



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**



**SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH HANDBOOK**

2022/23

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RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Our Research Ethos

The School of Biological Sciences aims to enhance the way we use technology in research, food security, microbiology, ecosystem biology, sustainability and many other related areas. The three research theme areas are detailed below.

- **Agri-Food Systems and Human Nutrition**

This theme focuses on how Agri-Food systems can be better positioned to provide safe, authentic and healthy diets with high-quality plant, livestock and aquaculture products, whilst supporting human and animal health in a way that is sustainable and resilient to climatic changes.

Underpinning these goals, the disciplinary expertise of the theme integrates basic and applied research from animal health and welfare, nutrition, performance and environmental and social impact (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions from livestock) to chemical contaminant and natural toxin detection, food microbiology, food fraud detection and food systems traceability and transparency, integrated into a holistic total systems approach.

Supported by underpinning expertise in cutting edge molecular, genomic, transcriptomic, proteomic and metabolomic technologies, artificial intelligence and simulation modelling, the goal of the theme is to support the transformation of global Agri-Food systems. This is with the purpose of maximising the benefits both to animal and human nutrition and health, while simultaneously reducing environmental impact, protecting ecological resources, supporting livelihoods and access to affordable safe foods, whilst upholding social, cultural, and ethical values. A system based on the principles of measurable integrity and impact.

Theme Lead: Professor Chris Creevey (chris.creevey@qub.ac.uk)

Deputy Theme Lead: Dr Katerina Theodoridou (k.theodoridou@qub.ac.uk)

- **Understanding Health and Disease**

The Understanding Health and Disease research theme covers humans, plants, and animals with research strengths in prevention, diagnostics, surveillance, epidemiology, and treatments. We study how health can be improved through food and nutrition and how diseases can be tackled by understanding their fundamental molecular mechanisms. Our researchers work in human cancer and genetic diseases, in infections caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites, and in how global health and disease will be affected by global warming and climate change.

We recognize that the only way to tackle the problems we face as a society is to take an interdisciplinary approach to our research. This means we have expertise in broad areas including molecular biology, biochemistry, bioinformatics, genomics, transcriptomics, modelling, bioanalytical chemistry, proteomics, metabolomics, microbiology, parasitology, and plant biology. We work internationally with researchers and partners in universities, charities, non-governmental organisations, industry, and government agencies to tackle local and global challenges.

Theme Lead: Professor Eric Morgan (eric.morgan@qub.ac.uk)

Deputy Theme Lead: Dr Simon Cameron (s.cameron@qub.ac.uk)

- **Sustaining Ecosystems and Biodiversity**

This theme covers research in biodiversity and ecosystem services for environments ranging from tropical forests to deep oceans, using field techniques and skills such as wildlife tracking, taxonomy, geostatistics, molecular and genetic ecology, environmental microbiology, microbial ecology, food web analysis, microcosm and mesocosm experiments, and mathematical/computational methods. Within this theme we also study the behaviour and temperament of wild, agricultural or domestic animals and their implications for welfare and ability to respond to environmental change.

Potential research projects include phylogenetic analysis of rare and newly discovered species, examination of ecological interactions in tropical systems, agricultural soils, or marine communities, using state-of-the-art genetic analysis, surveys using drones or satellite tagging, or experiments in tanks and field plots, including careful and ethical examinations of animal behaviour. Projects range from theoretical analysis of stability in ecosystems, through discovery of new species and mechanisms of interaction, or responses to climate change, to the assessment of agri-environment schemes, development of new methods for commercial fisheries management and economic evaluations of conservation measures. Projects very often have an international dimension and include collaboration with other researchers worldwide.

Theme Lead: Professor Mark Emmerson (m.emmerson@qub.ac.uk)

Deputy Theme Lead: Dr Julianne Megaw (j.megaw@qub.ac.uk)

Institute for Global Food Security

The Institute for Global Food Security at Queen's University Belfast was founded in 2013 to provide a world-leading commitment to research in food security. The Institute is a key partner in national and global efforts to provide the world's growing population with a sustainable, safe and secure supply of high quality food. Increasingly, many aspects of our research are carried out in collaboration with world-leading colleagues and research centres in Europe, Asia and North America.

The research of the Institute falls within three grand challenges:

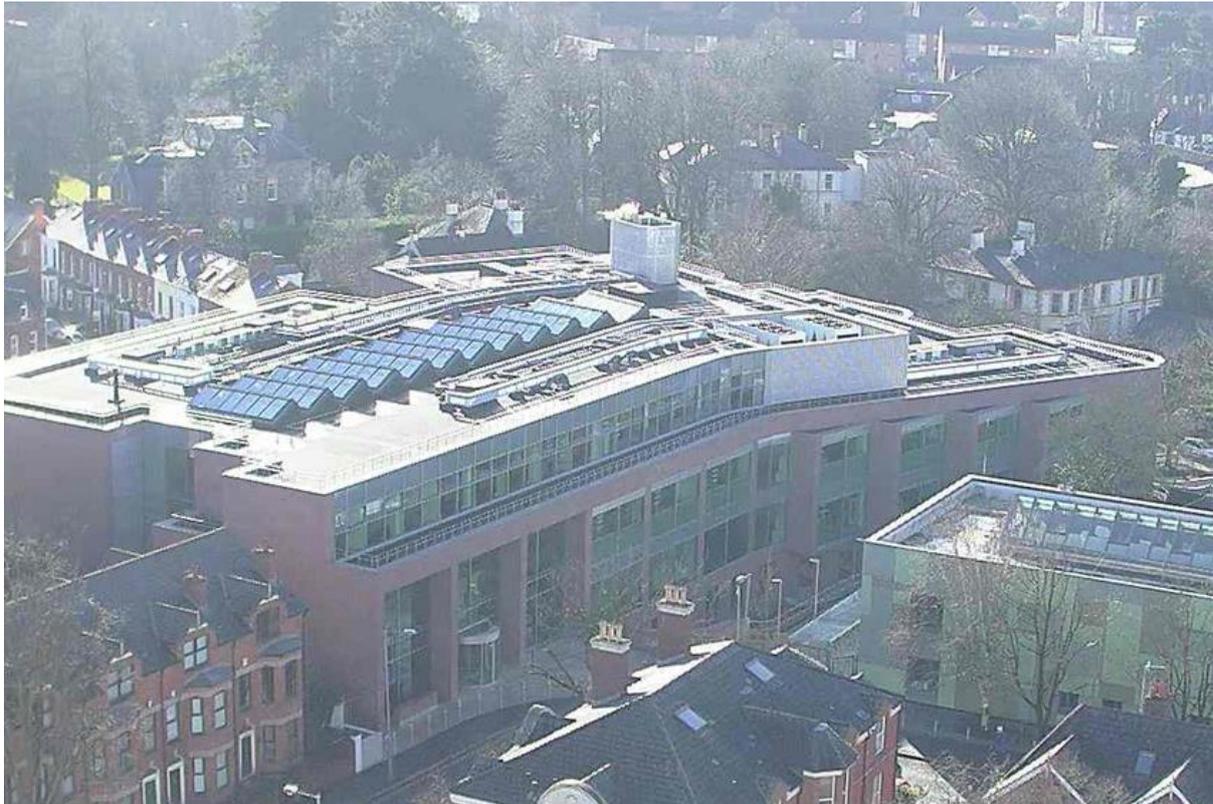
- **Farms for the Future**
- **Global Food Integrity**

- **Food, Nutrition and Health**

At a time when the world's population is growing at its fastest ever rate, food security is a major global challenge. The Institute for Global Food Security aims to play a major role in delivering safe, sustainable and authentic food to the world's population, and has become globally recognised for its excellence in research. Responsive, high-quality education is essential to ensure the agri-food sector remains innovative, sustainable and globally competitive. To secure this success, our teaching draws on excellence in areas as diverse as nutrition, diet and health, chemical engineering, biomedical sciences and biochemistry.

