RESEARCH SKILLS PROGRAMME (RSP) FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS IN HaSS

2018/2019
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Welcome to the Research Skills Programme (RSP)

I am delighted to welcome you to the Research Skills Programme (RSP) for students in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences. This Programme offers all postgraduate students in the Faculty the option to attend a series of workshops to support their development as researchers.

The HaSS Research Skills Programme (RSP) has been designed as an integral component of the University’s Researcher Development Programme. It allows you to obtain credits as you build your research skills, while it remains an optional programme. It is run through the HaSS Graduate School and it is open to all PGR students and also staff members.

The programme consists of several workshops, each relating to a particular skill or knowledge aspect relevant to your research training. You are welcome to attend as many of these sessions as you like and find useful for your development.

The programme is structured into six Units, each consisting of three or four seminars and an optional task to complete. For those seeking credits, attendance at a minimum of two sessions in a unit, together with the successful completion of the unit task, leads to the award of three credits. Students who do not plan to claim the credits do not need to complete the tasks.

Additional research training may be available through your School or Department. You should check with your supervisor and your School’s PGR Director the training that you must or can complete as part of your postgraduate degree as part of your Training Needs assessment.

We hope that you enjoy the sessions in this year’s RSP and find the Programme stimulating and valuable. The sessions encourage interaction, with an emphasis on student involvement, and offer hands-on activities and opportunities to share your own research experiences.

For any questions or suggestions on the Programme, please email me: daniela.sime@strath.ac.uk For admin related questions, bookings or room enquiries, the Graduate School staff can help at: hass-postgrad@strath.ac.uk

On behalf of the staff involved in the Programme, I wish you a successful academic year.

Dr Daniela Sime,
Reader in Education & Social Policy
Outline of sessions

All sessions run 5:00-8:00 pm. Please remember to register for each session in advance through the Eventbrite registration links provided under the outline of each session (pages 13 ff). Use Eventbrite to book and cancel attendance, if needed, rather than emailing staff to say you want to attend or cancel.

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The Research Skills Programme (RSP)

Programme Overview

The Research Skills Programme (RSP) offers you a range of training activities, with flexibility to identify your priorities and plan your research skills development independently and based on your learning needs. While in the past, students’ development was mainly thought of in terms of support with their thesis preparation and direct research, more recently, Research Councils, other research sponsors and employers have asked for a more holistic approach to developing researchers. Postgraduate researchers are now expected to develop a range of generic and transferable skills to a high level, to prepare them for their future career in academia or other fields and make them competitive at an international level.

In April 2011, the Research Councils issued the Researcher Development Framework (RDP) (see Appendix in this Booklet), which specifies four domains and four sub-domains, encompassing the knowledge, intellectual abilities and professional standards to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills required to be a successful researcher. The four main domains are:

- Knowledge and intellectual abilities (domain A)
- Personal effectiveness (domain B)
- Research governance and organisation (domain C)
- Engagement, influence and impact (domain D)

The Research Councils are also funding the Vitae Programme (see www.vitae.ac.uk) to support postgraduate researchers and their supervisors through a range of activities, including courses, publications and online resources.

The Research Skills Programme provided through the Graduate School in HaSS is informed by the above guidelines and aims to support you in developing as a rounded professional and prepare you fully for your future career. It runs in conjunction with the Researcher Development Programme (RDP) available at University level.

The Programme this year has six units, with three or four workshops/seminars available under each of these and addressing the different domains from the Researcher Development Framework (RDF). These include:

- Literature reviewing
- Qualitative methods (1 and 2)
- Quantitative methods
- Academic Writing
- Engagement and Impact

The units and workshops available under each are detailed later in this handbook. The programme is not compulsory and is open to all postgraduate students in HaSS, including those on Masters programmes. You can complete the Programme over the duration of one or more years and you can attend any of the sessions that are relevant to you and your training.
Programme requirements- registration, attendance and credits

The Research Skills Programme (RSP) is available to all postgraduate students in HAaS. There is no prescribed order for completing the sessions and students who do not want or need to accumulate credits are welcome to attend any of the sessions without completing the tasks. Advance registration is however required of all participants, as venues may change or sessions may be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. Registration is done online, through the links provided under each of the sessions (see page 13 ff for links).

