Research Postgraduate Student Handbook 2017-2018

IBERS Athrofa y Gwyddorau Biolegol, Amgylcheddol a Gwledig
Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences

INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides an introduction to research postgraduate training in IBERS. We hope to answer most of your questions directly in this text, but we will also inform you of the best places to consult in order to resolve any remaining queries. Successful completion of your research training will be dependent on a range of skills that you will develop through the course of your studies:

- ability to develop a close working rapport with your supervisor(s) and other staff members
- developing experimental design procedures
- writing concise and relevant literature reviews
- collating results and interpreting data
- honing presentation and written communication ability

Your relationship with your supervisorial team will help you to acquire new knowledge, gain scientific insight, develop your technical and experimental skills, and build your capacity and confidence to establish valuable academic networks. Whilst the academic mentoring procedures and your day to day experiences will provide you with the vast majority of skills required for a successful career in science and beyond, there are a number of modules and workshops available through the Graduate School that offer wider skills training. The Aberystwyth Graduate School modules will provide you with a platform of essential transferable skills that will assist you in your postgraduate research studies and subsequent career. For a PhD you are required to complete 40 credits worth of Graduate School modules during years 1 and 2, for an MPhil 10 credits during your 1 year course. The choice of modules taken is mostly free, decided in consultation with your supervisors, but IBERS requires you to take PGM2110 (*Statistics for Experimental Scientists*) and recommends PGM1520/PGM2310 **(***Research Skills and Personal Development for Scientists***)**.

We want you to enjoy your time with us, to take full advantage of the considerable professional and personal opportunities that are available, and to develop into a valued member of the IBERS postgraduate community. At the same time, completion of your experimental research programme and of the written thesis itself will require you to develop and display considerable levels of dedication and commitment to your studies; these are the universal qualities of successful scientists of all disciplines, and will subsequently leave you well-placed to pursue a successful career. The main aim of this handbook is to provide you with general information about IBERS and to introduce you to the institute Research Postgraduate Monitoring Scheme. There is also some useful information on support structures within the Institute and at Aberystwyth University and some advice on how to conduct your research and thesis write-up. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this handbook is up-to date, changes in University and Institute procedures do occasionally occur. If you have any questions or comments about this handbook, please speak to or e-mail the IBERS Postgraduate Co-ordinator (Michelle Allen, Edward Llwyd room 3.12, myd@aber.ac.uk).

The IBERS Research Postgraduate handbook should be read in conjunction with the following documents produced by the University Graduate School:

- The Code of Practice for Research Postgraduates
- The Researcher Development Programme Handbook

The handbooks, and other useful materials, are available as pdf versions via the Graduate School at http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/docs-handbooks/

Key Postgraduate Research Staff

Prof Paul Shaw
Director of Postgraduate
Research Studies

Ms Michelle Allen
Postgraduate Co-ordinator

Dr Maurice Bosch
IBERS Postgraduate
Research Committee

Dr Danny Thorogood
IBERS Postgraduate
Research Committee

We wish you every success with your research postgraduate studies in IBERS.

THE INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL & RURAL SCIENCES

Aberystwyth University has a long history of teaching and research in the fields of biology, agriculture and related disciplines, and the establishment of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station in 1919 made Aberystwyth a major force in the development of grasses and clovers for agriculture. This tradition continues today with the formation in 2008 of IBERS from the fusion of the University Institutes of Biological Sciences & Rural Sciences with the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) funded Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER). The formation of IBERS coincides with the realisation that the global human population is projected to rise by 40% from 6.6 billion to 9.3 billion by 2050. This population rise places increasing pressure to meet, in sustainable ways, competing demands for food, feed, fibre, energy and the environment. IBERS scientists conduct basic, strategic and applied research from the level of molecules and genes to whole organism biology and ecology, to address the major global challenges of climate change and food / water / energy security together with environmental and biodiversity sustainability.

The Director of IBERS

I am very pleased to welcome all the post-graduate research students to IBERS. You will see from our mission below, that our research students and academics have very important work to do; tackling some of the great challenges facing our societies today. Aberystwyth and IBERS can be a great place to work with unique facilities and resources; I as Director and all the staff are committed to providing the support necessary for you to make a very significant contribution to your subjects. I have a long interest in the success of student research programmes since completing a PhD myself back in the 1980's. That experience was a very important step in allowing me to develop my academic career, first at the Sports Turf Research Institute, Bingley followed by longer periods at the Royal Agricultural College, and then at the University of Reading before recently arriving at Aberystwyth. My previous positions have included Directorships of Research Units, Director of Post-graduate Research Students, Director of Research, and Head of School: none of which would have been possible without that initial grounding gained as a research student. I continue to work with PhD students, I'm currently supervising my 38th and 39th, because I believe they are a crucial component in the development of high-calibre research and researchers who make an impact.

I wish you all well as you develop your careers with us, and look forward to your successes both whilst you are at Aberystwyth and then beyond.

Professor Michael Gooding

IBERS Awards

In the latest Research Assessment (REF 2014) of UK Universities 84% of our publications were ranked as either 'World Class" or 'Internationally Excellent", and 76% of our Impact studies were ranked as "World Leading". IBERS was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education in recognition of its research achievements in 2009. In 2011 IBERS received the first BBSRC Excellence with Impact Award for cultural change and research excellence from the UK Minister of State for Universities and Science, and in 2013 the Times Higher Education award for Outstanding Contribution to Innovation and Technology.

IBERS Mission Statement

Our vision is to be one of the top three land-based University departments in the World.

A major feature of this vision is to conduct fundamental and applied biological research to tackle some of the most urgent challenges to humanity. These include human and veterinary diseases, understanding and conserving biodiversity, food production and bio-energy in the face of climate change, growing populations, water scarcity and competing demands for land. IBERS will harness and develop unique interdisciplinary scientific expertise within the institute, and establish collaborative projects with other academic departments at the University, to deliver holistic solutions to the global grand challenges:

- Living with climate change
- Renewable energy
- Global food and water security
- Animal and plant diseases.

IBERS is distinguished by embracing both discovery research and its application to solve the pressing needs of our planet. Hence, IBERS is well placed to make a significant contribution to the changing needs of society both nationally and internationally. We therefore will ensure that scientists, working individually or in interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary teams, are empowered to drive forward step changes that will deliver economic and social impact on local, national and international scales.

Research facilities in IBERS

IBERS employs around 360 staff, has an annual turnover of £25 million, and currently hosts 141 PhD / MPhil students and 48 PGT students. There is an active programme of infrastructure investment in existing and new facilities, with £55 million spent in last 7 years and a new £35 million Innovation Campus being built on the Gogerddan site for 2018. The Translational Genomics Facility provides a focus for Next Generation Sequencing activities. The Metabolomics Centre is equipped with a range of high sensitivity instruments supporting metabolite fingerprinting, metabolite profiling and targeted analysis. The National Plant Phenomics Centre expands the Institute's capacity to provide controlled environment facilities for plant growth and trait analysis. IBERS has invested in computing facilities to achieve the goal of integrated science and provide processing for very large datasets.

Phenomics Centre in IBERS Gogerddan

RESEARCH THEMES & RESEARCH GROUPS

IBERS research is organised into three core themes and fifteen interrelated research groups. Partnerships with the commercial and private sector helps ensure IBERS research remains responsive and relevant to industrial needs.

IBERS Director of Research and Enterprise: Professor Alison Kingston-Smith (ahk@aber.ac.uk)

Animal and Aquatic Sciences Theme: Leader Dr Pippa Moore (pim2@aber.ac.uk)

Theme Director of Research (Dr Chris Creevey)
Theme Director of Teaching (Dr Roger Santer)

Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Theme: Leader Professor Iain Donnison (isd@aber.ac.uk)

Theme Director of Research (Dr Dylan Gwynn Jones)
Theme Director of Teaching (Dr Basil Wolf)

Biology and Health Theme: Leader Dr Rhys Thatcher (ryt@aber.ac.uk)

Theme Director of Research (Prof Luis Mur)
Theme Director of Teaching (Dr Joe Ironside)

Our research highlights can be found at [*http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/news/*](http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/news/)

RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE TRAINING IN IBERS

Research postgraduate training forms a key part of the IBERS mission. Our postgraduate students are inspired by world class research experts in their respective disciplines and we hope will be proud of their affiliation with IBERS, Aberystwyth University and Wales. The laboratory and central research facilities available to you in IBERS will be shown and explained to you by your supervisory team. You will be provided desk space and computing facilities, and there is also a Postgraduate Centre on Penglais Campus in the Llandinam building. On both sites there are excellent cafes, and a number of fully equipped meeting rooms and a video-conference suite. Life sciences texts and journals are held in the Hugh Owen Library, whilst the National Library has a broad range of scientific literature. Information on library registration is provided during your induction programme. At Aberystwyth University many journal articles are available electronically linked to research literature database search engines (http://www.inf.aber.ac.uk/elecinfo/). Computer workstations and wireless internet access is available in most buildings on the two IBERS campuses. You are entitled to use any workstation. Information on computer registration is provided during your induction.

IBERS PGR students can set up their own **student web profiles** linked to research groups, supervisors and IBERS PG pages –- contact Sarah Pryse (rms@aber.ac.uk).

PG students are encouraged to publicise their research achievements through peer-reviewed publications, but also through public engagement – **develop your skills at publicising your own and other researchers' news** by joining our *Press Gang* – contact Dr Sarah Dalesman (sad31@aber.ac.uk)

Penglais Campus showing IBERS-Penglais, and in the foreground the National Library of Wales

RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

An important part of your development as a professional researcher is to take individual responsibility for your research outputs, your working practices and your conduct – **we expect you to take responsibility, jointly with your supervisors, for monitoring of your progress, attendance and meeting deadlines**.