May 2022 saw the launch of the QUB-NML Centre of Excellence in Agriculture and Food Integrity. Based at the ASSET Technology Centre in the Biological Sciences building, the centre will provide an interdisciplinary environment for projects that develop innovations in scientific measurement to support the agri-food industry and supply chain by improving reliability, safety, and productivity. It will also educate and train current and future industry leaders in Northern Ireland, and the rest of the UK, with the specialist knowledge and skills needed for a fast-changing, competitive commercial landscape.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/GRI/TheInstituteforGlobalFoodSecurity/>



KEY FACILITIES

Our Building

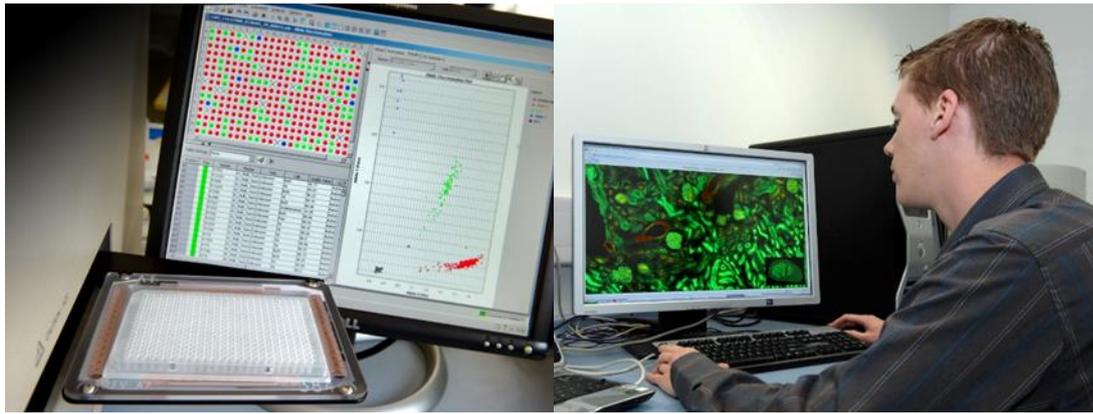
Opened in early 2019 at Chlorine Gardens, the new School/Institute building provides the facilities to help grow our life sciences sector, especially in areas such as agriculture/food science, food safety, disease/infection biology, diagnostics, waste management, ecosystems and the environment.

Advanced Informatics (MHLS Faculty Core Technology Unit)

The Advanced Informatics Core Technology Unit provides access to a comprehensive spectrum of data collection, data management, integration, linkage, exchange, reuse, analytics tools and data modelling expertise. It also:

- Identifies and implements strategic enhancements to data management so as to realise the vision of a semantic “mind” to provide an ability of actionable intelligence.
- Establishes and maintains a comprehensive and systematic research data management framework consisting of an integrative “fabric” of people, policies and technologies.
- Designs, delivers, manages and optimises a suite of software tools that support “lifecycle” management of data resources and consultative needs.
- Identifies and supports data needs through the appropriate selection, implementation and management of technology platforms.

<https://pure.qub.ac.uk/en/equipments/advanced-informatics-core-technology-unit>



Mass Spectrometry (MHLS Faculty Core Technology Unit)

The main objectives of the Mass Spectrometry Core Technology Unit are to:

- Undertake and facilitate high quality mass spectrometry based research.
- Provide access to high end mass spectrometers and develop innovative applications for life-scientists and clinicians.
- Provide high quality training to undergraduate/postgraduate students and researchers.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/GRI/TheInstituteforGlobalFoodSecurity/FacilitiesincludingASSETlab/AdvancedMassSpectrometry/>

Genomics (MHLS Faculty Core Technology Unit)

The aim of the Genomics Core Technology Unit is to enhance research by providing access to the latest genomics technology.

A significant investment in state-of-the-art equipment enables support of a range of genomics applications, with a particular focus on Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS). The GCTU provides an increasing range of off-the shelf NGS services and will also work with research teams to develop bespoke projects that exploit the power of NGS applications to enhance research outputs.

The GCTU is a not-for-profit service provider for the research community and is equipped with state-of-the-art next generation sequencing platforms. Coupled with complementary robotics, sequence capture and array capabilities, it offers optimum, tailor-made solutions across a wide range of biological applications.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/core-technology-units/Genomics/>

Advanced Imaging (MHLS Faculty Core Technology Unit)

The goal of the Advanced Imaging Core Technology Unit is to strengthen research capabilities and promote research excellence at Queen's by providing training and access to cutting edge microscopy, imaging equipment, techniques and imaging analysis.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/core-technology-units/AdvancedImaging/>

Biosensor Technologies

For more than a decade the Advanced Asset laboratory has been pioneering the use of biosensor technology in the area of food safety monitoring and is recognised as a world-leading research group in this area. The group are experts in the development of highly innovative sensor based detection systems relating to biological and chemical contaminants in foods of pertinence to food integrity, safety, defence, quality and sustainability. Examples of such contamination include: naturally occurring toxins of fungal, algal, plant and bacterial origin present in the environment (e.g. mycotoxins

and marine biotoxins); improper use of agrichemicals (e.g. antibiotics, pesticides); the illegal use of growth promoting compounds in animal production (e.g. B-agonists); by-products from food processing (e.g. acrylamide, allergens); and food-borne pathogens.

In addition to the traditional enzyme and luminescence based immunoassay design capabilities (e.g. ELISA and LFDs) the ASSET centre hosts a suite of optical (e.g. SPR, planar waveguide, Luminex XMap) and electrochemical (e.g. Palmsens) biosensor platforms with full capabilities in printing technology for developing nanosensing lab on a chip nucleic acid or proteins multiplex arrays. To complement these platforms are the molecular and protein tools for characterisation, e.g. PCR, RT-PCR, 2D gel electrophoresis and imager, Western blots, nanodrop and bioanalyser. The Institute has top class Category 2 mammalian and bacterial cell culturing facilities for phage protein and monoclonal antibody production, and for the utilisation of algal and bacterial cultures for developing and validating biosensor methods of analysis for toxin and pathogen detection.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/GRI/TheInstituteforGlobalFoodSecurity/FacilitiesincludingASSETlab/BiosensorTechnologies/>

Elemental Analysis

The Elemental Analysis facility in the Advanced Asset laboratory features ICP-MS, light stable isotope mass spectrometry, desktop XRF and Dionex. The Agilent ICP-MS is used for low-level total elemental analysis in acid/alkali digests (such as arsenic, antimony, cadmium, selenium, iodine, phosphorus, lead, copper, zinc, etc.) and lead isotopes. It is coupled to Dionex to enable anion speciation, predominantly arsenic speciation, in a range of matrices such as waters, animal tissues, plants, soils and urines. The Sercon mass spectrometry is dedicated to C, N, H, S and O isotopes in solid samples including animal and plant tissues and soils. The Rigaku XRF complements the ICP-MS as it has better coverage of macro-elements (calcium, potassium, magnesium, sulphur, silicon, phosphorus) in a wide range solid samples. The standalone Dionex is used for nutrient anion and cation (nitrate, nitrite, ammonium, chloride, fluoride, phosphate, sulphate, etc.) in water samples.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/GRI/TheInstituteforGlobalFoodSecurity/FacilitiesincludingASSETlab/ElementalAnalysis/>

Spectroscopic Fingerprinting

Within the ASSET Centre there is a wide range of spectroscopic instrumentation for use in untargeted and targeted analysis. This includes the high end iS50 multi-spectroscopic instrument (FT-IR, NIR, Raman), iS5 FT-IR, Antaris II NIRS, Delta Nu Raman (1064nm) and various handheld instruments, e.g. SCiO NIR, Micro-NIR, Spectrolytic MIR. Analysis using the spectroscopic techniques gives rise to unique fingerprint profiling and, coupled with powerful chemometric software, can produce application models for qualitative and quantitative analysis. Models have been developed to detect adulteration in a wide range of commodities at risk from fraud. These include edible oils and feed oils, herbs and spices and soya bean meal. Bespoke proximate analysis models using NIR have also been developed in conjunction with animal feed companies.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/GRI/TheInstituteforGlobalFoodSecurity/Archive/ASSET/SpectroscopicFingerprinting/>

Agri-Plas

The Centre for Plasma in Agri-Food (AgriPlas) is a dedicated research facility investigating a new technology with potential to reduce chemicals and antibiotics in the food chain. AgriPlas is the first of its kind in Europe. Its focus is not only on pioneering research into cold plasma – ionised gases or liquids that have antimicrobial properties – but also the potential commercial applications.