For students who want to accumulate credits, attendance of at least two sessions in a unit and satisfactory completion of the unit task is required. Students could therefore accumulate anything between 3 to 18 credits over the period of their postgraduate degree. No credits will be given for attendance only. It is important therefore that students sign the attendance sheet on the day and submit the unit task in MyPlace no later than two months after the completion of the unit. These will be assessed as ‘task completed’ if the content is in line with the task instructions.

To find the course in MyPlace, search for ‘HASS Research Skills Programme’ and enrol in class. After confirmation of successful completion of task via MyPlace, students must upload the task and the feedback given in their personal training record in Neptune. When submitting tasks in Neptune, these should be clearly marked as ‘Research Skills Programme- Task Unit 1’, ‘Research Skills Programme- Task Unit 2’ etc.

For those following the PG Cert in Researcher Professional Development (PhD students registered in October 2013 or thereafter), credits are allocated as follows:

- **Literature Reviewing** (RD904 – Engagement, Influence and Impact)
- **Qualitative Methods (1)** (RD901 – Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities)
- **Qualitative Methods (2)** (RD901 – Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities)
- **Quantitative Methods** (RD901 – Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities)
- **Academic Writing** (RD904 – Engagement, Influence and Impact)
- **Engagement and Impact** (RD904 – Engagement, Influence and Impact)

For students undertaking research Masters degrees (other than MRes, which is exempt) credits go towards the RD906 class (masters-specific class).

For students registered in September 2013 or before, credits count towards the credit requirements specified in the Calendar Regulations (i.e., between 15 and 60 in total for PhD students; between 10 and 60 in total for MPhils).
Programme reading

This is a generic list of reading materials for the Programme, most of which are available in the University library. Further reading materials may be provided at each workshop by individual presenters.


Planning your development

How should I plan my development?

It is important to take time to plan your training and development early on in your postgraduate career, but also to revisit your development plan regularly throughout your degree, as your needs may change as your research and postgraduate career progress. The Researcher Development Framework (see Appendix) is a useful place to start.

You might want to think of your development in terms of:
- Subject specific knowledge – many covered through your degree, in your School or Department;
- Generic skills – or discipline specific skills, many covered in this Programme;
- Transferable skills – for which training is available through the Researcher Development Programme.

Use the Professional Development Planner (provided by Vitae) to map out the skills you would like to develop. Vitae now charges a fee for this, but other planners are also available:

https://rdfplanner.vitae.ac.uk/

You should consult with your supervision team and ask their advice on skills and knowledge that might be useful and sessions that you should attend, to make sure that you attend the appropriate training in relation to your needs and the stage of your research and development. They can recommend opportunities for development and support you in attending these. You can also discuss your training needs with the PGR co-ordinator in your School.

Training objectives you aim to achieve should be SMART:

- **Specific**: in both meaning and focus
- **Measurable**: how will you know you will have achieved progress
- **Advantageous**: what’s the personal advantage?
- **Realistic**: can you complete it in the time you have?
- **Time limited**: with deadlines and milestones for completion

An example of a SMART objective would be: *I will attend a workshop on time management by the end of first semester, to make me better at organising my time and have a more satisfactory work/life balance.*

You should review your initial development plan at least yearly (possibly at the same time with your annual review) and add new skills you may need for the later stages of the project and further on, in your career. It is important to see your development as an ongoing process and see yourself as ‘in charge’ of driving it and identifying opportunities to achieve your objectives.
Which skills should I develop and... where? how? when?

This depends on which School you are based in, which degree you are taking, your previous experience of research and the requirements explained in the letter offering you a place on your course. Your School's Post-graduate Research Co-ordinator and the Graduate School can clarify these issues further for you.

If you are a doctoral student, you are required to complete 60 credits as part of your doctorate. The main options available to you are through the University's Researcher Development Programme (RDP), the Research Skills Programme (RSP) provided in HaSS and possibly training provided at the School level. The RDP also allows you to claim credits for activities completed outside the university - check their website for details. You should discuss these options with your supervisors and PGR co-ordinator. Other credit-bearing activities may be available through external providers.