For AU Regulations for the degree of PhD see:
http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/contents/phd/, and for MPhil see:
http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/contents/masters-phil/

A programme of induction for all new research postgraduates is organised by the University Graduate School. IBERS also provides an induction programme. This meeting includes a general introduction to the Institute, its rules, regulations, practices and facilities for research students. Other useful information can be found on AU PG websites – see http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/pg-issues/research/ and http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/. You will be provided with a supervisory team consisting of at least two staff Supervisors who will help you to develop your knowledge, skills and responsibilities.

Whilst there are no prescriptive working hours for research postgraduates, there is an expectation that full time students will usually be researching in the Institute for 37h per week over at least 44 weeks p.a. **Unavoidable absence** from the Institute for more than a week must be notified in writing to your supervisors and to Michelle Allen (myd@aber.ac.uk), the IBERS Postgraduate Co-ordinator. Medical certificates are required after an absence of seven days or more. **Notification of absence away from Aberystwyth is particularly important for Overseas students (Tier 4 visa), to stay within regulations for UKBA visas**, and for students in receipt of a research council or other external grant, as we may be asked to provide evidence covering periods of absence by your sponsor.

As a research postgraduate student, your study effort will naturally focus on either experimental laboratory, field and policy based research. As an integrated part of the research process, you are strongly encouraged to attend departmental and other relevant university lectures and seminars which will give further insight into how your specialist area fits into broader research themes. Invited speaker-based seminars will also broaden the scope of your knowledge base, offer exposure to the cutting edge of research and will offer new networking opportunities. Details of all lectures and seminars are posted around each building and circulated via e-mail and IBERS website.

Reporting / Assessment - if you are asked to produce any formal reports or assessment these should be submitted typewritten. You have access to the University computer system to allow you to produce good quality documents. You should always allow a week for printing out work or assignments via central university services. Assignments will invariably carry deadlines. It is important from a professional point of view that you learn to meet deadlines. If you feel there is a legitimate reason for late submission you may be allowed an extension to the deadline. Initial enquiries about deadlines should be made to the Postgraduate Coordinator.

Safety Regulations must be complied with at all times. You must read, complete and sign the declaration attached to the Safety Regulations and return it to the Postgraduate Co-ordinator at Penglais or Safety Officer at Gogerddan before you embark on any practical or field work. Students must adhere to all aspects of safety related to their experiments. You can discuss the appropriate safety measures for your project with your supervisory team and seek advice from the IBERS Safety Committee via Ms Jane Richards (jzr@aber.ac.uk).

Please ensure any change in local/home address and/or telephone number is reported immediately to the IBERS Postgraduate Co-ordinator. It is important for us to know where we can find you in an emergency.

SEEKING ADVICE

If you are having problems keeping up with your studies, for any reason, it is important to talk to your research supervisor(s) or your assessor (at the earliest opportunity).   If you prefer, you may choose to consult with members of the IBERS Postgraduate Research Committee (below) or alternatively University Student Support (http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-support/). At IBERS we feel that we are approachable, but you may wish to talk with someone independent of your research area or department, especially if it concerns a personal matter.

When taking one of the postgraduate taught modules, then their design, presentation and associated assignments are the responsibility of the module co-ordinator who should be consulted if you have general queries concerning the content, timetabling or assignments.   With respect to your own studies, it is usual that your Supervisory team will be your first point of contact over any difficulties.

IBERS Postgraduate Research Committee
The Postgraduate Research Committee is there to provide advice, guidance and monitoring of your progress through your studies:

Professor Paul Shaw (Director of Postgraduate Research Studies), room 3.14 Edward Llwyd, Penglais Campus, pws3@aber.ac.uk Tel x 2328

Mrs Michelle Allen (IBERS Postgraduate Co-ordinator), room 3.12 Edward Llwyd, Penglais Campus, myd@aber.ac.uk Tel x 2315

Dr Maurice Bosch, Gogerddan Campus, mub@aber.ac.uk Tel x 3103

Photographic and imaging facility
Sarah Spring (rms@aber.ac.uk) is available to advise with the preparation of research material presentations, and Mr Tony Pugh (anthony_pugh@btinternet.com) can be contacted for photo-work. Please consult your Supervisors prior to making formal requests for work.

Conferences and travel
Research students as part of their training are expected to attend and present at conferences relevant to their research interests. Some award-supported students may be able to claim expenses from their grant-awarding body. In addition many conference organisers have funds specifically designated to support less experienced scientists. Some funding may also be available from supervisors, IBERS funds or possibly the E.J. Gooding Fund. Please check with your supervisor well in advance of the conference date to discuss the procedure for funding applications.

Research Postgraduate Student-Staff Consultancy Committee
Liaison between staff and research students is important and encouraged within IBERS. In addition to the lines of communication already outlined, the Research Postgraduate Student-Staff Consultancy Committee provides a medium through which students may express constructive criticism of research postgraduate degree courses, research and related matters. It is composed of staff and elected members of the research postgraduate cohort. Items for discussion should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the committee (Dr Maurice Bosch mub@aber.ac.uk).

Remember that any problems not resolved by either your supervisor, assessor, the Postgraduate Director or Co-ordinator, or Student-Staff Committee can be referred to the IBERS Director (Prof Michael Gooding).

UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITIES TO RESEARCH TRAINING

Responsibility of Aberystwyth University to research postgraduate training
The Director of the Graduate School (Prof Reyer Zwiggelaar, rrz@aber.ac.uk) is responsible for the provision of postgraduate training within Aberystwyth University as a whole, and has a co-ordinating role in relation to the development of policy on postgraduate matters; the provision of facilities for postgraduates; and the monitoring of academic progress of postgraduate students. The Director is supported by a PG skills officer (Dr Ian Archer, ina@aber.ac.uk) and Graduate School administrator (Mrs Jan Davies, x2219, postgraduate.office@aber.ac.uk).

The University has a clear *Code of Practice for Research Postgraduates* and policy on the supervision of research postgraduates in the *Handbook for Supervisors of Research Postgraduates* produced by the Graduate School (http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/docs-handbooks/), that includes general advice on the role of the student and supervisors in the monitoring progress, the frequency of meetings/contact with the supervisors, and the minimum expectations with regard to record keeping.

The University's Academic Quality & Records Office (http://www.aber.ac.uk/academicoffice/) is responsible for research postgraduate registration, maintaining academic records and the submission of research theses. Please note that access to Information Services facilities (i.e. Library and Computing) will be provided throughout, and continue after, your registration period until graduation.

Responsibility of the IBERS Supervisory team to monitor research postgraduate progress
A progress monitoring report form (available from Michelle Allen, myd@aber.ac.uk) for formal Monitoring of Research Students is completed every year (January and/or June depending on start date), and signed by the student, their supervisors and IBERS Director (Prof Michael Gooding). Monitoring forms are the basis of a formal record of research progress and skills development which are logged and recorded on the University's monitoring system. **The first year of study is a probationary period** and a recommendation will be made by the supervisory team to the IBERS Postgraduate Research Committee on whether or not the student may be permitted to continue with his/her studies, based on an assessment from a body of evidence of the student's potential to successfully complete their studies. This is an important decision as not only is it unfair to allow an unsuitable student to continue, but also that after the probationary period any subsequent failure to complete will jeopardise the Institute's ability to obtain future Research Council studentships. The recommendation is based upon IBERS progression criteria and is informed through the regular meetings/discussions held between the student and their supervisory team.
Thus, the recommendation of the supervisory team is not the final university decision but is forwarded first for consideration by IBERS Postgraduate Research Committee, which makes an Institute recommendation based on the progress report and conveys this recommendation to the University Research Monitoring Committee to confirm completion or failure of the probationary year. The IBERS Postgraduate Research Committee will request to meet with a student individually pre- and/or post-University meeting if deemed necessary.

IBERS departmental responsibility in monitoring research postgraduate progress
IBERS has an appointed Postgraduate Research Committee whose terms of reference include consideration of student monitoring and report co-ordination. In addition, under special circumstances the consideration of student progression recommendations can be devolved to a sub-committee or considered as part of a closed agenda.
The IBERS Postgraduate Research Committee provide a degree of externality in the decision to permit or prevent a student from progressing to his/her subsequent period of study.
In addition, IBERS requires the **submission of a signed summary of the outcome of monthly target setting meetings between supervisors and students**. The summary is completed on a form provided by and returned (for annual monitoring) to IBERS postgraduate co-ordinator Michelle Allen (myd@aber.ac.uk). **Students on Tier 4 visas must submit their monthly meeting record sheets to Michelle Allen during their monthly attendance registration.**

The University Research Monitoring Committee has the authority to ratify or change the final recommendation provided to it by Institute Postgraduate Committee. It also has the power to require the Institute representative of the research committee to provide evidence to substantiate the recommendation being made.

Progress is formally monitored by the University Research Monitoring Committee on at least an annual basis for <u>all</u> research postgraduate students. Students coming to the end of their registration period and those writing up will be formally monitored semi-annually by the University.

<u>Responsibility of informing the student about the progress recommendation</u>
The student will be informed by the postgraduate co-ordinator or supervisor of the recommendation of the Postgraduate Committee and the decision of the University Research Monitoring Committee and must countersign the annual report provided to University.

LENGTH OF STUDY: MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM CANDIDATURE

Minimum candidature is the period in which the candidate must be enrolled as a full fee-paying student. (see Table below). The end of minimum candidature is the date by which a student is encouraged to submit. Once minimum candidature and student registration period are passed, **the candidate should be in the late writing up stages.**
Maximum candidature is the very latest date by which the candidate must submit their thesis - **NOTE: if you do not submit a thesis by the maximum time limit, you will not be able to submit for your degree** (unless an extension, in the case of special circumstances backed by evidence, has been agreed previously). It is expected that a candidate will plan to submit their thesis, and have submitted an Intention to Submit form (obtainable from Michelle Allen), well before the final deadline in case of unforeseen time slippages, for example during writing up while working after the registration period.