AgriPlas will work closely with the Northern Ireland, UK and European agri-food industry on a number of projects to explore the use of plasma technology in, for example, veterinary treatments, prolonging shelf life of agri-food products and farm biosecurity.

<https://daro.qub.ac.uk/agriplas-igfs-amr>



Marine Laboratory

Queen's University Marine Laboratory (QML), Portaferry, is a research laboratory that serves the School of Biological Sciences and the School of Natural and Built Environment. It hosts the Modiolus Restoration Research Group (MRRG) which aims to restore the Strangford Lough Special Area of Conservation (SAC) back to Favourable Conservation Status (FCS). Facilities in Portaferry are used by resident staff and students as well as associated researchers from Queen's University and international visitors.

The facilities include field-based teaching space, meeting facilities, modern laboratories, small boats, professional scientific diving, indoor and outdoor aquarium facilities with running seawater, mesocosms for highly replicated experimental ecology, and the engineering wave basin facility. Measuring 18 x 16m with an operating depth of up to 0.65m, and powered by a 24 paddle Wave Maker, the basin can produce regular and random waves to test scale model devices and wave interactions.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/QueensUniversityMarineLaboratory/>



Northern Ireland Clinical Research Facility

Based within NHS Premises with services to support nutrition as well as a range of other disciplines, the Northern Ireland Clinical Research Facility enables broader clinical research on societal health, wellbeing and ageing.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/TheWellcomeTrust-WolfsonNorthernIrelandClinicalResearchFacility/>



KEY CONTACTS

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The School Reception Desk and General Office are located on the ground floor of the Biological Sciences building, 19 Chlorine Gardens, and are open for enquiries from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday.



USEFUL WEBLINKS

Queen's Online

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/qol/>

Information on Research section in Queen's Online

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/InformationServices/Services/ResearchSupport/AccessingtheService/>

QSI – Queen's Student Information System

<https://qsis.qub.ac.uk/psp/cs92prd/?cmd=login>

Information and guidance on QSI (including information on recording meetings with supervisors and external training and development)

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/StudentServicesSystems/Qsis/QsisServices/QsisforStudents/QsisforResearchStudents/>

MyFuture

https://qub-csm.symplicity.com/students/?signin_tab=0

Information and guidance on MyFuture

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/careers/HowtoUseMyFuture/>

Pure

<https://pureadmin.qub.ac.uk/admin/login.xhtml>

Information and guidance on Pure

<https://libguides.qub.ac.uk/openaccess/research/portal>

(There is also a Pure workshop that can be accessed via MyFuture)

Student-Supervisor Relationship Toolkit

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/studentvoice/studentsupervisorrelationshipkit/>

Study Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/>

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/ResearchDegreeProgrammes/>

Resource Library

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/ResourceLibrary/>

Support Services

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/PostgraduateStudy/Facilities/SupportServices/>

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/QUBeWell/about/policy/>

Student Cost of Living Hub

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/my-queens/cost-of-living/>

Accommodation

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/accommodation/>

Graduate School

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/graduate-school/>

Immigration Support Service

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/iss/>

Student Finance Framework

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/Feesandfinance/FileStore/Filetoupload,1250400,en.pdf>

Faculty Research Ethics Committees

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/Governance-ethics-and-integrity/Ethics/FacultyResearchEthicsCommittees/>

Vitae Researcher Development Framework (External Website)

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework>

Thesis Submission

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/SubmissionProcess/>

Graduation

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/home/Graduation/>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

By enrolling at Queen's University Belfast, you undertake to abide by all of our regulations, policies and procedures so **it is important that you familiarise yourself with them.**

The University's General Regulations contain important information about the rules governing progression, assessment, degree classification and postgraduate awards on all programmes. They assure the University's academic standards and ensure all students are treated consistently and equitably. They are also part of the formal contract between you and the University. The University's General Regulations can be found at:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/>

All students are expected to behave in collegiate and respectful ways when interacting with other students and with members of staff. We have an important civic role to play in ensuring the health and safety of our wider community. It is up to each of us to conscientiously do our part. We must also ensure that we behave with integrity and treat each other with respect ensuring that we adhere to public health guidance. Students are asked to keep in mind the Queen's core values: Integrity, Connected, Ambition, Respect, and Excellence (iCARE).

Breaches of University regulations may be dealt with under:

- **Conduct Regulations**

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/ConductRegulations/> or, where appropriate

- **Fitness to Practise Procedure**

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/Procedures/FitnessToPractiseProcedure/>

If you have any problems understanding any of these regulations, policies and procedures, or if you have any questions, it is important that you discuss them with your supervisor(s) or Advice SU in One Elmwood.

The University's Student Charter sets out how the University will work in partnership with you to support your learning and help you to realise your ambitions, as well as the standards of behaviour and personal responsibility that we expect from our students. Students should be aware of their duties and responsibilities towards fellow students, University staff, visitors to the University and the local community. The Student Charter can be found at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudentCharter/>

The responsibilities of students whilst engaging with their supervisor over the course of their RDP are highlighted at various stages throughout the Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes:

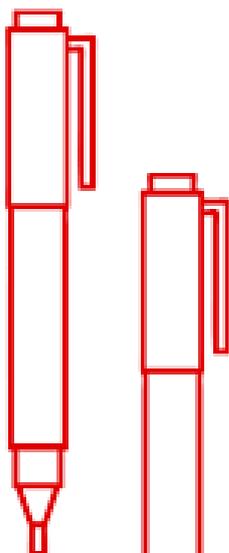
<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/>

(See also Responsibilities of the Supervisor:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/ResearchDegreeProgrammes/Supervision/>).

Research students' responsibilities include:

- **Personal and professional development, including, where possible, recognising when they need help and seeking it in a timely manner.**
- **Maintaining regular contact with the supervisory team.**
- **Preparing adequately for meetings with supervisors.**
- **Setting and keeping to timetables and deadlines, including planning and submitting work as and when required, and maintaining satisfactory progress with the research degree programme.**
- **Maintaining research records in such a way that they can be accessed and understood by anyone with a legitimate need to see them.**
- **Raising awareness of any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect their work.**
- **Attending any development opportunities (research-related or other) that have been identified when agreeing development needs with supervisors.**
- **Being familiar with the regulations and policies that affect them, including those relating to their award, health and safety, intellectual property, electronic repositories, and ethical research.**



ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS: PLAGIARISM



REFERENCING AND COPYRIGHT

Please visit the [cite2write](#) resource site and attend relevant Graduate School courses to ensure that you are aware of what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.

In respect of the incorporation of published material in your PhD/MPhil thesis, we would like to highlight the following guidance:

- Only published material to which you have made a leading contribution may be incorporated in your thesis.
- The inclusion of such material and its extent must be clearly referenced in the thesis. Without proper referencing a student will be deemed to have self-plagiarised, and will be subject to the Regulations Governing the Allegation and Investigation of Misconduct in Research: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/Governance-ethics-and-integrity/FileStore/Filetoupload.905808.en.pdf>
- Any queries that students may have in relation to the above should be directed to their supervisor(s) in the first instance. Rebecca Clarke, Open Research Librarian, can assist in addressing individual queries if required and is contactable at: rebecca.clarke@qub.ac.uk
- Further information on referencing in general is available from the Library's guide: <https://libguides.qub.ac.uk/c.php?g=656295&p=4613743> The Graduate School also typically run training sessions on referencing. These should appear in the list of available training courses in the new academic year (please check [MyFuture](#)).

All research students should also attend the "Copyright and your e-thesis" training that is offered by Dr Michael O'Connor of the McClay Library. This course is designed to make students aware of all copyright issues which need to be considered in relation to thesis submission. The course is usually run once in each semester and registration is via [MyFuture](#).