The Researcher Development Programme (RDP) is a comprehensive university-wide programme of career development opportunities to support postgraduate research students and staff. Delivered in partnership with all Faculties and Professional Services, the RDP is designed to meet the needs of our diverse research and postgraduate community. The RDP recognises all career paths and aims to enhance your skills and competencies for current and future roles within academic and other sectors. Visit http://www.strath.ac.uk/rdp for more information.

Each School might also provide research skills courses or opportunities for students to develop specialist knowledge and skills, for example by allowing you to attend research skills sessions on Masters programmes or staff-led research seminars. Your supervisors and PGR Director will direct you to these, but you should also ask around and find out what is available in your School. If you have a specific training need for which provision does not exist at University level, discuss this with your PGR Director, they might know of opportunities available with providers from outside the university.

What should I do first?

- Familiarise yourself with the activities available through the RDP/RSP and the process for registration;
- Register early for the sessions you want to attend, as classes are very popular;
- Complete a ‘needs analysis’ to identify the research skills that you need to develop each year;
- Introduce yourself to the PGR Director in your School and to the other postgraduate students;
- Find out what research activities are available to you in your School, for example, research seminars you can attend;
- Familiarise yourself with the facilities and the people in the Graduate School and get to know the people who can support you.

What should I do later?

- Discuss training needs with your supervisors regularly, ask them for support in identifying training opportunities;
• Regularly update your online portfolio of training completed (on Neptune), reflect on learning done and review your training needs; this will also count as evidence of research development at your formal reviews;
• Develop networks with more experienced doctoral students and early career researchers in your School, to find out about other opportunities for development, and to have an on-going network of support;
• Complete the feedback forms on events you attend, to help us make the programme better!

Who can help

There are several people who could help you identify your training needs and develop these, including:

• Your supervisory team- they should be able to support you in identifying your training needs and opportunities to develop these and provide ongoing support;

• Your School's PGR Director- they may know about discipline-specific opportunities, sources of funding, networks of support in your field etc. (see contact details at the end of this Booklet);

• Other doctoral students/early career researchers in your School- they could suggest workshops and conferences they have attended, professional networks, informal meeting places etc.;

• The Graduate School- can guide you through the University's support services, workshops available, provide general information on courses and ongoing support; check also www.strath.ac.uk/rdp

• The staff delivering the workshops- they come from a range of Schools within the Faculty and also from other support services (Library, Research and Knowledge Exchange Services- RKES, Media Office) and they can answer your questions on the content of individual workshops.

For any general enquiries, on the research skills training and other events provided in HaSS, please contact the Graduate School: hass-postgrad@strath.ac.uk
Outline of units and tasks

UNIT 1 - LITERATURE REVIEWING

Workshop 1, 2nd October  
Sarah Kevill and Gareth Ryan, Library Services  
Conducting literature searches using the library electronic resources  
Register at: https://literature-searches-2018.eventbrite.co.uk

This workshop will introduce you to resources available through the Library, including online materials. You will learn how to plan and conduct literature searches, how to find resources relevant to your research interests and where to find guidance on how to reference sources in your own work. You will have time to run your own searches and ask questions about databases and other resources available to you.

Workshop 2, 8th October  
Dr Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
Writing a critical literature review  
Register at: https://critical-lit-review-2018.eventbrite.co.uk

This session will discuss in detail the purpose and scope of a literature review in Social Sciences, how to go about planning and conducting a review, and how to use the review to inform the research design. The second part will discuss aspects of writing a literature review, including use of references, and will give students the opportunity to raise their own questions in relation to completing a literature review.