Degree & Mode of Study	Minimum Registration Fee Paying Period	Maximum Time Limit - Deadline for <u>final </u>submission of Thesis
MPhil		
Full time	1 year	2 years
Part time	2 years	3 years
PhD		
Full time*	3 years	4 years
Part time*	5 years	7 years
DAg		
Part time	5 years	7 years

* 1 year less if exempt from probationary year

RESEARCH AND SKILLS TRAINING

WITHIN IBERS

Research Seminars in IBERS
IBERS has a series of lectures and seminars held throughout the year, advertised via email and IBERS website. This programme includes both internal and external international speakers. Research postgraduate students are expected to give at least two seminars on their own work at an IBERS seminar series. **ALL** Postgraduate students are expected to attend IBERS based seminars.

Demonstrating to Undergraduate Practical Classes

It is usual practice in IBERS for research postgraduate students to demonstrate to undergraduate practical classes. This gives postgraduates experience in practical instruction and the design and management of practical classes, while at the same time making a valuable contribution to IBERS teaching. Before the start of each session, postgraduate students are invited to take part and to indicate in which undergraduate modules they would be prepared to demonstrate. Participation is, of course, dependent on approval from the student's supervisor. Details of the responsibilities of demonstrators and the rates of pay are given at the Demonstrators' Workshop to be held during the University Postgraduate Induction Programme at the start of the academic year. Postgraduates wishing to demonstrate must have attended the training workshop beforehand.

WITH THE AU GRADUATE SCHOOL

All full time PhD students are expected to complete a minimum of 40 credits of institutionally-provided research training within the first two years. It is expected that a minimum of 20 credits will be taken in the first year, and any remaining credits in the second year.
All full time MPhil students are expected to complete a minimum of 10 credits of institutionally-provided research training

Research postgraduates are initially required to discuss their research area with their supervisor / department, and decide which remit their research falls under. Students **must** then discuss which modules would be most suitable with their supervisors before registering for them.
Full-time Science remit (e.g. BBSRC, EPSRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) PhD students are expected to choose 40 credits from the list at https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/researcher/central-research/

IBERS PhD students are required to complete a statistical training module:
Statistics for Experimental Scientists (PGM2110)
The module aims to provide an understanding of the principles of research design, the ability to statistically analyse data and the subsequent interpretation of such analyses are essential for the Sciences. This module builds on basic statistical principles that would have been covered at undergraduate level and develops procedures relevant to science subject areas. The module is comprised of a series of self-contained, e-learning based units delivered entirely through Blackboard but supported by optional workshops to provide help as required. A core of compulsory units will reinforce elements of basic statistics while a broader range of more advanced techniques will be available for students to select from according to study scheme and dissertation topic. The statistical techniques will be demonstrated using SPSS, a statistical package fully supported by the University.

IBERS recommends attending the following modules:

Research Skills and Personal Development for Scientists (PGM1520, PGM2310)
This module aims to give research students in the Sciences, a broad knowledge of a range of transferable skills that they can apply in a variety of research contexts. The module will cover personal development, including skills in negotiating and networking, academic writing, research management, team working and writing and presenting a conference paper. The module also covers IT skills, both general and in an applied research context.

Skills in Bioinformatics for Biologists (PGM2810)
Students will attend a pre-session including an overview of different taught modules on offer and provide an overview of the wider bioinformatics related resources available. Apart from practical sessions introducing Linux and High Performance Computing, students will also attend practical sessions using the R language from the module "Statistical Concepts, Methods and Tools" NAM5120. For those requiring further statistical and R programming skills it will be possible to take additional sessions from NAM5120 and the follow-up module "Statistical Techniques for Computational Biology" NAM5220. Other available modules teaching bioinformatics skills include "Programming for Scientists" CSM0120 (for those with a background in biological sciences needing Python programming skills); "Machine Learning for Intelligent Systems" CSM6420 (only for those requiring machine learning skills). For those from a non-biological background there are more generic modules" Applied Molecular Biology and Bioinformatics" BR20620 or "Bioinformatics and Functional Genomics" BR31420.

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

1. Emergency Procedures

1.1 Fire

If you hear the fire alarm, leave the building (do not use lifts) and proceed to the nearest assembly point. Do not re-enter the building until instructions are given by the Institute Fire Marshalls that it is safe to do so.

If you discover a fire set off the fire alarms at the nearest "fire alarm call point" and leave the building as explained above.

1.2 First Aid

There are two ways of getting first aid when required:-

- Call AU Security Office at 222 (24 hours) on internal phones.
- Call IBERS Penglais Reception at 01970 621986 or Gogerddan Reception at 01970 823000 during normal working hours.

1.3 Lifts

If you get stuck in a lift press the "lift alarm button" for assistance.

If you become aware of a problem with a lift contact Campus Help at 01970 622999 or campushelp@aber.ac.uk.

Lifts must not be used outside normal working hours.

2. Medical Questionnaire

First year students will be issued with a medical questionnaire in their first meeting with their personal tutor. This should be completed and returned to the Student Admin Team Office during the first week of term to ensure that staff can be made aware of underlying health problems that may impact on your participation in activities that form part of your course. If there are any changes to your health during your time in Aberystwyth please update your online record. If you have transferred in to the second or final year of a course in IBERS please call at the IBERS Student Admin Team office to request a questionnaire.

3. HSE Practice

There can be a risk of injury or illness from a number of hazards associated with aspects of academic life on and off the campus. Some of the higher risks are associated with laboratory work, field trials, work experience, farming activities and road safety. Potential risks can be controlled through the risk assessment process.

3.1 Risk assessment

A "hazard" is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, vehicles, slippery floors etc.

"Risk" is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of the potential seriousness of the harm.

A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paper work, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in a workplace or place of study.

How to assess the risks in your workplace

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how

- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record your significant findings
- Review your assessment and update if necessary

The Health & Safety Executive's pragmatic view of risk management is:

"Risk management is about taking practical steps to protect people from real harm and suffering - not bureaucratic back covering"

Taking a sensible approach to risk management is about:

- ensuring that workers and the public are properly protected
- enabling innovation and learning not stifling them
- ensuring that those who create risks manage them responsibly which is likely to lead to robust action
- providing overall benefit to society by balancing benefits and risks, with a focus on reducing significant risks - both those which arise more often and those with serious consequences
- enabling individuals to understand that as well as the right to protection, they also have to exercise responsibility

It is not about:

- scaring people by exaggerating or publicising trivial risks
- stopping important recreational and learning activities for individuals where the risks are managed
- creating a totally risk-free society
- generating useless paperwork mountains

3.2 COSHH Assessments

A COSHH assessment concentrates on the hazards and risks from hazardous substances in your workplace. Hazardous substances which may pose health risks are not restricted to chemicals. They also include products containing chemicals, fumes, dusts, vapours, mists, nanotechnology, gases and asphyxiating gases, biological agents and germs e.g. Zoonoses are diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

A Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) risk assessment on chemical and biological materials will be available from a member of staff. The SDS for each chemical contains information relating to its properties, stability, reactivity and toxicology, handling, storage and transportation and measures relating to First Aid, firefighting and accidental release. While a SDS identifies particular aspects of a chemical or substance, COSHH Assessments are task related assessments and assist in the identification of hazards associated with how you are using a substance, such as quantity, transportation etc.

IBERS uses an online COSHH Assessment System called Sevron which is available from IBERS HS contacts below.

3.3 Laboratory Work

A member of the academic or technical staff will make you familiar with Safe Laboratory Practice, carrying out specific scientific techniques, handling, storing, dispensing and safe disposal of chemical and biological materials.

You will be advised on what protective clothing and footwear is appropriate in a laboratory setting. Eating and drinking are forbidden in all laboratories.

Academic and technical staff will advise on safe working practice associated with particular experimental practices, use of specialist equipment, hazardous waste disposal and recycling. Damaged and faulty equipment should also be reported to the laboratory staff.

In particular you must not carry out work involving animals, GMOs (genetically modified organisms), pathogens or ionising and non-ionising radiation (laser related) without consulting your supervisor.

Access and keys: if you need to work outside of "normal office hours" (8am-6pm) you will need to complete a risk assessment of the work you are doing which includes lone working, and then contact Rob Darby (rmd@aber.ac.uk, tel. ext. 2311) to arrange card access to buildings out of hours and keys/fobs for particular room access (including offices).

3.4 Fieldwork and Work Experience

Students taking part in field work, work in plots or greenhouses and work experience will be required to assist staff in conducting a risk assessment relevant to their activities and adhering to particular measures designed to reduce significant risks. Potential hazards may be associated with samples, crops, animals, equipment, machinery and specific scientific or commercial activities.

3.5 Road Safety & Travel

Please take particular care when moving around the University Campus whether driving, cycling or on foot at any time of the day or night. If you are proposing to drive a University vehicle, a member of staff will inform you of the relevant rules and insurance restrictions associated with this activity.

3.6 Incident Reporting

All incidents, whether accidents, ill health, near misses, damage to equipment, property or vehicles should be reported immediately. Near misses are just as important as accidents as the cause and the actions put in place to prevent reoccurrence will be the same as if an accident had occurred. Incident forms are available via IBERS Safety Contacts below.

4. AU HS Policy

Health and safety responsibilities for students are set out in sections 2.12 and 2.20 of the AU Health Safety Policy. This can be accessed on the University Health and Safety Environment web site: http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/

2.12   All Employees and Students:-

2.12.1 Every employee and every student is under a legal obligation to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions or inactions.

2.12.2 Every University employee and student must comply with the rules and requirements set out in this Policy and associated policies and procedures.