Any copyright-related queries that students may have should be directed to Dr Michael O'Connor and colleagues at e-thesis@qub.ac.uk Further information is available at the following link: <https://libguides.qub.ac.uk/c.php?g=602009&p=4712790> There is also a Library guide to copyright: <https://libguides.qub.ac.uk/ethesis/copyright>

We would also like to highlight that Patrick Elliott, Subject Librarian for Biological Sciences, offers training in EndNote Reference Management Software. These sessions are scheduled through the

Graduate School's training programme and should appear in the list of available courses in the new academic year (please check [MyFuture](#)). Patrick may be contacted at: p.elliott@qub.ac.uk



TURNITIN

The University uses Turnitin for detection of plagiarism and all PGR theses submitted for examination will be analysed with this software for originality. As such, principal supervisors are required to sign a Thesis Submission Form to confirm that appropriate sections of the thesis have been submitted to Turnitin in line with the [Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes](#), 7.1.5, before the thesis will be accepted by Student Records.

Any queries about, or requests for assistance with, Turnitin may be directed to the Education Officer (PGR): biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

In order to safeguard our academic standards and the integrity of our awards the University has procedures in place for dealing with suspected academic misconduct. The procedure details types of academic misconduct, such as cheating in an examination, plagiarism, collusion and fabrication, how suspected offences are investigated and the penalties that can be imposed. The procedure also details students' rights of appeal in cases relating to academic misconduct.

A Student Guide on the Procedures for Dealing with Academic Offences can be found at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicAffairs/AppealsComplaintsandMisconduct/AcademicOffences/Student-Guide/>

The Procedures for Dealing with Academic Offences can be found at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/Procedures/ProceduresforDealingwithAcademicOffences/>



REGISTRATION

All postgraduate research students must be fully registered at all times until they submit the final version of their thesis. Details of what you must do in order to register are provided in the table below. Support is available: reghelp@qub.ac.uk / +44(0)28 9097 3223 and [guidance videos](#).

Please note that the University's main Enrolment and Registration process is held annually in September. If you are a new research student with a start date in September or October you will register as part of this process (see notes in the table below). If you are already registered as a student, you must renew your registration during each annual E&R process (see [Returning Postgraduate Research Student](#) section in the table below). The only students exempt from this are those who are on a University-approved leave of absence.

If you do not complete registration you will receive communication from Student Services and Systems to bring the issue to your attention. **If you then fail to complete registration by the deadline specified by Student Services and Systems you will be withdrawn from the University.** If you wish to re-register and are permitted to do so by your School, a re-registration fee may be charged.

Category of student	Actions required to complete registration
<p>New postgraduate research student</p> <p>See www.qub.ac.uk/welcome</p>	<p>UK/ROI students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Log-in to QGIS with username (student number) and password (provided in communication from Student Services and Systems, normally from late August). <p>Visit Self Service > Student Centre to access the Registration Wizard. Follow the instructions to complete all steps.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Complete ID and qualifications check on campus and

	<p>collect Student Card. Student Services and Systems will provide you with details of how you may do this. You must provide original documentary evidence of your entrance qualifications (with a certified English translation, where applicable) – unless these are Queen’s qualifications, sponsor letter (if applicable) and a current UK/ROI passport. If you do not have a UK/ROI passport, visit https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/my-queens/enrolment-and-registration/ or contact reghelp@qub.ac.uk for advice.</p> <p>Students who have received a funding offer letter from the Graduate School must provide the Graduate School with their bank details and Intellectual Property Rights Declaration.</p> <p>Non-UK/ROI students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You will need to supply any current immigration documentation you have at present and complete the arrival questionnaire link you have been sent. Immigration Support Service (ISS) staff will then check these before allowing you to proceed and complete your registration. ISS will contact you if they require any further information prior to completing the check and you will receive an email confirming when this check has been completed. 2. Follow steps 1 and 2 under UK/ROI students, above.
Returning postgraduate research student	<p>Log-in to QGIS with username and password and visit Self Service > Student Centre to access the Registration Wizard. Follow the instructions to complete all steps.</p>

The table below shows each available registration status and details key points to note.

Registration status	Points to note
Full-time	Standard registration status.
Part-time	Not available to International students on a student visa.
Thesis Only	<p>Available for a <u>maximum</u> of twelve months only to students who have completed all research required for their thesis and have been enrolled for the normal period of study for their research degree programme. Students on Thesis Only status are not expected to make use of lab facilities, and for insurance reasons should contact the School if they need to use the labs: biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk</p> <p>For information on what constitutes the normal period of study for your research degree programme, please refer to section 4. Period of Study of the University’s Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes: http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulati</p>

	<p>onsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/</p> <p>Please note that the academic year for postgraduate research students begins on 1 October. Therefore, if you are due to register on Thesis Only status after 1 October (for example, in November or December) you will be liable to pay standard fees from 1 October until your date of Thesis Only registration, in addition to the Thesis Only fees which you will pay subsequently.</p>
Graduation Only	<p>A student's registration status is changed to Graduation Only by Student Services and Systems when the student submits their thesis for examination. No tuition fees are incurred during registration on Graduation Only status. Students on Graduation Only status are not expected to make use of lab facilities, and for insurance reasons should contact the School if they need to use the labs: biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk</p>

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES/INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY INDUCTION

Please note that attendance at the following induction events is mandatory for all new research students.

SBIO/IGFS PGR Welcome/Induction – Wednesday 12 October, 3 pm – 5 pm, in Biological Sciences Building, Lecture Theatre LG/012

SBIO/IGFS PGR Health and Safety Induction – Friday 7 October, 1 pm – 4 pm, in Biological Sciences Building, Lecture Theatre LG/012

Graduate School Postgraduate Research Student Induction – Friday 7 October, 9 am – 1 pm, via MS Teams. Register [here](#).

You may also wish to register for the following sessions:

Demonstrator Training – Wednesday 19 October, 10 am – 12 noon, in Biological Sciences Building, Teaching Lab. This training is mandatory for students who wish to undertake demonstrator work.

Introduction to Library for Biological Sciences – Thursday 13 October, 2 pm - 2.30 pm, OR Tuesday 18 October, 2 pm – 2.30 pm, via MS Teams. Register through [MyFuture](#).

Searching Databases – MEDLINE AND EMBASE – Tuesday 8 November, 2 pm – 3.30 pm (via MS Teams) OR Thursday 1 December, 2 pm – 3.30 pm (McClay Library). Register through [MyFuture](#).

Searching Databases – Web of Science and Scopus – Tuesday 1 November, 2 pm – 3.30 pm (via MS Teams) OR Thursday 24 November, 2 pm – 3.30 pm (McClay Library). Register through [MyFuture](#).

Getting Started with EndNote – Thursday 27 October, 2 pm – 3.30 pm (McClay Library) OR Thursday 17 November, 2 pm – 3.30 pm (McClay Library) OR Thursday 6 December, 2 pm – 3.30 pm (via MS Teams). Register through [MyFuture](#).

QSI (Queen's Student Information System) Training – Online training in QSI Research Student Lifecycle (RSL) is available through the Graduate School Induction (see above) and also at: <https://upk.qub.ac.uk/rsl/Publishing%20Content/PlayerPackage/data/toc.html>

FEES

Information on tuition fees for postgraduate research students is available from the University website at <https://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/PostgraduateStudy/TuitionFees/#PGRFees>

The University's Student Finance Framework may be reviewed at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/Feesandfinance/FileStore/Fileupload,1250400,en.pdf>



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL: TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

The Graduate School opened in 2015 in the Lynn Building on the main Queen's campus. It is a dedicated postgraduate facility with a whole range of related activities running throughout the year to support postgraduates. The building features a dedicated silent study area, group study rooms and rooms that are bookable for conference use.

At Queen's you are expected to undertake thirty days of training and development (internal and/or external) during the course of your PhD. The Graduate School administers the Postgraduate Development Programme which exists to support research students in the development of research skills and to enhance their employability through career and personal development. Full details of the Postgraduate Development Programme are available at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/graduate-school/development/postgraduate-research-development-programme/>

All Graduate School training events are bookable through the University's [MyFuture](#) platform. Once you have logged in to MyFuture go to Events, and in the search bar enter 'GS' to search all Graduate School training and events.