Workshop 3, 15th October  
Dr Daniela Sime, Social Work & Social Policy  
Identifying a research topic, clarifying RQs and planning your research  
Register at: https://research-topic-2018.eventbrite.co.uk

This session examines different examples of research topics- you will have a chance to discuss in groups your research topic. An overview of the research design process will then be given, with a range of examples to illustrate these, and advice on how to ensure the research carried out is reliable and trustable. The final practical element of the session will look at how to develop research questions to guide your enquiry and how to plan the research to ensure on time completion.
Unit 1- Task for credit accumulation

Complete a selective Bibliography of 20-25 titles that relate to your research, based on the skills you have acquired in this unit. You should select references from a wide range of sources (databases, printed materials, electronic journals, websites etc.) and complete the Bibliography following the APA referencing style. Then write a reflective note on how you developed your search strategy and how successful you think you were in completing this task. Upload your Bibliography and reflective note onto MyPlace.

Remember: Submit on MyPlace (find the module ‘Research Skills Programme’ and join first). Once your task has been marked, you can then submit task + feedback on Neptune to claim 3 credits.
Workshop 4, 14\textsuperscript{th} November  
Dr Laura Steckley, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
**Ethical issues in research**  
Register at: [https://ethical-issues-2018.eventbrite.co.uk](https://ethical-issues-2018.eventbrite.co.uk)

This workshop will look in detail at the key ethical issues involved in research with individuals, including vulnerable groups, and detail the steps you need to follow in securing ethical approval for your research. Issues of consent, confidentiality, anonymity and others are discussed in relation to direct examples from research in Social Sciences. This session is aimed mainly at students on professional doctorates and part-time students, but anyone can attend.

Workshop 5, 27\textsuperscript{th} November  
Dr Virginie Thériault, School of Education  
**Doing ethnographic work**  
Register at: [https://ethnographic-work-2018.eventbrite.co.uk](https://ethnographic-work-2018.eventbrite.co.uk)

In this workshop we consider what ‘doing ethnographic work’ means. The first part of this workshop is dedicated to an exploration of ethnography and what constitutes ethnographic research methods such as interview and observation. We also consider the approaches to data analysis that are commonly used in ethnographic studies. In the second part of the workshop, we discuss the complexities of insider/outsider research and how to gain access to the research site and the importance of developing and maintaining rapport with informants.

Workshop 6, 3\textsuperscript{rd} December  
Dr Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
**Interviews and focus groups**  
Register at: [https://focus-groups-2018.eventbrite.co.uk](https://focus-groups-2018.eventbrite.co.uk)

This workshop explores the theoretical and practical issues involved in planning and organising interviews and focus groups with research participants. We will weigh the advantages and disadvantages of using each method, the main issues to consider in identifying suitable interviewees and participants, and the practical issues involved in planning interview schedules, designing the best questions, setting up meetings and
conducting the interviews/groups. There will be opportunities for practising your own interviewing skills and discussing your own experience/research plans.

Workshop 7, 12th December
Dimitar Karadzhov, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Optimising the use of theory in research
Register at: https://research-theory-2018.eventbrite.co.uk

Theories form the backbone of research rigour and scientific progress. This session aims to equip learners with the knowledge and skills to optimally use theory in research projects. The session will help learners distinguish between theory (incl. different types of theories), theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Learners will be demonstrated how to successfully develop and integrate a theoretical framework in dissertation research. Theoretical rigour will be discussed as an indicator of research quality. The emphasis will be on qualitative and mixed-method research in the health and social sciences, although reference will be made to applying theory to purely quantitative research projects. Attendees are encouraged to bring a sample of their work showing the development, justification and application of a theoretical framework or a set of theories, for individual reflection and in-group discussion.

Unit 2- Task for credit accumulation

Design a detailed schedule for an interview or focus group relevant to your research topic and provide a short outline (500-1,000 words) of the aspects you have considered in the design, supported by evidence from academic reading.

Remember: Submit on MyPlace (find the module ‘Research Skills Programme’ and join first). Once your task has been marked, you can then submit task + feedback on Neptune to claim 3 credits.
Workshop 8, 15th January 2018  
Content analysis and analysing social media text  
Dr Mark Shephard, School of Politics  
Register at: https://content-analysis-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This session will focus on analysing social media text or more easily ‘content analysis’ (with examples from social media, parliamentary texts etc. + with brief section on discourse analysis, i.e. how is it different from content analysis) and a discussion of manual versus machine coding.