2.12.3 It is the legal duty of all employees and students whilst at work or study at the University and whilst away from the University on University business or related activities to:-
  i.   behave responsibly and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their work or activities;
  ii.   participate in appropriate health and safety training, as required;
  iii. undertake suitable and sufficient risk assessments or support the competent person within their Department / Institute and cooperate with control measures and procedures;
  iv.   work together with colleagues and students to enable them to carry out their own health and safety responsibilities;
  v.   report to supervisory staff any situation, working practice or procedure which they suspect is potentially hazardous;
  vi.   report promptly all accidents and incidents to supervisory staff or other appropriate person;
  vii. use, but not misuse, protective clothing, equipment or materials provided;
  viii. comply with the health and safety rules, policies and instructions, both spoken and written, which are issued to them; and to
  ix.   use machinery, chemicals, biological material, plant or equipment in the manner for which they were designed and in accordance with the appropriate safety precautions.

2.12.4 The University and/or appropriate Institute or Professional Service Department shall ensure suitable instruction, training and supervision and safety equipment, protective

clothing and health precautions (e.g. vaccinations) are provided to ensure these obligations are capable of being fulfilled.

2.20   Employees and Students working away from the University:-

2.20.1   Where an employee or student is working away from the University on University business the potential risks associated by such work, travel or location shall be assessed by the appropriate Institute or Professional Service Department having due consideration for University policies and arrangements and, where applicable, Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice.   Risk Assessments are also required for overseas travel and are necessary in order to ensure cover under the University's Travel Insurance Policy.

2.20.2   Specific advice on work placements and travel overseas is available from the University's Health, Safety and Environment Website or on request from the AU Health, Safety and Environment Department.

IBERS Health, Safety and Environment Contacts:

Jane Richards

IBERS HSE & Training Advisor: Tel: 01970 823009   Email: jzr@aber.ac.uk

THE RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE MONITORING SYSTEM

Chronological Sequence of Events for PhD, and MPhil Students intending to transfer to a PhD.
The scheme is intended to be robust, but flexible enough to provide a general framework across the wide range of projects and disciplines within IBERS. It must be recognised that there are only two normal University time points to consider probation (January and July) and, therefore, some students will be assessed earlier into their studies than others if they do not start at the usual time in September. The format is based broadly on guidance from the BBSRC studentship booklet (QAA Code of Practice for Research Students). In addition to the Induction Programmes operated by the University and IBERS, completion of at least 20 credits of the Graduate School's Researcher Development modules within the first year (of a total required minimum of 40 credits in years 1 & 2) is a pre-requisite to progression for all PhD students. The probationary year is an essential milestone for both the research postgraduate student and the Institute. The year provides for the decision to allow research postgraduate students that are likely to submit within the time limit to continue their studies; conversely, it provides an opportunity to terminate the registration of students who are unlikely to achieve that goal, which will be a stressful experience and waste of their time, and count against us in completion rates and so our ability to attract funding for future research postgraduates. Successful completion of the probationary year requires monitoring schemes based on a body of written and oral evidence of progress, including reports from an independent assessor and from student interview with the Postgraduate Committee.

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT, AS WELL AS SUPERVISORS, TO MONITOR AND RECORD PROGRESS THROUGH REGULAR MEETINGS AND WRITTEN UPDATES.

The Probationary Year
Months 0-1 IBERS Postgraduate Co-ordinator will be provided by the Primary Supervisor with a one-page synopsis of the background of the student and the general area of the research programme, and full list of supervisors associated with the student. The 2nd/3rd supervisors will be responsible, in collaboration with the Primary Supervisor, for conducting the monitoring of student progress and reporting to University via the IBERS Postgraduate Committee, and will be required to attend the appropriate seminar/or poster sessions and assess written reports (see below).

Months 1-4 (*flexible submission date with experimental commitments)* Students, with the support and guidance of their supervisor(s), will provide a literature review (including clear aims, objectives and proposed hypotheses of the study) of 10 -15 pages (3500 - 5000 words) to their supervisory team. This review provides the student with a background and clear structure for the study, can form the

basis of the introductory sections of the thesis to be built upon throughout the programme, and provide documentable evidence of students' writing ability. The review will be marked by the 2nd or 3rd supervisor, and feedback provided to the student. This procedure provides an opportunity for any concerns or difficulties to be resolved at an early stage. Failure to comply with any of the above will result in an interview with the IBERS Postgraduate committee, and for funded students this may result in withdrawal of financial support.

Throughout the student's registration period monthly (at least) meetings will take place with the supervisory team, and progress and plans recorded on the standard form submitted by the student (in time for annual monitoring) to the Postgraduate Coordinator. <u>Students on Tier 4 visas</u> must submit their monthly meeting record sheets to Michelle Allen during their monthly attendance registration.

Months 6-8 Students will present a short <u>seminar</u> for discussion to the IBERS postgraduate conference session, or failing that in an Institute seminar series. In these exercises, students will need to demonstrate a broad understanding of the subject matter and the relevant literature, justify the direction to be taken by the research programme, define the general nature of the project and identify possible milestones. The seminar will be marked by Postgraduate Committee and the student will subsequently receive written feedback. If a seminar is not possible within the time-frame, <u>a poster presentation and oral defence</u> will be required at an IBERS research meeting.

Months 7-8 <u>Students will produce a short written report (3-5 pages) on their research progress and plans (with dated actions) followed by a progress review meeting with their supervisory team.</u> The objectives of this report are several fold: (i) they provide an opportunity for focussed reflection on research progress; (ii) practice in scientific writing skills in preparation for journal publication and the PhD thesis; (iii) to provide documented evidence upon which supervisors can review student progress for the Annual Monitoring report. This report makes an important contribution for progression criteria and University monitoring. Therefore, this report should provide evidence of the ability to produce a concise and critical summary of previously published work, evidence of good experimental planning and execution and sound interpretation of experimental results. At this stage, results may only be preliminary or range–finding, but the potential for generating a substantive data set within the timeframe of the studentship must be evident.   The reports will help the student to focus on the aims of the PhD programme and to develop a realistic future plan of work.

Month 8 (usually by mid-June) **Completion of University Research Student Progress Monitoring Form.** The Student and the Supervisors should complete and agree on the contents of the form, which will include the Assessor's feedback, prior to submission to the IBERS Postgraduate Committee.

Month 8-9 All probationary students will have the opportunity to meet with the IBERS Postgraduate Committee to assess progress and to raise issues of concern, and to provide feedback in order to develop further their research potential.   Attendance, if specifically requested by the IBERS Postgraduate Committee, will be mandatory.

Month 9-10 Meeting of IBERS Postgraduate Research Committee.
The remit of the committee is to consider all students whose progress is to be reported to the University:
- Ensure that Institute progression criteria have been applied (including submission of signed monthly Supervision Record forms) and that there is a detailed action plan included with the monitoring form;
- Objectively review the recommendation made by the supervisory team seeking, where appropriate, additional evidence;
- Make a recommendation about progression to the University Research Monitoring Committee through completion of the report lists provided by Academic Office;
- Provide evidence of a Yes or No decision on Probationary year to the University Research Monitoring Committee.

Month 10 University Monitoring meeting attended by member(s) of the IBERS Postgraduate Committee

The University either supports student progression to Year 2 studies or requests further review by Month 12 (usually September).

Month 12 Report on students in further review to University Monitoring Committee following individual meeting with the IBERS Postgraduate Research Director. Final decision made on progress and registration for following year.

<u>**Post-Probationary Year Monitoring Criteria**</u>
Months 12-30 During this period students will be expected to give a follow-up <u>seminar</u> in the department which the Supervisors will attend, and also present a <u>poster</u> at a local meeting. These activities may also be viewed as `rehearsals` for contributions to outside meetings. Students should be encouraged to attend training courses such as those offered by funding councils and the Graduate School. Research Student Progress will again be monitored in June (and/or January) via the IBERS Postgraduate Committee and the University, and constructive feedback will be given to students to ensure successful and timely submission of a strong thesis and to provide practice and guidance for the oral defence of the thesis.

Months 16-20 During this period students are advised to complete and submit to their Supervisors an <u>interim PhD report</u> (3,500 - 5,000 words) in preparation for 2nd Year monitoring and progression. This report should contain revised and extended work, building upon the previous literature review and 1st Year report (again with a future research plan with dated milestones), and ideally should contain a draft thesis chapter or outline of multiple chapters. Submission of the interim report will be followed, within one month, by an **annual progress meeting with Supervisors**. **The meeting will form the basis for completion of the annual Research Student Progress Monitoring Form,** and for constructive feedback to the student and to ensure that any recommendations are carried out promptly before the student is allowed to proceed to third year registration. These activities are valuable in helping students and supervisor(s) to focus the research programme towards successful completion within the time limit and will help in preparing students for the *viva voce* examination.

Months 19-21 In order that student registration be continued into the final year, the University Research Monitoring Committee, based on a progress report from the Supervisory team, will recommend whether or not the student should be allowed to proceed. The student and the Supervisor(s) should agree on the content of the report prior to submission to the IBERS Postgraduate Committee who will review the evidence and may call a meeting prior to referral to University. Should student progress be deemed unsatisfactory, the student will be informed in writing by both the IBERS Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and the Graduate School. Students will then be given the opportunity to discuss and note a schedule of work with their Supervisor in consultation with the Assessor. By the end of month 23 (in most instances this will be by mid-September), a decision will be made about whether satisfactory progress has been made, based on the assembled evidence. The PhD student will then be informed in writing, whether or not they will be allowed to proceed.

Months 25 At this point at start of Year 3 PhD students should arrange a meeting with their supervisors to review progress and initiate preliminary planning for the submission of their thesis.