Any training you have booked through MyFuture and have attended will be automatically added to your training record. Should you require this to be completed for a particular deadline, for example if you are preparing for differentiation or annual progress review, please contact: pg.skills@qub.ac.uk to discuss your requirements.

Research students can also record other instances of training and development on their training plan. Details on how to do this and more information on recording your training can be found at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/graduate-school/Filestore/Fileupload,1017692,en.pdf>

Funding is available to assist current postgraduate students in organising academic events and cultural interventions, which work to bring together the wider communities within both postgraduate

taught and postgraduate research student bodies at Queen's: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/graduate-school/development/Postgraduate-ledInitiatives/>

Visit the Graduate School website for full information on all that it has to offer the postgraduate community: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/graduate-school/>



FUTURE READY AWARD

The Future Ready Award (formerly “Researcher Plus”) is an opportunity for postgraduate research students to gain official University recognition for their range of skills achieved in addition to their research. For further information, see: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/graduate-school/development/researcher-plus/>

PURE

Pure is the University's Research Portal, the research repository of the University, and all postgraduate research students are strongly encouraged to make use of it to showcase their research activities (conference attendance, publications, etc.)

All research students are also required to upload an electronic copy of their final thesis to Pure.

For further information and guidance, please refer to the following webpages:

<https://libguides.qub.ac.uk/openaccess/research/portal>

<https://libguides.qub.ac.uk/openaccess/training>

<https://libguides.qub.ac.uk/ethesis>

Queries may be directed to the Institutional Repository Officer, Dr Michael O'Connor:

michael.oconnor@qub.ac.uk



THE MCCLAY LIBRARY

The McClay Library, located on College Park Avenue to the rear of the main campus, brings together wide-ranging library, computing and media services in a single location as well as offering facilities for quiet study and group work.

Other libraries at Queen's include the Medical Library in the Mulhouse Building (Belfast Royal Victoria Hospital, Mulhouse Road) and the Biomedical Library (Medical Biology Centre, Lisburn Road). Full details of all library features and services, and how to access them, are available at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/InformationServices/TheLibrary/> Mr Patrick Elliott, Biological Sciences Subject Librarian, is contactable at: p.elliott@qub.ac.uk

HELP/STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Any comments, questions, or concerns in relation to your studies may be directed to the School's Education Officer (PGR) (biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk) or to the Postgraduate Research Director (g.arnott@qub.ac.uk).

Details of the full range of student support services, from counselling to childcare and careers, is available on the University's website:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/PostgraduateStudy/Facilities/SupportServices/>

Students who are in **emotional distress** and require **emergency support** should contact:

Inspire – (24/7 helpline – Freephone) – 0808 800 0016 (Wellbeing Support)

Lifeline – (24/7 helpline – Freephone) – 0808 808 8000 (Crisis Support)

Samaritans – 116 123

The GP out-of-hours number for the University area is 028 9079 6220.

For external support in relation to **food and essentials**, please contact the Advice NI Community Helpline: 0808 802 0020 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) - <https://www.adviceni.net/>

Students with concerns about their own **wellbeing** or that of others should refer to the Student Wellbeing Service: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/wellbeing/ConnectWithUs/> and studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk



For **International students**, specialist guidance and assistance is available from the Immigration Support Service: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/iss/> and immigration@qub.ac.uk

The MHLS Faculty employs a teaching associate, Mr Justin O'Hagan, to provide one-to-one support in the **academic use of English for students whose first language is not English**. To request a referral, please contact the Education Officer (PGR): biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk SBIO/IGFS also run timetabled support sessions for non-native English speakers throughout the academic year.

If you require support due to a **disability**, please visit: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/> and contact: disability.office@qub.ac.uk

If you are experiencing **financial difficulty**, you may wish to consider applying to the University's Student Support Fund (if you are from Northern Ireland or Great Britain) or the Financial Assistance Fund (which is open to applications from all students who may be in need). Information is available at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/Feesandfinance/student-financial-support/> or from: supportfund@qub.ac.uk

The University's Student **Cost of Living** Hub is online at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/my-queens/cost-of-living/>

To request guidance on **budgeting** please contact the Advice Centre at Queen's Students' Union: <https://www.qubsu.org/AdviceSU/>

If you feel that you are a victim of **bullying and harassment**, please refer to the guidance available at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/wellbeing/PoliciesProcedures/BullyingandHarassment/> and contact the Student Wellbeing Service: studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk

The Student **Maternity, Maternity Support and Adoption** Policy is available at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/wellbeing/PoliciesProcedures/StudentMaternity/>

SUPERVISION

You may raise concerns related to your supervision, in complete confidence, either through progress review or by contacting the PGR Director, Dr Gareth Arnott: g.arnott@qub.ac.uk

If your principal and secondary supervisors are partners, you should be specifically informed of this at the start of your research degree. There should be a third supervisor in all such circumstances.

SECURITY

Contact details for Queen's Security are: 028 9097 5099 and security@qub.ac.uk

<p>Wellbeing drop-in</p> <p><i>Discuss any issues that you may be struggling with.</i></p> <p>Level 1, One Elmwood</p> <p>Mon – Fri, 11 am – 3 pm</p>	<p>Wellbeing appointments</p> <p><i>Meet with a Wellbeing Adviser by appointment to discuss issues.</i></p> <p>Book here.</p>	<p>Counselling</p> <p>Request a counselling session by email:</p> <p>gubstudents@inspirewellbeing.org</p>
<p>Support Services – At a Glance</p>	<p>Health and relationships</p> <p>University Health Centre</p> <p>Advice SU provide guidance.</p> <p>There is a Report & Support service for victims of bullying or harassment.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Self-Help</p> <p>Access online resources here.</p>
	<p>Emergency Support</p> <p>Find contact details for Inspire, Lifeline, and Samaritans here.</p>	<p>Worried about a friend?</p> <p><i>There are a range of options available to students who feel that a friend may need support.</i></p> <p>Find out more here.</p>
	<p>Wellbeing Events</p> <p><i>From sessions focused on mental health to yoga and quizzes.</i></p> <p>Information here.</p>	<p>Advice on accommodation issues</p> <p>Advice SU can provide guidance on house hunting, contracts and deposits, ending your tenancy, and more.</p>
	<p>Student-Supervisor Relationship Toolkit</p> <p><i>Advice for students on how to improve the working relationship with their supervisors.</i></p> <p>Information here.</p>	<p>Support for students with disabilities</p> <p><i>Students who have a disability may register with Disability Services and avail of appropriate support.</i></p> <p>Information here.</p>
	<p>Caring responsibilities</p> <p>The University provides childcare facilities. Advice SU can provide information and guidance to students who act as carers.</p>	<p>Connect with other students for support</p> <p><i>The TalkCampus app is anonymous and used worldwide.</i></p> <p>Information here.</p>
	<p>Struggling financially?</p> <p>You may be eligible to apply for the Student Support Fund (NI/GB students) and or the University Financial Assistance Fund (all students).</p> <p>The Pantry helps students stock-up on essential items.</p> <p>Financial advice is available from Advice SU and Advice NI.</p>	



DEMONSTRATING

- All postgraduate research students may have the opportunity to carry out demonstrating duties for undergraduate or postgraduate taught practical classes during their studies. **Students are not permitted to demonstrate until they have completed appropriate training and registered on QWork: <https://www.q-work.co.uk/>**
- Students must familiarise themselves with the University's Equality and Diversity Policy: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/diversity-and-inclusion/policies-procedures-and-guidance/>
- The University strongly recommends that students on full-time programmes devote **no more than fifteen hours per week to paid employment** (please ensure you check with your sponsor as number of permitted working hours may differ). There is strong evidence to suggest that significant levels of part-time work can compromise your academic progress and affect degree outcomes.
- Please note that International students may have prohibitions or restrictions on working in the UK. **It is very important that you confirm you have a legal right to work and that you don't exceed the permitted hours as stated on your visa.** If you work in excess of these restrictions, the University must report this as a breach of your visa conditions to UKVI. This may result in the University withdrawing sponsorship of your visa (which means that you will no longer be permitted to study at the University). Further information can be found at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/International/International-students/Visa-and-Immigration/>
- We do urge you to be sensible about how you manage your study, work, and social time to get the best result you can from your degree. If you do have financial pressures that mean you have to work more hours than is advisable, please seek advice. Advisors at the One Elmwood Student Centre can give you advice on funds that are available to help students in your position. The Learning Development Service can also offer advice on time management: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/learning/>