Workshop 9, 30th January 2018  
Dr Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
Participatory techniques and researching sensitive topics  
Register at: https://participatory-techniques-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

In this workshop, we consider a range of participatory research techniques that can be used to explore sensitive research topics. This will be a hands-on opportunity to learn tips to support participation in all aspects of the research process, from research design to the final stage of providing feedback to participants. This workshop will draw on case studies to discuss the merits and challenges of participatory research.

Workshop 10, 6th February  
Dr Chris Jones, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
Qualitative analysis using thematic and framework approaches  
Register at: https://qualitative-analysis-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This workshop introduces thematic qualitative analysis and goes on to consider the Framework method for managing and analysing qualitative data. Framework is a robust approach to qualitative data analysis that was developed at the National Centre for Social Research. The method supports the organisation and management of data through a process of summarisation that results in the development of a matrix which facilitates the analysis of data by both case and theme. This process can be used with the latest version of NVivo.
Workshop 11, 19th February
Dimitar Karadzhov, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Doing research with vulnerable, marginalised and/or disadvantaged adults
Register at: https://marginalised-groups-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

The focus of this session will be ethical, methodological, practical, and theoretical considerations of engaging vulnerable, marginalised and/or disadvantaged (VMD) adults in qualitative research. The concept of ‘vulnerability’ will be critically examined, and its role in specific research projects discussed. The presenter will share his experience and tips based on his research with individuals stricken with poverty, housing insecurity, addiction and serious mental illness. Interviewing as a data collection tool will be closely examined. Approaches to increasing participant engagement in research will be shared. Attendees will be encouraged to share personal experiences and/or reflections of engaging in this type of research.

**Unit 3- Task for credit accumulation**
Write a short piece (1,000-1,500 words) on the ethical challenges in your research and how you plan to address these OR a short piece on the ethical challenges of conducting research with children and young people when approaching sensitive topics.

Remember: Submit on MyPlace (find the module ‘Research Skills Programme’ and join first). Once your task has been marked, you can then submit task + feedback on Neptune to claim 3 credits.
UNIT 4- QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Workshop 12, 4th March
Prof Ian Greener, School of Social Work & Social Policy
The nature and uses of quantitative data
Register at: https://quantitative-data-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This session will outline the philosophy and uses of quantitative methods, explaining the core ideas and basic principles involved in designing and implementing quantitative research.

Workshop 13, 14th March
Prof Ian Greener, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Analysing Quantitative Data
Register at: https://analysing-quants-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This workshop gives an overview of approaches to analysing quantitative data and practical considerations in planning your data analysis. It will be primarily concerned with the mechanics of conducting basic quantitative analysis and will discuss the most common mistakes in quantitative data analysis and give opportunities to ask your own questions in relation to analysing quantitative data.

Workshop 14, 27th March
Prof Ian Greener, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Using SPSS in analysis
Register at: https://spss-analysis-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This session is an introduction to the use of SPSS in analysing quantitative data. It will give students an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the software and think about its applications to their own research.

Unit 4- Task for credit accumulation
Design a questionnaire on a research topic of your choice and provide a short statement (500-1,000 words) on the issues you have considered in the design, with references to relevant academic reading.
UNIT 5- ACADEMIC WRITING

Workshop 15, 8th April
Dr Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Writing your thesis- and submitting on time!
Register at: https://writing-thesis-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This session will focus on the best techniques to use in writing your thesis from year 1 to submission- how to plan your writing, how to develop your academic writing style, how to make sure your writing is critical and build a convincing argument. We will also discuss writing management, how to overcome challenges in writing and how to plan a successful timeline to ensure timely submission of your thesis.

Workshop 16, 24th April
Dimitar Karadzhov, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Academic writing and productivity
Register at: https://academic-writing-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This session explores the issue of writing productivity in a research career. The presenter will share a selection of resources for boosting writing productivity and quality by prominent authors in the field such as Sheila Reindl, Helen Sword, William Strunk, William Zinsser, Roy Peter Clark, Scott Adams, and others. A look into the habits of prolific writers (mainly non-fiction) will demonstrate useful tips and strategies learners can apply in their careers. The importance of writing clarity and style in peer-reviewed publications will be examined. Internet tools for helping writing productivity and reducing procrastination will be shown. Attendees are asked to bring a sample of their writing (approx. 2 A4 pages long; preferably in unedited/early draft version) for personal reflection and in-group exercises.