Months 30-32 A thesis outline will be supplied to and agreed by supervisors (and copied to IBERS postgraduate co-ordinator) to include basic chapter outlines, summary of the literature review and a timetable for completion. Supervisors will respond within one month with any generic thesis structure comments. Students (in consultation with their Supervisory Team) will prepare their Intention to Submit forms, including nominations for Examiners. **These forms will be submitted to the IBERS Postgraduate Co-ordinator (and on to Academic Quality and Records Office)** <u>**three months prior to thesis submission**</u>. The Postgraduate Committee will provide advice on maximising use of the remaining time to compile a strong thesis and will provide students with feedback.

Months 36 and every 3 months thereafter
An interview with the Supervisors will be arranged to discuss progress towards writing-up, career development and the value of training. Candidates in abeyance will continue to be formally monitored by University until submission of thesis.

Notes:

1. The IBERS research postgraduate monitoring scheme is designed to help students and supervisors to work together to plan and monitor progress towards a successful thesis, including individual training and professional development. **It is the responsibility of the student as well as their supervisors** to monitor progress through regular meetings and written updates.

YOUR AIM SHOULD BE TO SUBMIT YOUR THESIS CLOSE TO OR SHORTLY AFTER END OF YOUR REGISTRATION PERIOD OF 3 YEARS

2. The IBERS research postgraduate monitoring scheme does not propose to monitor the progress of individual experiments, nor is it usually intended to be a guide for the conduct of a research programme; these remain the responsibility of the student and supervisors.

3. The scheme is intended to be flexible to allow for initial registration at times other than the beginning of the academic year, although mandatory Skills Modules are taken at fixed times during the academic calendar.

4. Students should feel free to discuss academic or non-academic issues in confidence with their Assessor at any time throughout the research programme, **although it should be emphasised that students should have first consulted their supervisory team**. Unresolved issues should then be raised with the IBERS Postgraduate Committee via the Postgraduate Co-ordinator.

KEY TIMELINES FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE MONITORING SCHEME

Month 1 – Supervisor to supply a synopsis of student background and their general research programme, and confirm full supervisory team to PG Coordinator

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Month 1 – 4: Student produces literature review of 10-15 pages to be marked by 2nd / 3rd supervisor, With feedback provided to the student. Monthly (at least) supervisory meetings initiated and reported on

↓

Month 6 – 8: Student presents a seminar for discussion to an appropriate forum such as an IBERS meeting or IBERS postgraduate conference

↓

Month 7- 8: Student produces a report on research progress to supervisors. This should include a brief introduction stating hypotheses, aims and objectives, materials and methods, results to date and discussion including future work, goals and targets.
Annual review meeting with Supervisors
Student meeting with Postgraduate Committee
Month 9: Formal report of Probationary Year made to University by Postgraduate Committee. Pass probation or decision delayed until Month 12.

↓

Months 12 – 30: Follow up seminar and poster

↓

Month 16 -21: Student submits interim report ~ 3,500-5,000 words
Annual review meeting with Supervisors and Assessor – complete Monitoring Form
Monitoring decision of whether student is allowed to proceed to third year registration

↓

Month 25: Progress Review meeting with Supervisors and Assessor and thesis submission planning

↓

Month 30 – 32: Detailed Thesis outline supplied to and agreed with supervisors
Receive independent feedback and advice on thesis plan
Prepare Intention to Submit Form

↓

Month 36: Completion and submission of thesis

GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PRESENTATION

For AU Regulations for the Degree of PhD see
http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/contents/phd/, and for MPhil see
http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/contents/masters-phil/

Regulations for Presentation

The thesis should not exceed 100,000 words, excluding preliminaries and other functional parts such as textual material, bibliography, list of references and index.
- The thesis should be double or one and a half line spacing.
- Single spacing for the Summary/Abstract and any indented quotations and footnotes.
- It should be consistent in style and show logical thought.

Refer to https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aqro/students/pg-issues/research/theses-sub-proc/
For information on presenting your thesis in an alternative (published paper) format see http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/pg-issues/research/alternateformatphdthesisinformation/

Time Limit

For students registered after September 1997 the time limit for submission is **four years**. Extensions will only be granted by the Head of Graduate School in exceptional circumstances. If a student needs to take temporary withdrawal from the University (only available during the registration period) for health or other personal or professional reasons, then the clock is stopped for the duration (see http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/ug-issues/other-info/withdrawal/).

Processing Research Theses

The Academic & Quality Records Office in Cledwyn, Penglais, processes MPhil and PhD research theses. All students planning to submit their thesis should contact either Michelle Allen, Postgraduate Co-ordinator, to obtain an Intention to Submit form or download the form from the AQRO website (http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/pg-issues/research/) and, 3 months prior to the date of thesis submission, this form should be returned to Michelle Allen who will then confirm the selection of external and internal examiners prior to confirmation from AQRO.

NB: Students should complete the sections on the Intention to Submit Form which deal with the appointment of External and Internal Examiners in consultation with their supervisor(s).
Students should submit their theses to Michelle Allen, Student Support Office, Edward Llwyd Building, IBERS, Penglais.

THESIS SUBMISSION, EXAMINATION AND RESULTS

It is the expectation of the University that students will complete their theses before or as soon after the end of their registration periods as possible. Research postgraduates who do not complete the research and writing of the thesis during the period of registration must complete within the maximum time limit for submission of theses as indicated in Table 1. Supervisors will help to ensure that their students keep within this maximum period, and will provide guidance and support in relation to the writing-up process up to the time of submission. Time limits for submission of theses may be extended only in exceptional circumstances; an application for an extension should be made in writing by the student, with the support of the supervisors and Institute, to the University.

When both student and supervisor are satisfied that the student will shortly be in a position to submit the thesis, the student should collect the 'Intention to Submit' form and the necessary submission documents from AQRO. The student and supervisor are expected to complete sections 1 & 2 of the "Intention to Submit" form. Once this has been done the form should be sent to IBERS postgraduate co-ordinator, Michelle Allen, for completion and signature prior to submission to AQRO. The documents include advice on the binding and presentation of theses, and the declarations and

summary which must accompany the thesis - see Appendix 1. AQRO will check that the student is within the time limit and has paid all fees and matriculated and will certify that this is so. The thesis cannot be assessed until all debts have been honoured and unless the student has matriculated and is within the time limit. If there is any problem, the student will be advised on what must be done before the thesis can be submitted.

The written thesis will also be examined through a *viva voce* or oral examination. This examination will be conducted by an examining board consisting of a chairperson, one internal examiner and one external examiner. Where candidates have studied under staff regulations a second external examiner will be appointed in place of the internal. The chairperson is there to ensure that the examination is conducted properly according to the regulations. The internal examiner, who will not be the supervisor, and the external examiner, will pose most of the questions. The external examiner, normally an academic from a University other than Aberystwyth University, will be an expert in the field of the student's research and will understand the requirements of a PhD or Research Masters degree. The supervisor may also attend the *viva* but will act only in an advisory capacity. The University's guidance notes for *viva* procedures are set out in Appendix 2.

The *viva* examination is not a formality. It is an integral part of the examination for a research degree. The Office of Postgraduate Studies will offer candidates a training session on *vivas* towards the end of their registration periods. The examiners will need to satisfy themselves that the thesis is the candidate's own work and that the candidate possesses a good general knowledge in the field of the research. The examiners will identify what they see as the strengths of the thesis and will give the student the opportunity to clarify any obscurities and defend any weaknesses which they perceive. They will then determine whether the thesis meets the following standard:

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a scheme of further study and research, the results of which are judged to constitute an original contribution to learning and to give evidence of systematic study and of ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the subject. In judging the merit of a thesis submitted in candidature for the degree of PhD, the examiners shall bear in mind the standard and scope of work which it is reasonable to expect a capable and diligent student to present after a period of two or three years (as appropriate) of full-time study, or its part-time equivalent.

The degree of Master of Philosophy may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a course of further study and research, the results of which are judged to constitute a critical evaluation and analysis of a body of knowledge or an original contribution to knowledge.

> The options open to PhD examiners may be summarised as follows:
- to award the PhD (possibly requiring minor or typographical corrections which shall normally be completed within 4 weeks of the viva);
- to award the PhD (possibly requiring more substantial corrections which shall normally be completed within 6 months of the viva);
- not to award the PhD but to allow re-submission for a PhD with substantial changes (with payment of a full examination fee);
- not to approve the award of a PhD - no re-submission;
- not to award a PhD, but to award an MPhil;
- not to award a PhD, but allow re-submission for an MPhil (with payment of an examination fee).

The options open to MPhil examiners may be summarised as follows:
1. to award the MPhil (possibly requiring minor or typographical corrections which shall normally be completed within 4 weeks of the viva);
2. not to award the MPhil but to allow the candidate to re-submit the thesis for an MPhil with changes in detail or presentation (paying a reduced examination fee);
3. not to award the MPhil but to allow re-submission for an MPhil with substantial changes (with payment of a full examination fee);
4. not to approve the award of an MPhil-no re-submission.

The examiners will inform the candidate of their decision immediately after the viva. They will report formally to the Aberystwyth Registry (AQRO). AQRO will notify the student of the result. If the award has not been approved, the re-submission requirements will be outlined in this official notice.

If the thesis is not passed or is required to be re-written, it is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the exam board to ensure that the candidate is provided with detailed comments explaining the reasons why the thesis has not been passed and indicating in general terms what further work may be required of the candidate. The examiners will decide whether a second viva is required for students re-submitting their work for examination. This is not compulsory. Examiners can also offer advice to successful candidates on how the research might be prepared for publication.

Resubmission
Details of the resubmission procedure can be found at
https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/contents/theses/

Prior to Resubmitting
1   Candidate collects and completes an "Intention to Submit" form and the relevant Submission Documents as above.
2   Department completes their section and sends it to the AQRO again, no less than four weeks before resubmission of thesis. The same examiners should be used unless there is a valid reason for not doing so which should be noted by the Department in a covering letter.
3   AQRO contacts the External Examiner again so that he/she is prepared for arrival of thesis.
4   AQRO requests the Gold Certificate again. This is because up to a year may elapse between the date if the first Gold Certificate and the resubmission, during which time further debts may have been incurred.

