academic and other matters. In college you may also approach the Tutor for Graduates and/or the Senior Tutor for advice. The Tutor for Graduates is a fellow of the college with particular responsibility for the interests and welfare of graduate students. In some colleges, the Senior Tutor will also have the role of Tutor for Graduates. Each college will also have other named individuals who can offer individual advice. The University also has a professionally staffed confidential Student Counselling Service, which offers assistance with personal, emotional, social and academic problems.

#### **Central:**

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

#### **Contacts**

If you have any queries about your department's statement of provision please contact: the Director of Graduate Studies in your department, or the departmental Graduate Office.