Workshop 17, 7th May
Prof Ian Greener, School of Social Work & Social Policy
Writing for publication
Register at: https://writing-publication-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This seminar will discuss how to choose a journal and how to optimise the chance of your submission being accepted. The presenter will also give an insight into the reviewing process and the editors’ decision making.
Workshop 18, 16th May  
Dr Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
Writing a small grant proposal and fellowship application  
Register at: https://grant-proposal-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This session will offer a series of valuable tips to write a successful grant proposal or a fellowship application. The first part of the talk will focus on the different parts a good proposal should contain. More specifically, we will discuss issues involved in designing the proposal, from considering your research interests and the funders' priorities to paying attention to the methodological design of the project, through addressing dissemination of the results and budget planning of the activities. In the second part, we will concentrate on a list of possible targets for your applications.

**Unit 5- Task for credit accumulation**

Write a critical outline of your thesis, identifying the main research debates it engages with and the gaps in knowledge it aims to inform. Clarify the research questions and how these emerge from the gaps identified through the review of existing literature. (max. 2,000 words)
Workshop 19, 29th May 2018  
Dr Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
Getting research into use: Engaging the public, having policy and practice impact  
Register at: https://public-engagement-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This workshop will look at the best approaches to making your research accessible for wider audiences, including the general public, policy makers and perhaps practitioners. It will detail the roles of the best ways to identify potential users early and talk you to the process of ‘translating’ research findings into policy and practice implications. It will then offer some ‘hints and tips’ on preparing to speak about your research to the general public and a simulation of a public forum where everyone will present their research in a plan language format.

Workshop 20, 4th June 2018  
Dr Claire McDiarmid, School of Law  
Teaching skills for postgraduates  
Register at: https://teaching-skills-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

In this seminar, we will consider various aspects of teaching to assist PGR students in undertaking this work. These include:

- preparation: consideration of learning outcomes and teaching to meet these;  
- different formats: eg lecture; tutorial, seminar  
- audience: preparation for and interaction with;  
- delivery - style; manner;  
- use of visual aids including powerpoint;  
- use of other media / ways to engage;  
- linking teaching with research;  
- assessment

Workshop 21, 13th June  
Dr Sarah Edwards, School of Humanities  
Presenting at conferences and networking  
Register at: https://conference-presenting-2019.eventbrite.co.uk

This workshop explores the opportunities and potential pitfalls of presenting at conferences. We consider all aspects of conference presentations: which conferences to consider; writing successful abstracts; creating visual presentations; the importance of engaging your audience and holding their attention; networking and developing
relationships. At the end of the workshop, you should feel confident about presenting at conferences and ready to share your research!

**Workshop 22, 24th June**  
**Dr Daniela Sime, School of Social Work & Social Policy**  
**Preparing for your viva**  
Register at: [https://viva-preparation-2019.eventbrite.co.uk](https://viva-preparation-2019.eventbrite.co.uk)

This workshop will start with an overview of the viva process and examine the University’s regulations in relation to examining. It will detail the roles of the examiners and the structure of the viva exam, and then discuss possible questions and how best to answer these in a viva exam. It will then offer some ‘hints and tips’ on preparing for the viva and conclude with a simulation of a viva situation.

**Unit 6- Task for credit accumulation**

Upload your slides/poster from a conference presentation or the PDF and write a reflection (500-1000 words) on how you prepared the presentation/poster, what were you trying to achieve in terms of impact/key messages, perhaps how successful the presentation was and what would you do differently next time.

Remember: Submit on MyPlace (find the module ‘Research Skills Programme’ and join first). Once your task has been marked, you can then submit task + feedback on Neptune to claim 3 credits.
Support available for your development

There are a range of people who can help with your research and skills development throughout your Masters or doctoral career.