Candidate Submits Thesis
1   Department receives two copies of the resubmitted thesis and checks that they are bound and presented correctly and contain the correct elements.
2   Department sends to the AQRO:
        ☐   2 copies of the thesis
        ☐   2 copies of the Notice of Candidature forms
        ☐   Loose summary sheet
        ☐   Cheque for the relevant resubmission fee

NB. Details of the most recent resubmission fees can be obtained from the AQRO.
1   AQRO despatches theses to correct examiners and informs Examination Co-ordinator, and the candidate as before.

Re-examination
2   The student must receive written, clear feedback on the points which the examiners felt warranted the decision that the thesis must be re-submitted. This feedback is normally provided by the internal examiner, but may be via the supervisor. It is then incumbent on the student to ensure that the re-submitted thesis clearly addresses these points.
3   A *viva voce* may be repeated if required.
4   Once the examination is complete, the department sends the Report and Result form to the Academic Office.

If the examiners fail to agree on what recommendation should be made, a second external examiner shall normally be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor, and the decision of the second examiner shall be final.

If the thesis is not passed at the examination, the candidate shall have the right to appeal against the decision of the examiners.

APPEALS, COMPLAINTS AND UNFAIR PRACTICE

Appeals

If the thesis is not passed at examination, the candidate shall have the right to appeal against the decision of the examiners as laid down in the Aberystwyth University's Appeals Procedure (Postgraduate Research Degrees) available from AQRO. The appeal must be made in writing, to the Academic Office, within two months of official notification of the result of the examination, on one or more of the following grounds.

1   defects or irregularities in the conduct of the examination;
2   exceptional personal circumstances affecting the candidate's performance which the candidate was unable, for good reasons, to inform the Examining Board of prior to its meeting;
3   evidence of prejudice, bias, or inadequate assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners;
4   inadequate supervision, which had not been previously reported for exceptional reasons.

Appeals which question the academic judgement of examiners are not admissible.

Complaints

The University has a formal complaints procedure or grievances concerning the University they should address them in the first instance to their supervisor. If they cannot be resolved at this level students should approach the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies, or Institute Director. If matters are not resolved at this level, or if this is not practicable, students can take their case to the Head of the Graduate School. Further information is also included in the University Code of Practice for Research Postgraduates.

Unacceptable Academic Practice

It is Unacceptable Academic Practice to commit any act whereby a person may obtain, for himself/herself or for another, an unpermitted advantage. The Regulation shall apply, and a student may be found to have committed Unacceptable Academic Practice, regardless of a student's intention and the outcome of the act, and whether the student acts alone or in conjunction with another/others. Any action or actions shall be deemed to fall within this definition, whether occurring during, or in relation to, a formal examination, a piece of coursework, the presentation of medical or other evidence to Examination Boards, or any form of assessment undertaken in pursuit of a University qualification or award.

The University recognises the following categories of Unacceptable Academic Practice. These are not exhaustive, and other cases may fall within the general definition of Unacceptable Academic Practice:

- Plagiarism: using another person's work and presenting it as one's own, whether intentionally or unintentionally;

- Collusion: when work that has been undertaken by or with others is submitted and passed off as solely the work of one person;

- Fabrication of evidence or data: Fabrication of evidence or data and/or use of such evidence or data in assessed work include making false claims to have carried out experiments, observations, interviews or other forms of data collection and analysis. Fabrication of evidence or data and/or use of such evidence or data also include presenting false or falsified evidence of special circumstances;

- Unacceptable Academic Practice in formal examinations: introduction of unauthorised material; copying from, or communicating with, any other person; communicating electronically with any other person; impersonating an examination candidate or allowing

oneself to be impersonated; presenting an examination script as one's own work when the script includes material produced by unauthorised means;

- Recycling of data or text: recycling of data or text in more than one assessment when it is explicitly not permitted by the Institute or Department.

The full Regulation on Unacceptable Academic Practice can be found here: https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/uap/.

Further information regarding good academic practice and referencing can be found here: https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/aberskills/ . If you are unsure, you must contact your department/institute for further guidance.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this handbook is up-to date, changes in University and Institute procedures, rules and regulations do occasionally occur, so please check any particular issue with IBERS PG Co-ordinator, the Graduate School or AU Academic Quality and Records Office.

GENERIC THESIS STRUCTURE

General Introduction

summarise and evaluate books, reviews, primary research articles, theses, etc
- define the gap in the literature
- define and justify your project
- clear statement of thesis aims

General Methods and Materials (if generic to thesis work)

define the method, theoretical approach, instrumentation
method of inquiry you will use
show links between your method and other methods
justify your method

Results (can be a number of defined experimental chapters)

report what you did, lists steps followed
document the analysis, showing how you carried it out
report what you found
prioritise sections for main body of thesis or appendix
synthesise results in illustrations, tables, graphs, etc.

General Discussion

interpret what you found
justify your interpretation with reference to other research findings

Recommendations

- for future research
- for future practice
report issues which were beyond the scope of this study

Generic Thesis Structure: Based on a scheme devised by Dr Rowena Murray, Centre for Academic Practice, University of Strathclyde.

NB AU now allows submission for a PhD by alternative (published material) formats – see http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student/pg-issues/research/alternateformatphdthesisinformation/

This generic structure provides a useful framework for thesis writing. It provides the basis whereby students can adapt a structure to suit an individual project. For example the results section can be subdivided into chapters or divisions. Where the thesis comprises a number of areas that uses essentially non-overlapping methodology the thesis may be divided into a general introduction, chapters each containing a brief introductory statement of aim, materials and methods, results and discussion. The thesis is then made coherent by a final general discussion chapter. Some information may be appropriately placed in Appendices for instance detailed methods of data analysis. Care should be taken in the use of appendices to ensure that critical results are not omitted from the main body of the text.

Specific items within a thesis
Although individual theses vary there are certain elements that are essential and others that are commonly adopted.

Abstract
This should contain a concise statement of the goals and outcomes of the study.

Table of Contents
This should be designed to help the reader locate a particular section quickly. A hierachical structure of chapter headings and sub-headings within each chapter is useful.

List of Figures and or Tables
A list of displayed items including title and page number is a helpful addition to future readers of the thesis.

List of Abbreviations
Any abbreviations that you use should be defined in a list at the front of the thesis. International committees often provide unambiguous abbreviations that form part of an international shorthand, non-standard abbreviations should be used sparingly and only if they save substantial space.

Acknowledgements
It is customary to include acknowledgements and some students may also opt to write a short dedication.

References
A poorly constructed reference list gives a bad impression and implies carelessness. The majority of examiners check the list for accuracy and ensure that citations in the text are included in the reference list and vice versa.
The most common scheme adopted for referencing is the 'Harvard System' which you can find on page 23. An alternative is to use a numbering scheme where citations are given a unique number, usually in square brackets. References should be numbered in the order in which they appear in the text. However, some caution is required and many believe that this system has little to commend it. Although good bibliographic software packages are available, mistakes are often made when adding further citations and in re-numbering successive ones. In addition numbers give no information at all about the work.

Whichever bibliographic presentation is used the format should be consistent throughout.

Where appropriate a list or collation of publications where the candidate is the author/co-author should be included.

Thesis Writing Style

You will have the opportunity to attend a brief training session on thesis writing style where the relative merits of structured writing and free writing will be discussed. You may find the handouts on writing style and punctuation of help in getting started.

Statistical Analyses

Correct use of P> normal levels of significance for biologists. 5%(*), 1% (**), 0.1%(***). Include ANOVA tables (unless very many) with raw data in an Appendix or on an accompanying CD. Remember to describe in the Methods section how you conducted the analyses (which programme, version etc, with reference citation). If an unusual type of analysis has been employed some further explanation of the method should be included.

Appendix

If it is necessary to include large amounts of original numerical data or details of a computer program these are often best included as an Appendix (plural Appendices). You should consider placing a CD in the back of the thesis if the raw data from your experiments are very extensive.

REFERENCING: THE HARVARD SYSTEM

Articles in Journals

Single author
- in the text: (Sautter, 1984)
- in the references section: Sautter, C. (1984) Immunocytochemical localization of isocitrate lyase and hydroxyruvates reducatse. *Journal of Ultrastructure Research* 89: 187-197.

Two authors
- in the text: (Plumley and Schmidt, 1987)
- in the references: Plumley, F.G. and Schmidt, G.W. (1987) Reconstruction of the chlorophyll *a/b* light-harvesting complexes: xanthophyll-dependent assembly and energy transfer. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA* 84: 146-148.

Three or more authors
- in the text: (Roberts, Thompson, Dumbroff, Gebstein and Mattoo, 1987) or (Roberts *et al.*, 1987) '*et al*' is the abbreviated form of '*et alia*' meaning 'and others'. Usually, multi authored references are quoted in full in the first instance, thereafter *'et al'* is used.
- in the references: Roberts, D.R., Thompson, J.E., Dumbroff, E.B., Gebstein, S. and Mattoo, A.K. (1987) Differential changes in the synthesis and steady-state levels of thylakoid proteins during leaf senescence. *Plant Molecular Biology* 9: 343-353.

Books
- The conventions for single, joint and multiple authorship citations in the text are as for Articles in Journals
- in the references: Sambrook, J., Fritsch, E. and Maniatis, T. (1989) Molecular cloning: A laboratory manual. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press. Cold Spring Harbor, New York. pp 71-85.
- referencing authorship of a chapter in an edited volume:
- in the text: the author(s) of the article are cited by NOT the editors
- in the references: Larsson, C. and Widell, S. (1987) Preparation of high purity plasma membranes. In: Packer, L. and Douce, R. (eds) Plant Cell Membranes. Academic Press, London, New York. pp 558-568.
- if a book has more than one edition, make it clear which edition you have used in the references.