	<p><u>Training</u></p> <p><u>Records of meetings with supervisor(s)</u></p>	<p>Progress Monitoring (p. 29).</p> <p>Approximately ten days of training and development (internal or external) throughout the year. See The Graduate School (p. 20-21).</p> <p>At least one meeting per month to be recorded in QSIS throughout the year. See Progress Monitoring (p. 29).</p>
Year 2	<p><u>Annual Progress Review</u></p> <p><u>Training</u></p> <p><u>Records of meetings with supervisor(s)</u></p>	<p>Spring (normally April or May) of your second year. See Progress Monitoring (p. 29)</p> <p>Approximately ten days of training and development (internal or external) throughout the year. See The Graduate School (p. 20-21).</p> <p>At least one meeting per month to be recorded in QSIS throughout the year. See Progress Monitoring (p. 29).</p>
Year 3	<p><u>Focus on thesis write-up</u></p> <p><u>Intention to Submit request</u></p> <p><u>Thesis submission</u></p>	<p>Six months before the end of your final year (i.e. Year 3 unless you have funding for a longer period). To help make the write-up easier, you should also have been writing the thesis as you go along with your studies/experiments. In other words do not leave the final thesis write up until the end of your PhD!</p> <p>Three months before the end of your final year (i.e. Year 3 unless you have funding for a longer period). See Thesis Submission and Examination (p. 30-31).</p> <p>At the end of your final year. See Thesis Submission and Examination (p. 30-31).</p> <p>All full-time PhD students who do not submit within three years must submit within four years (eight years for part-time students). See Thesis Submission and Examination (p. 30-31).</p>

	<p><u>Annual Progress Review</u></p> <p><u>Training</u></p> <p><u>Records of meetings with supervisors</u></p> <p><u>Viva exam</u></p> <p><u>Graduation</u></p>	<p>Spring (normally April or May) of your third year. See Progress Monitoring (p. 29).</p> <p>Approximately ten days of training and development (internal or external) throughout the year. See The Graduate School (p. 20-21).</p> <p>At least one meeting per month to be recorded in QGIS throughout the year. See Progress Monitoring (p. 29).</p> <p>The viva exam is normally taken within approximately two months of the submission date. See Thesis Submission and Examination (p. 30-31).</p> <p>Students who pass their viva and submit the final, electronic copy of their thesis will be eligible to register for graduation. See Graduation (p. 31).</p>
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PROGRESS MONITORING

All postgraduate research students, whether based at Queen's or elsewhere, must undergo progress monitoring as detailed in the table below. All SBIO/IGFS students are assigned progress monitors ("RSL Panel Members" in QSIS) who serve as the independent assessors for each review.

See forms: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofBiologicalSciences/Research/PhDResearch/>

Review	Timing of review	Review requirements
Initial Review	Within three months of first registration (full-time students) and six months of first registration (part-time students).	You must submit a project summary and research plan and attend an interview with an independent panel. You may access the record of the meeting, with assessors' feedback, in QSIS following approval by the PGR Director (of which you will receive an automatic email notification).
Annual Progress Review (including Differentiation)	Each year until the viva exam. The first Annual Progress Review for full-time research students is normally their assessment for differentiation.	You must submit a report on your research and a copy of your training record. You must also attend an interview with an independent panel. You may access the record of the meeting, with assessors' feedback, in QSIS following approval by the PGR Director (of which you will receive an automatic email notification). Please note that part-time PhD students are expected to complete differentiation within 18 months of first registration.
Formal meetings with supervisor(s)	At least one meeting per month should be recorded. All members of the supervisory team should attend at least half of these meetings. There should also be regular informal meetings.	You must discuss the progress of your research plan with your supervisor(s). A short summary of each meeting must be recorded in QSIS. For instructions on how to do this: https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/StudentServicesSystems/Qsis/QsisServices/QsisforStudents/QsisforResearchStudents/ Instructions on how to access all records of your progress reviews in QSIS are also available from the link above.



THESIS SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION

Please note that **all** full-time PhD students are required to submit their thesis to Student Registry within three years of first registering or within a **maximum** of four years. Procedures for submission are detailed at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/records/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/SubmissionProcess/>

All research students who exceed the normal period of study for their degree programme will be asked to demonstrate that they are on course to submit their thesis within an appropriate timeframe. Students who do not submit within the maximum period of study will be required to produce a concession request for permission to continue, which will be granted only if exceptional circumstances apply. For information on what constitutes the normal period of study for your research degree programme, please refer to section 4. Period of Study of the University's Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes:

[\(http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/\)](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/)

Students must give formal notice of their intention to submit their thesis. You should do this **three months before your intended submission date** by logging-in to QSIS and navigating to the Research tile on your homepage. From the menu within Navigation Short Cuts you need to select Intention to Submit (you can either scroll down through the section or click on the row of dots at the bottom of the section and drag these to expand it out). This will open the Service Request window where you can create an Intention to Submit request. Intention to Submit requests must include your thesis title and a planned submission date (DD/MM/YY). Submitted requests must then be processed by the School/Institute with the approval of the principal supervisor.

If you intend to graduate in summer, you are advised to submit your thesis for examination in early January (early June for winter graduation). Deadlines for submission of the final thesis are available at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/records/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/ImportantDeadlines/>

Once your Intention to Submit request has been submitted and approved, your supervisor(s) must nominate both an internal and external examiner for your thesis. (If you are an employee of Queen's, or have been so at any time during your research degree, **both** examiners must be external). These nominated examiners must be approved by the University before you are allowed to submit your thesis. The Nomination of Examiners form is available on request from biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk

Information on how your thesis must be presented and submitted is available on the Student Registry Services website at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/ThesisFormat/> and <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/OnlineForms/>

As part of the examination of your thesis you must attend a viva exam with the examiners and an independent convenor. The viva will normally be held approximately two months after the submission of your thesis. Information on viva procedures and outcomes is available under section 7.7 (The Examinations Process) of the University's Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/>

For answers to frequently asked questions relating to thesis submission and examination, please see: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/FAQ/>



GRADUATION

When the Student Registry office receives the final, electronic copy of your thesis which you will upload to Pure (see pg. 21), they will generate a qualification letter which confirms that you have qualified for the degree of Doctor or Master of Philosophy. The Head of Student Registry will also amend your student account in QGIS to show that you have completed all elements of your research programme and are eligible for graduation.

When you receive your qualification letter you will be eligible for graduation. You will receive an email to your Queen's student email address that will advise you when the registration wizard for graduation will open in QGIS. Instructions on how to complete the registration wizard will be contained in the email.

Further information on graduation is available from the University's website:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/home/Graduation/>

Following graduation, if you wish to obtain an official copy of your academic transcript, a replacement degree parchment or a letter verifying your education, you may contact Student Registry for assistance: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/>



ABSENCE

Withdrawals should be applied for in advance. A temporary withdrawal “stops the clock” on your research degree. If you require a temporary withdrawal from your studies you should obtain a request form from biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk

Temporary withdrawals cannot be recognised unless they are formally requested by the student and pass through the approval process involving the School and Student Registry. **Note that if a student is “active” (i.e. not temporarily withdrawn) for at least 20 calendar days of a month, full tuition fees for that month apply and the monthly stipend (if a studentship is held) may be paid.**

Funded students should refer to their funder’s terms and conditions, or contact the Postgraduate Awards team at pgawards@qub.ac.uk, to confirm the implications that a leave of absence may have for their funding arrangements. Some funders offer sick pay for a limited period. Overseas students should contact Immigration Support at immigration@qub.ac.uk to check implications for their visa.

