

# MPLS Template of Provision for Graduate Research Students

## DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS

The purpose of this statement is to indicate what a graduate research student might expect to be offered in the **Department of Materials**. It is expected that during a graduate's first term at Oxford, each graduate student and their supervisor will discuss the statement of provision, and the supervisor will confirm to the departmental DGS the individualised provision as it applies to that student. The provision should be reviewed by the supervisor with the student at least once a year. Further information and guidance about research degrees may be found in the University's Notes of Guidance for Research Degrees at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/epsc/guidance/index.shtml>

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

You will have a named supervisor or supervisors, normally as indicated in your offer letter, who will have overall responsibility for the direction of your work on behalf of your department. Typically, you should expect to have meetings with your supervisor or a member of the supervisory team with a frequency of at least once a fortnight averaged across the year. The regularity of these meetings may be subject to variations according to the time of the year, and the stage you are at in your research programme. Please note that this is a minimum and your supervisors may require more frequent meetings. The Division's Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students is available at <http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/intranet/teachingandlearning/graduateprog.html>

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

You will have departmental induction at the beginning of your first term. The main induction to the department is provided at the start of Michaelmas Term. Other arrangements will be made for students starting at other times of the year. Your supervisor(s) will arrange more specialised induction subsequently. The main set of slides from the most recent Departmental induction event can be found at <http://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/teaching/postgrads/InductionTalk2006.ppt>

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

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

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

You will have access to the Department of Materials IT Support Team, the Departmental Workshop (after completing workshop induction), the Department of Materials Library (in addition to the RSL and other university libraries, and the centrally provided electronic resources). Experimental, photographic and materials modelling facilities are available as appropriate to your research topic. The provision of other resources specific to your project should be agreed with your supervisor as a part of the planning stages of the agreed project. Details of the facilities mentioned above and others are given in the Department's 'Facilities & Procedures' booklet (<http://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/local/FP.html>) and at [http://begbrokenano.materials.ox.ac.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=39](http://begbrokenano.materials.ox.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=39).

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

You will have access to the seminars that individual research groups or groups with common areas of interest organise for their own members and others. You will also have access to the other departmental seminars and colloquia in the Department of Materials, and many of those offered by other Departments too.

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

You will find that limited departmental funds are available to assist with attendance at conferences, in addition to any allocated funds via individual research group/supervisors. In the Department of Materials it is the responsibility of individual research groups to provide appropriate desktop or

laptop computing facilities. Your supervisor will have a small budget to cover day-to-day consumables used in your project.

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

As appropriate to the different stages of your graduate career, you will have the opportunity to attend a variety of skills training sessions and specific research training offered by the Department, as described in the Department's 'Graduate Course Handbook' (<http://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/teaching/handbooks/2006GRADHBK.pdf>) and 'Postgraduate Lecture & Training Course Synopses and Research Colloquia Details' booklet (<http://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/teaching/handbooks/2006GRADLECT.pdf>).

The slides from many of the generic skills training workshops are available at <http://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/teaching/pgskills.html> although these cannot fully substitute for engaging in discussion & group exercises at the live workshops.

The MPLS Division also organises courses and career planning events, details of which are emailed to students via their departments. Information about transferable skills training is provided in the division's WebLearn site

<http://www.weblearn.ox.ac.uk/site/mathsphphys/gradstudents/>

Information about divisional training and other courses offered across the University is also available through the Skills Portal at

<http://www.skillsportal.ox.ac.uk>

This site provides information about transferable skills development for research students and research staff at Oxford University, and includes a searchable database of skills training opportunities, links to articles on subjects such as project management, teaching and career planning, and message boards for asking questions and discussing issues with other researchers. An online Personal Development Planning System also is available through the Skills Portal.

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

The University has established a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), which will support the development of research students who wish to follow an academic career, including training in teaching skills.

Information about teaching skills training and teaching opportunities provided by the Department of Materials can be found in the three Departmental sources given in (7) above and in the General Scheme of Lectures and the Termly Lecture Lists found at

<http://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/teaching/lecturelists.html>. These opportunities are NOT restricted to those who declare a wish to follow an academic career.

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

Department:

Research students can use the Parks View Cafeteria in the Holder Building. This facility is shared by all staff & students of the Departments of Materials and of Engineering Science and facilitates interaction between different research groups and with support staff. Departmental seminars, colloquia and training workshops bring research students together with academic and other research staff in the department to hear about on-going research and to develop new skills and provide an opportunity for networking and socialising. In addition to many ad hoc social events that take place, the Department's graduate student-staff liaison committee (the JCCG) organises a number of social events including free coffee once a week for all graduate students and final year undergraduates, a subsidised evening social event in Michaelmas Term and a subsidised summer barbeque.

College:

Many colleges will be able to provide you with at least one year's accommodation. Generally speaking your college will provide meals throughout the year, but provision will vary from college to college, especially during vacations, and you will need to familiarise yourself with your college's detailed arrangements. In addition there are usually self-catering facilities available in graduate

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

Central:

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

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

Department:

Within the Department, your supervisor, Director of Graduate Studies, Graduate Studies Secretary, Departmental Administrator and their teams are all available to offer support. The Joint Consultative Committee for Graduates (JCCG) provides a channel through which graduate students' views and concerns can be brought to the attention of the Department of Materials Academic Committee.

College:

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

Central:

The University provides,

- (i) Student Counselling Service (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/shw/counserv.shtml>) and
- (ii) a Careers Service (<http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/>).