Government Publications
- in the text: (DES, 1985)
- in the references: Department of Education and Science (1985) Better Schools., HMSO, London.

Conference Proceedings

The use of quotations and citations
- where quotations are used, they should be clearly referenced as described above

- if quoting more than one reference in the text, quote the earliest first i.e. (Smith, 1968; Williams and Brown, 1977; Smith and Jones, 1985)
- where you quote work from a review article without reading the primary source:-
- in the text: (Brown, 1987; as cited in Smith, 1994)
- in the references: should only include the reference to Smith (1994)

Referencing from the internet
- quote the citation in the text as above
- in the references: include authors, date, title and http address

The organisation of references
In the references all materials should be listed alphabetically for each author: single authored items first, joint authorship second and multiple authors third. Within each authored section, items should be listed in date order.

If two or more references have the same authorship and date, they should be listed with a lower case letter after the date:-
- in the text: (Woods, 1978a; b) or (Woods, 1978b) where appropriate
- in the references: Woods, P. (1978a) etc. followed by Woods, P. (1978b) etc.

Guidelines for writing your PhD Thesis
The University requirements for thesis presentation are generic and the aim of this document is to provide more detailed guidelines, which you are recommended to follow. As such this represents an IBERS "house style" of which external examiners will be made aware.

The University rules (from the pink 'Enabling Regulations' booklet)
You should read this booklet carefully yourself, especially pp. 4-7 and Appendix 1. Here are the key points (remember that 'shall' means 'must'):-

1. Every candidates research shall be completed by the presentation of a thesis (**normally not exceeding 100,000 words,** excluding Appendices and genuine footnotes) which embodies the methods and results of the research.

2. At submission, the candidate must hand in (to Michelle Allen) **two bound copies** of the thesis, each of which shall contain:

> (i) a **summary** not exceeding 300 words;
> (ii) a **statement signed by the candidate** showing the extent to which the work submitted is the result of the candidate's own investigation; acknowledgement of other sources shall be made by footnotes giving explicit references.

A full bibliography should be appended to the work:
> (iii) a **signed statement** regarding the availability of the thesis.

In addition, candidates must provide a copy of the summary on the submission form, two copies of the 'Notice of candidature' forms.

3. The thesis may be presented in a temporary (soft) binding "sufficiently strong to withstand transit to and from the examiners" and must bear on the spine, in a form which cannot easily be erased, the candidate's name, institution attended and the degree for which s/he is a candidate. (No ring-binding etc).

4. Theses shall be presented in permanent and legible form in typescript, not less that 12 point (does not apply to Figures and Tables). Use double or 1.5 spacing (summary may be single spaced) on one side of A4 paper.

General arrangements
Theses should contain well-planned critical experiments. Experimental projects should report the student's own work (if assistance is received, this should be acknowledged in the appropriate part of the text and in the acknowledgements section). Results that are not the student's own should be clearly identified. Laboratory notebooks should be retained in case they need to be referred to later.

Theses in IBERS should generally be 200-350 pages in length (including Tables, Figures and Bibliography but not Appendices). Longer theses prove difficult to bind and can be tedious to read. Less relevant/readable material (e.g. raw data, statistical analyses [if numerous], DNA sequences, recipes for media/assays etc.) should be placed in Appendices. Where these become bulky, consider placing all the data on a CD in an envelope taped into the back of the thesis.

Leave a margin of about 4 cm on the left hand side of each page (to allow for binding). All other margins should be 2.5 cm. Use 70g/m^2 to 100g/m^2 paper (but remember that thicker paper makes for more difficult binding). Most candidates use Times New Roman or Helvetica font, justified, no less than 12 pt. All pages, including Figures and Tables, should be numbered consecutively starting with the first page of chapter 1. The index, acknowledgements etc. should be numbered in Roman numerals.

Specific issues of presentation
Time spent on presentation of your thesis is time very well spent. The examiners of your thesis will **aim** to get to the heart of the work you have done and assess the validity of your experimental approach and the way you have interpreted your data. **However,** a thesis that is difficult to follow, or riddled with typographical errors or inconsistencies of terminology, will distract the examiners from their task and can be a cause for serious concern and may predispose the examiners to recommend that an extensive revision be undertaken. This guide will not cover all issues. Sometimes there is no clear "right way" to do things – in such cases opt for one method and **be consistent** through the thesis.

Headings and titles
Headings help the author in ordering subject matter and assist the reader in navigating around the thesis. Excessive subdivision should be avoided. The components of the thesis should follow a logical system of numbering, eg:-

1. CHAPTER TITLE
Chapter titles should be in bold upper case letters, not underlined or punctuated, and should give the chapter number and its title (eg INTRODUCTION or RESULTS etc)

1.1 MAIN SECTION HEADINGS
Main section headings should be in capital letters as above, not underlined, indented or punctuated. The number attached to each main section heading should give the chapter and section numbers, followed by the main section heading, as shown

1.1.1. Sub-section titles
Divisions of main sections should be preceded by their chapter numbers, their main section number and their own section number, as shown (i.e. not punctuated or underlined). The first letter of each word in the subsection title should be in capitals; the remainder should be in lower case. The whole heading should be in bold typeface. Each subsection of a main section should be followed by a new paragraph.

1.1.1.1. *Further sub-divisions (sub-subsection titles)*
Avoid this level of sub-division if possible. If necessary, these should be in italics.

Nomenclature
In the naming of animals and plants the International Rules of Zoological and Botanical Nomenclature must be used. Generic and specific names are italicised. When first mentioned, the name should be followed by the species authority and the date: e.g. *Fasciola hepatica* Lin. 1785. If a species has been transferred to a new genus the species authority is placed in parentheses, e.g. *Ixodes ricinus* (Lin.1746). For most species the date is now frequently omitted. For widely used organisms (e.g. *Arabidopsis thaliana)* strain and source should be stated. In these that contain large number of species names (e.g. surveys), the student should consult the supervisor for the best method of citation. Generic names must be abbreviated on repetition, e.g. *F. hepatica,* provided this does not lead to ambiguity, (e.g. *Dicrocoelium dendriticum* and *Diphyllobothrium dendriticum.* Could be written as *Dic.* or *Dip. dentriticum).* Phyla have a capital letter, e.g. Acanthocephala, but the anglicised versions do not, e.g. acanthocephalans. Guidance on nomenclature of micro-organisms will be given

by individual supervisors.   For many organisms there are disagreements as to nomenclature so make sure you use a **recent** source and cite this.

Style and wording
These should have three qualities: clarity, simplicity and brevity. Choose words that have precise meanings and forms of expression with only one interpretation. Every sentence should be simple and concise, so consider the value of each word, delete all redundant words, sentences and even paragraphs and <u>avoid repetition.</u> Avoid long paragraphs. It is considered more stylish to write out small numbers (<10) at the start of the sentences (e.g. One ml HC1 was added…). Avoid the use of footnotes. Words originating from Latin or (less so) Greek can have strange plural forms (e.g. antenna/antennae; spectrum/spectra; focus/foci; genus/genera). With the exception of a very few people who suffered Latin at school, these are a pain but do try your best to conform to the rules (correct plurals given in any dictionary-spellcheckers are also helpful).

Punctuation
The main function of punctuation is to make perfectly clear the construction of the written words. If this function is properly fulfilled the risk of ambiguity will be avoided. Do not be afraid to use commas, colons and semi-colons, but make sure you use them properly.

Tables and Figures
It is normally advisable to prepare each Table or Figure (note capitals) on a separate page (if possible, in the normal orientation of the text), although small Tables may be incorporated in the text and small Figures may be grouped. Both should be numbered in sequence within each chapter, prefixed by the chapter number (e.g. Table 5.1, Figure 6,4). Each Table must be numbered and provided with a heading that should be self-explanatory (so that the reader has some idea of what data are being presented without reference to the accompanying text). Any abbreviations or symbols used should be explained below the heading. If you are presenting numerical data, ask yourself whether any statistical analysis should have been conducted. These should be included as necessary in all Figures and Tables (e.g. standard errors / standard deviations).

Figures, which may be graphs, drawings, maps should be produced using a graphics package or drawn in black ink. Photographs should ideally be digitised and printed with a good quality inkjet printer at high resolution on photo-quality paper (not card). Several figures (a composite Figure) can be arranged on a page if necessary. Where relevant the scale of magnification should be given alongside the Figure. Maps and photomicrographs should always include a scale. Tally lines should take the shortest route from the feature to be labelled to the outside of the column of names. The use of previously published Figures and Tables is acceptable provided the full source is given (and in the case of maps permission is granted). A title and a legend to explain each Figure should be given at the bottom of the page or on a separate facing page; it should explain any abbreviations used in the Figure.

Abbreviations, symbols and measurements
Letter symbols, signs and abbreviations must be in accordance with the British Standard 1991 (available in library) or <u>Units, Symbols and Abbreviations</u> (SI UNITS) Ed. George Ellis 1971, Abbreviations should be used sparingly and spelt out in full on first use. Your thesis should contain a glossary of abbreviations after the index.
All measurements should be given in S.I. units, e.g. 1 µm not 1 µ; 1 nm not 1 mµ (see Barrass, 1978 for details). Note that there is a space between the number and the unit (except for e.g. 30⁰C and 75%). Unit abbreviations are the same in both the singular and plural (e.g. 1 ml and 10 ml) and are not followed by a full stop. Derived units should use superscript numerals (e.g. cm s^{-1}) rather than the solidus (cm/sec)

The following is a list of some of the more common abbreviations: metre (m); minute (min); centimetre (cm); hour (h); millimetre (mm); day (d); week (wk); litre (l); year (yr); millilitre (ml); tonne (t); gram (g); hectare (ha); kilogram (kg); square metre (m^2); milligram (mg); joule (J); second (s); megajoule (MJ); nucleotide (nt); base pair (bp); kilobase pair (kb); megabase pair (Mb).