If you are unable to come in to work because of illness or self-isolation, you must inform your supervisor(s) and must also contact biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk if you are absent for three working days. You are able to self-certify for five working days. If you are absent for longer than five days, a medical certificate is required and should be sent to biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING OF STUDENTS ON A TIER 4 VISA

The UK Visa and Immigration Service (UKVI) requires confirmation that International students are attending the University and are fully engaged with their studies. **For the University to continue to sponsor student visas, students who hold such a visa are required to record in QSIS at least one meeting per month with their supervisors (see Progress Monitoring, pg. 29).**

Failure to record at least one meeting per month will be noted by Immigration Support who are required to report repeated unauthorised absences to the Home Office.

For further information on this, students are advised to contact Immigration Support at: immigration@qub.ac.uk, or in person at the One Elmwood Student Centre.

In addition, an Absence Notification or Off-Campus Study Notification form (as appropriate) must be completed and submitted if those on a student visa intend to take annual leave, travel outside Northern Ireland (including travel to the rest of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland), or if a temporary withdrawal is required. Forms are available on request from: biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk

All travel requires completion one month in advance of a Travel Justification and Risk Assessment Form. This form is available through the [Biological Sciences Risk Assessment Portal](#). For access, please contact: j.a.hanna@qub.ac.uk



HOLIDAYS

Full-time research students* are entitled to take up to 40 days of annual leave each year (20 days for part-time students) **including** public holidays and University closure days. In cases where a student does not start their degree at the beginning of a calendar year or is on a leave of absence for part of a year, holiday entitlement is determined on a pro rata basis. All holidays must be agreed with supervisors in advance.

***International students on a student visa should note that they may be absent from the University for a maximum of 60 days within any rolling 12 month period. If this may be an issue when requesting annual leave, students must consult Immigration Support. For any annual leave outside University closure days, students on a Tier 4 visa must complete an Absence Notification form and submit it to biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk**

The University's closure days in the 2023/24 academic year, and later in 2024, are as follows:

- **Christmas/New Year** – Friday 22 December 2023 to Tuesday 2 January 2024 (inclusive)
- **St Patrick's Day** – Monday 18 March 2024
- **Easter** – Friday 29 March to Friday 5 April 2024 (inclusive)
- **May Day** – Monday 6 May 2024
- **July Holidays** – Friday 12 July and Monday 15 July 2024
- **Christmas/New Year** – Monday 23 December 2024 to Wednesday 1 January 2025 (inclusive)



POSTGRADUATE STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Student Voice Committee is to ensure that Schools and Institutes receive evaluation and feedback from students on the quality of their academic provision and associated activities, and to provide a mechanism whereby Schools and Institutes can seek the views of students on matters of policy related to course development and review.

The Postgraduate Student Voice Committee in Biological Sciences/IGFS holds meetings for both postgraduate taught and research students. Student membership of the Committee is determined through a process administered by the Students' Union's Student Voice team (see:

<https://www.qubsu.org/Archivedmovedfrom-May2020/VoteforyourStudentReps/AcademicRep/BecomeaCourseRep/>)

The Committee normally holds PGR meetings (and, separately, PGT meetings) on four occasions during the academic year.

Student members are expected to represent their peers and to raise any questions, concerns or suggestions that they may have in relation to their degree programme or general experience at the University. The Committee is represented at the Postgraduate Forum, a University-wide Committee that is chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise. Postgraduate research students on the Committee may also be invited to attend meetings of the Biological Sciences/IGFS Postgraduate Research Committee, which deals with a range of issues relating to postgraduate research.

Membership of the Student Voice Committee also consists of academic staff representatives. The Staff Chair for the PGR meetings is Dr Gareth Arnott. If you are interested in learning more about the Committee and its functions, please contact: biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk

COMMUNICATION TO STUDENTS

Please note that all email communication from Biological Sciences/IGFS and from other parts of the University will always be sent to your Queen's email account. This applies even to students based externally who may have email accounts linked to the external host (e.g. AFBI, Teagasc). **You must therefore ensure that you check your Queen's email regularly so as not to miss important messages.**



HOUSE RULES (INCLUDING HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ETHICS)

- All health and safety-related forms mentioned below are available through the [Biological Sciences Risk Assessment Portal](#). If you do not have access, please contact: j.a.hanna@qub.ac.uk
- Lab coats should only be worn while in the laboratory.
- Normal working hours are Monday to Friday, 7 am to 7 pm. In exceptional circumstances you may be required to work later in the evening, or at weekends. In this case you **must** obtain and complete an Out-of-Hours/Lone Working form, have it signed by your supervisor, and ensure that you have the completed form in your possession when on the premises. Security (x5099) must be informed when you start **and** finish your out-of-hours work session (**and** in advance of the session, if you are working in Lennoxvale) and you must also sign the book at Reception. The emergency number for security is x2222.
- Prior to undertaking any lab work, COSHH forms **must** be completed and signed by both the principal supervisor and COSHH Coordination Officer, Katrina O'Connor (k.oconnor@qub.ac.uk)
- Students working at a desk in the building must ensure that their workspace is kept clean, tidy, and free from safety hazards at all times. **Do not** leave food or drinks containers around your workspace and **do not** position around your desk boxes or other materials which could create a trip hazard or fire safety issue. Research students are expected to aim for professional standards, and these include maintaining a safe and presentable working area.
- A Research Ethics Committee exists within the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/Governance-ethics-and-integrity/Ethics/FacultyResearchEthicsCommittees/> Students with questions relating to ethics in their research should discuss these with their supervisors in the first instance. The Faculty Research Ethics Officer, Mr Stefan Curran, is happy to assist students and their supervisors with applications to the Committee. Stefan may be contacted at: facultyrecmhls@qub.ac.uk
- Building access – any issues should be brought to the attention of technicians Chris Preshaw (c.preshaw@qub.ac.uk) and Katrina O'Connor (k.oconnor@qub.ac.uk).
- When submitting their final thesis, students should complete a leaver's form (available from: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofBiologicalSciences/Research/PhDResearch/>)

USE OF SCHOOL VEHICLES

School vehicles are available for use by staff or students to support education or research activities, and may be booked through the School Office. The key contact is School technician Ms Katrina O'Connor (k.oconnor@qub.ac.uk).

- All users must provide driving licence details to the Chief Technical Officer or their appointed representative for insurance purposes before they are authorised to drive any of the School vehicles. You must notify the School of any changes to your driving licence as soon as possible as failure to do so may invalidate any insurance cover.
- All users must recognise that we have a duty of care to our students. Therefore, vehicles should not be left back for use with little or no fuel on a regular basis. If you put fuel in your vehicle keep your receipt; this can be claimed back for eligible journeys. On completion of your journey you must note your mileage in the mileage book stored in the vehicle.
- Fuel should normally be purchased from the BP Garage, 70-74 Malone Road, Belfast, where the School has an account. If fuel is required offsite, please keep your receipt and this can be claimed back for eligible journeys.
- All users must recognise that the vehicles are for use by staff and students and so should not be returned in an unusable or unfit state. The vehicle user is responsible for taking any rubbish with them and there is to be no smoking in any of the vehicles. In the event of breakdown, each vehicle contains a contact telephone number for a recovery truck.
- All users must not bring the School/University into disrepute through their use of the School vehicles. This includes leaving the scene of an accident or incident where another vehicle has been damaged, or breaking any other law while in charge of the vehicle. Any and all damage must be reported immediately to the Chief Technical Officer or their nominated representative.
- If research is to be carried out over weekends or the holiday period, this must be authorised in advance by the Chief Technical Officer or their nominated representative. If this happens on a regular basis, justification must be supplied to the Head of School.

CONSUMABLES, TRAVEL, AND EXPENSES

All travel requires completion one month in advance of a Travel Justification and Risk Assessment Form. This form is available through the [Biological Sciences Risk Assessment Portal](#). If you do not have access, please contact: j.a.hanna@qub.ac.uk If travel is required for a conference or to carry out fieldwork, an email from the student with backup from their supervisor should be emailed to sbs-purchasing@qub.ac.uk The purchasing team can also book conference attendance on your behalf. Travel arrangements **must** be made through Corporate Travel Management (CTM), the University's travel agent. The purchasing team can provide advice on this.