Your supervisors

You should work with your supervisor(s) to identify early your training needs and then review these regularly in your supervision meetings. An annual Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is an expectation now of many research funders. Your supervisor(s) can advise on what courses you should attend and when, opportunities that may be available externally and potential sources of funding. They also know the discipline-specific opportunities and networks and may advise you on how to access these.

It is important however that you take charge of your skills development and you do not expect your supervisor(s) to ‘take care’ of your skills development. You should be proactive in reviewing your skills on a regular basis and identify opportunities for development and then perhaps discuss these with your supervisor(s). Remember also that for most students there is a minimum credit completion requirement of 60 credits before you can submit your thesis for the viva examination.

The review process

During the Annual and Interim reviews, which are part of the doctoral process, you will be asked to discuss your skills development plan and any needs you might have. This is a good opportunity to reflect on your ongoing development and perhaps review previous plans, as your development needs will change. Also, you can ask the reviewer’s opinion on your skills development plans and opportunities they might know of in your specific discipline.

Your School

You will be based in one of the Schools that form the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HaSS). In your School, there are several individuals who can support you in your research and development, alongside the supervisory team.
The Postgraduate Research Director is your first point of contact and they should be able to answer questions you might have about PG life, events organised at School level, the review process, and s/he will also put you in touch with other doctoral students. The PGR co-ordinator will also inform you of training programmes available in your School and which you must complete.

At School level, there will be other doctoral students and early career researchers who may offer support, especially in the initial stages. Try and introduce yourself to colleagues and people in your School and make your research interests known, so that people can include you in relevant activities. The Graduate School can also allocate you a mentor- another PhD student who can signpost things for you.

Also, find out early about events organised regularly, like research seminars or specialist groups which you might join. When the opportunity arises, introduce yourself to your Head of School and let them know about your area of work and interests.

**The Graduate School**

See [http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/courses/gradschool/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/courses/gradschool/)

As a postgraduate research student in HaSS, you are part of the Graduate School. Created in 2010, the Graduate School objective is to ensure that you have a first class environment in which to pursue your research. Throughout your research, you will be able to rely on the Graduate School Support Team to provide an accessible point of personal contact and information about all aspects of postgraduate life at Strathclyde. Check out the Graduate School Handbook and the Graduate School Sharepoint for more details on support available, which includes training events, information on research events, support with funding and much more.

Graduate School Sharepoint:

[https://moss.strath.ac.uk/hass/support/graduateschool/default.aspx](https://moss.strath.ac.uk/hass/support/graduateschool/default.aspx)
Strathclyde Researcher Development Programme (RDP)

This is the University’s programme of supporting the development of doctoral and early career researchers, which offers a range of courses, events, online resources and opportunities to develop skills for your current and future career. Check out their website regularly, for information and also to see courses on offer: http://www.strath.ac.uk/rdp/ and http://www.strath.ac.uk/postgrad/

Careers Services

The University’s Careers Service offers support through a team of qualified careers advisors available to provide impartial and confidential careers guidance to all postgraduate students and early careers researchers. You can use their Resource Centre, access information online, attend workshops organised regularly on different aspects of your development or make an appointment to see an advisor. See http://www.strath.ac.uk/careers/pgr/

Vitae and resources for researchers

Vitae (www.vitae.ac.uk) was established and funded by the UK Government to support researchers’ skills development. Its mission is to support not only students, but also researchers, supervisors, research managers. Vitae provides a diverse range of resources online through their website and also organises a range of events which are usually free to students, especially those funded through scholarships from the Funding Councils.

Activities they offer throughout the year include: Vitae Residential Schools, Graduate taster events, regional poster competitions, mentoring online etc. Check out their website for information and events.
# Useful contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HaSS Graduate School</th>
<th><a href="mailto:hass-postgrad@strath.ac.uk">hass-postgrad@strath.ac.uk</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/courses/gradschool/">http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/courses/gradschool/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| University RDP enquiries | researcher.development@strath.ac.uk |

## HaSS Staff with Research/PGR responsibilities

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Appendix: Researcher Development Framework