An Order Requisition Form which is available from the School Office must be completed when ordering consumables. The form should be signed by the student's supervisor. The form must be completed with the product code and description of the item being requested, project code, the supplier's name and address, and your funding code (if not known, ask the purchasing team via the email address below). A separate form must be completed for each supplier. Completed forms must be emailed to sbs-purchasing@qub.ac.uk

If items are being ordered using purchase card then please use bio-pcard@qub.ac.uk A link to the webpage would be extremely helpful. Orders are delivered to Stores on the lower-ground floor of the building.



TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS

For further details of all scholarships listed below, please visit:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/ScholarshipsandAwards/ScholarshipOpportunities/>

Another useful resource is Research Professional. This is a funding database which can be searched for suitable funding opportunities, including for conference travel:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/Support-for-researchers/Funding-information/Funding-opportunities/Research-Professional/>

Award	Details	When to apply
Alan Graham Fund	A travel scholarship of approximately £650 shall be awarded annually to an undergraduate or postgraduate student of the University to pursue a period of study or research in North America.	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.
Helen Ramsey Turtle Travel Scholarship	The scholarship is open to postgraduate students, enrolled at Queen's University Belfast both at the time of application and of travel, who have undertaken their primary degree at Queen's and who intend to travel to the USA and/or Canada to undertake a period of study. It is desirable, but not essential, that the period of travel would not be less than six weeks. The scholarship will normally be of a value of approximately £2,000 and should be spent on travel within	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.

	North America and/or activities which applicants can demonstrate will add value to their period of study.	
Emily Sarah Montgomery Travel Scholarship	One or more travel scholarships are awarded annually to students registered on a postgraduate programme at Queen's University Belfast for the purpose of travel outside Ireland in connection with a programme of research or further education. The scholarships will be awarded by the Scholarships and Awards Group. The scholarships are tenable with any other award. The maximum value of an award from the fund is £400, depending on the destination of the recipient.	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.
Sir Thomas Dixon Travel Scholarship	One or more travel scholarships may be awarded each year to undergraduate and postgraduate students of Queens University Belfast intending to pursue cultural activities abroad. This phrase is interpreted in the broader sense in recognition of the fact that cross-cultural activities broaden the horizons and facilitates personal development. Travel must be outside all of the islands of Britain and Ireland. The scholarships will be awarded by the Scholarships and Awards Group. The scholarships are tenable with any other award. The maximum value of an award from the fund is £600, depending on available funding.	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.
AIB (NI) Travel Scholarship	One scholarship of up to £650 may be awarded annually for travel between April – October. This award will be made to an exceptional undergraduate or postgraduate student of Queen's University Belfast in recognition of their outstanding proposal for planned activities outside Britain/Ireland. The travel must be in connection with a programme planned to extend the student's	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.

	educational experience.	
William and Betty MacQuitty Travel Scholarships	The MacQuitty Scholarships were established in 1999 to provide travel funds for Queen's postgraduate students. Applicants must be planning to travel overseas to further their education, and they must explain how their proposed trip demonstrates the principle "travel broadens the mind". Preference may be given to applicants whose travel involves study of global environmental issues or medicine.	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.
The Higginson Leadership Award	The purpose of the award is to encourage a sense of social responsibility and inspirational leadership among students of the University, and to support enterprising activities or ventures overseas which will demonstrate initiative and the ability to inspire or act as a role model for others. Applicants must be registered Queen's students at the application closing date. An award will be made up to the value of £3,000.	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.

OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS

Award	Details	When to apply
The Queen's Women Graduates' Scholarship	The scholarship should enhance the educational opportunities of women students, normally those who have had a gap of at least five years since attending school, who are enrolled on and are attending a degree, diploma or certificate award-bearing course at the University. Applicants should have a low income or be dependent on state benefits. An award of up to £1,000 will be made.	Please refer to the Scholarship Opportunities page.



ATHENA SWAN

The School/Institute is committed to the Athena SWAN Charter and its underpinning beliefs. We are current recipients of a Gold Award in this area. To keep up with all recent developments with SWAN (Gender Equality to Enable Scientific Excellence), and to see some of the discussions that have arisen, please visit the School website:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofBiologicalSciences/About/AthenaSWAN/>

Our current Athena SWAN Champion is Dr Paul Caplat (p.caplat@qub.ac.uk).

WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

School of Biological Sciences

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofBiologicalSciences/>

<https://twitter.com/QUBbioscience/>

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/QUBBiologicalSciences/>

Institute for Global Food Security

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/GRI/TheInstituteforGlobalFoodSecurity/>

<https://twitter.com/QUBIGFS/>

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/QUBIGFS/>

FAQS

Is there support for students preparing for differentiation?

Yes: the PGR Director delivers an annual session offering information, guidance, and Q&A on the differentiation process. The session is normally held in the spring. Exemplar differentiation reports, written by former students, are also made available to students in advance of the assessment process. See **Progress Monitoring** (p. 29).

How are my tuition fees calculated?

PGR tuition fees are calculated by the month. In the month that the student commences their studies, a monthly fee will only be calculated if the student is deemed to be in attendance on, or before, the 5th of that month. In all subsequent months, a monthly fee will be calculated if the student is deemed to be “active” (i.e. not on a temporary withdrawal) for 20 calendar days or more. The PGR fees cycle runs from October to September inclusive. When you register each September as part of the annual Enrolment & Registration process, you are registering for the **full** annual fees cycle (i.e. twelve monthly fees). If you submit your thesis or your registration status changes at some point during that cycle, your annual fees will be adjusted at the time of submission or of the change in registration status.

I receive a stipend for my research that is paid through the University. How may I access my payslips?

You may access, view, and download payslips on a secure, self-service basis on Queen’s Online (QoL) using your Queen’s student username and password: <https://login.qol.qub.ac.uk/home/>
Navigate to Service Applications > Admin > iTrent Self Service.

How do I submit my thesis?

The thesis must be submitted to Student Registry in accordance with the procedures detailed on the website: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/SubmissionProcess/> You should ensure that you produce an intention to submit request in QSiS approximately three months before your planned date of submission. You should also note that the nomination of examiners process must be complete before Student Registry can accept submission of your thesis. For further information, see **Thesis Submission and Examination** (p. 30-31) and: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/srecords/Examinations/Postgraduate-Research/FAQ/>

Do I need to register for the new academic year even after I have submitted my thesis for examination?

Yes: if you have submitted your thesis for examination (you may also have had your viva exam) you need to register for the new academic year in September *unless* you have submitted the final, electronic version of your thesis. Your registration status will be Graduation Only, which carries no associated fees.

If I have a problem, whom should I contact?

If the problem relates to registration or other administrative aspect of your studies, please contact the Education Officer (PGR): biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk If you have concerns about your progress, you should approach the PGR Director (g.arnott@qub.ac.uk). All issues will be addressed sensitively and confidentially. If English is not your first language and you wish to develop your academic English, you may contact biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk and request a referral to the Faculty’s Teaching Associate for English Language Support. If you require support in another area, such as personal wellbeing, please refer to the Help/Student Support Services section of this handbook and the University’s Support Services website:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/PostgraduateStudy/Facilities/SupportServices/>

How can I apply for a temporary withdrawal?

Withdrawal request forms may be requested from: biosciences-pg@qub.ac.uk You may be asked to submit supporting evidence so that your request may be approved by the PGR Director. Be aware that employment is not normally considered an acceptable reason for requesting temporary withdrawal. For further information, see **Absence** (p. 32).

Where can I find the University's PGR study regulations?

These are available online at:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/>

The regulations are supplemented by the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/ResearchDegreeProgrammes/>

Can I change my personal details that are recorded in QGIS?

You can make changes to some of your personal details (e.g. address) by editing the information in QGIS. Navigate to the Personal Details tile on your QGIS homepage. For any major changes, e.g. to your name or date of birth, please contact the Student Records team at s.records@qub.ac.uk

It is important that your records are up-to-date at all times so that the University is able to provide you with accurate documents of confirmation.