Use of powers
Avoid the use of an excessive number of zeros. It may be possible to change the unit (eg. 0.00015 M is better expressed as 0.15mM) using the S.I. system. Alternatively powers can be used, e.g.

300,000 can be expressed as 3×10^5 or using the S.I. system 300K. Care is needed to avoid confusion if powers are used in Tables or Figures. The power of 10 in the Table heading is the power by which <u>the value has been multiplied</u>. In a table an entry of "2" under a heading 10^3r, means the value of r is 0.002; and entry of "2" under a heading 10^{-3} r means the value of r is 2000. Similarly on a graph axis, a value of 3.3 on an axis labelled 1/T x 10^3 means the real value of 1/T is 0.0033.

UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

<u>Library Registration</u>

All students at the University are entitled to register as borrowers at the Hugh Owen Library. To receive your Information Services card you have to fill in the appropriate form (available from the library) and return it with one passport sized photograph, preferably colour. This card should be presented whenever you borrow or return books and you are responsible for all books issued on your card. This card is also used for access to the 24 hour computer rooms and to obtain credit for photocopying. If you lose your IS card please inform the Loans Enquiry desk immediately so that the card may be blocked, please note the cost of a replacement card is £8. As a postgraduate you are entitled to borrow up to 40 books for a period of up to 6 months at a time, although they may be recalled after 7 days by another reader. Books returned late or not returned on a recall will be subject to a fine. Further information: Loans Enquiry Desk, Hugh Owen Library or Lucy O'Donnell , Lending Services Librarian tel: 2400 email: luo@aber.ac.uk

<u>Careers Advisory Service (CAS)</u>

The CAS is located in Llandinam Building on Penglais Campus. It is open from 10.00-17.00 h Monday to Thursday and 10.00-16.30 on Fridays. The Careers Service website https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/careers/ is updated frequently to alert you to our programme of talks skills workshops and aptitude tests, job vacancies and links to employer sites. Their Website has advice on job-seeking skills, such as drafting effective CVs and application forms, interview technique, etc. Should you need further funding to support your studies, a package called Funderfinder and other information is available in the Library. Their Job Link Office (in the Street in the Union building) will advise on opportunities for part-time work in the Aberystwyth area. One to one discussions of your plans with a careers adviser (in English or Welsh) are bookable in advance or you may use the Quick Query service. We are happy to deal with any request: from a wish for a second opinion on a CV to helping those who are totally perplexed about the future! PROSPECTS Planner is available on the Campus network (under courseware) and provides an excellent means of assessing the transferable skills you have to offer an employer. It also offers an effective way of matching those skills to graduate jobs – but only to those jobs that are not specifically related to degree discipline. Postgraduates are advised to use the CAS at the earliest opportunity so that they may plan their job seeking strategy in good time and do not miss early closing dates in September/October.

<u>International English Centre</u>

The International English Centre provides English language and academic skills tuition for students of AU. Professionally experienced staff work in co-operation with academic departments to help students achieve their full potential.
During the academic year a range of seminars and workshops focusing on key language and skills issues is offered free to students. Special seminars are available for postgraduate students to improve their writing style or to organise information effectively for dissertations or theses, or to improve their presentation skills. Students may contact the centre to request an individual consultation.

Pre-entry courses are available for non-native speakers of English, focusing on the skills which are required for effective study e.g. academic writing, giving presentations, listening accurately. Emphasis is placed on the cultural and academic adjustments needed for successful study in Britain. Short courses are offered to students who have a good level of English but recognise the benefits of additional preparation. Longer courses (from a few weeks to a whole year) are offered to students who have not yet fulfilled the University English language requirements.

For further details about our programmes contact the International English Centre, Penglais Campus, AU. E-mail tesol@aber.ac.uk view the website at: http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/international-english/ and also https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-learning-support/.

<u>Computer Access Registration</u>

You can activate your computer account by using an activation programme available on all the public area room computers. Full instructions on activation are available from the Hugh Owen Help Desk (E Floor Hugh Owen Library). You need to know your student reference number to register. Your number will be available within a few days of the start of term from the Academic Office or the Help Desk (you will be asked to show some form of identification). Your number is also on your library card. Your computer account will last for the period of your studies. The Help Desk is available to answer any queries concerning activation and computing facilities at the times and locations given below:

Hugh Owen Library	Monday – Thursday	8.30am - 12.00 am
	Friday	8.30am - 9.30 pm
	Saturday	10.00noon - 6.00 pm
	Sunday	10.00noon - 6.00 pm
Thomas Parry Library	Monday – Friday	8.30am – 10.00 pm
	Saturday	10.00noon – 6.00 pm
	Sunday	10.00noon – 6.00 pm

Telephone Number: 01970 622474
Email: is@aber.ac.uk
Web page for assistance: http://www.inf.aber.ac.uk/advisory/faqs

Once you have activated your computer account, put yourself on the Postgraduate e-mail list by e-mailing Michelle Allen, myd@aber.ac.uk. Michelle will then ensure that you have been added to the mailing list. This electronic mail list has been set up so that you can send e-mail messages to all other postgraduates in the Institute simply by sending your message to ibers-postgrads in the To: line of the message. Important messages to postgraduates may also be distributed in this way so check your e-mail regularly.

Stuart Beckley, Student Admin Team (SAT), Edward Llwyd Building (email: stb@aber.ac.uk, tel. 2316) is responsible for maintaining the mailing lists.

Computer Courses

The following free half-day courses are available in the Teaching Room, Hugh Owen Library:
Computing Essentials; Word; Excel; Access; Email; Web; Electronic information sources; UNIX; Powerpoint.

<u>Student Support and Welfare Services</u>

Student Welcome Centre

The Student Welcome Centre houses the Advice, Information and Money Service; the Wellbeing Service and the Accessibility Service and is your one-stop shop for advice and information on a range of support.

Our Welcome Desk is your first port of call for general enquiries about these services and the desk is open Monday to Thursday, 9am–5pm and Friday, 9am–4pm.

Further information can be found here: https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-support/

Advice, Information and Money Service

The Student Advice, Information and Money Service provides information, advice, support and referral on a wide range of issues. If you are unsure about where to go for advice or assistance

please contact us. No issue is too big or too small. Our service is confidential, nonjudgmental and free of charge. We have a weekday drop-in service (see website for details) or you can make an appointment with a Student Adviser by contacting the Student Welcome Desk.

The student advisers are accredited with The National Association of Student Money Advisers (NASMA) and are able to offer professional advice on money management or any issues with Student Finance. They can also give advice and guidance on any queries relating to accommodation, academic progress, University procedures or eligibility for hardship funds.

Accessibility Service

The University welcomes applications from disabled students and those with specific learning differences, and considers them on the same academic grounds as those for other candidates. We advise you to consider, before applying, the requirements of your chosen course, identifying any elements that might present particular difficulties. We recommend that you visit the University campus and your department of choice to investigate the support that may be available, explore facilities and discuss specific needs.

Our Accessibility Advisers are happy to help before you apply. It is important that you contact your department and our advisers as early as possible as it may take time to arrange adjustments and organise support. We also recommend that you contact our Accessibility Advisers to discuss a study needs assessment and to get advice on grants, such as the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). Our advisers can arrange support workers, including for example, one-to-one study skills support and mentors. Individual examination arrangements may be available for students with a range of impairments including specific learning differences such as dyslexia and dyspraxia.

Our Accessibility Service also supports care leavers and can arrange support from a peer mentor for those students who are finding settling into University challenging.

Student Wellbeing Services

The Student Wellbeing Service provides advice and guidance on a range of health matters, including emotional and sexual well-being, and includes support for mental health and counselling provision. The Student Wellbeing Service is in addition to, but not a substitute for, your own GP. Although we work closely with local GPs and hospital services to ensure that you get good care and attention when needed, it is important that you register with a local GP practice on arrival in Aberystwyth. Services are available during Semester 1 and 2 Monday to Thursday, 9am–4.30pm and Friday, 9am–4pm, with a more limited service available over the Summer.

In addition to the services located in the Student Welcome Centre support is also available from:

The International Office

The International Office offers a comprehensive range of services to international students from organising welcome events to specialised immigration advice. Further information is available from our international pages https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/international/.

Visa and Immigration Advice
Our International Student Adviser can help with all types of study visa applications, Schengen visas for those that are travelling to Europe as well as provide information and advice on other immigration issues, email contact immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk.

International Office Trips
The International Office organises a social programme which allows students to enjoy trips and events all year round. Day trips are organised to places around Wales at the weekends, such as Cardiff, St Davids, Portmeirion and Harlech Castle. We also offer short afternoon trips to beauty spots close to Aberystwyth, and in the past have included visits to Aberaeron, Nant yr Arian and the Elan Valley. All trips are very low cost and give our students a chance to enjoy visiting places outside Aberystwyth while meeting new friends. The trips are open to all students, home and international, and are very popular so early booking is recommended to avoid disappointment.

One World Week
One World Week is an annual Aberystwyth University event celebrating the diverse culture of our university. Previous celebrations have included the One World Gala Evening, with traditional dancing and music, political debates, international film afternoons and a World Fair with food and drink samples from student's home countries, with traditional menus served in our University restaurant TaMed Da. This is a student driven event held in collaboration with the Students' Union and requires your input! Meetings to organise One World Week will be held from October onwards so come and join in and make sure that your country and culture is shared by us all.

Halal provision
Our catered establishments offer a selection of hot and cold dishes that are suitable for a Halal diet. All food is clearly marked for ease of identification.

Multi-faith and prayer room spaces
There are faith spaces available for prayer on the Penglais and Llanbadarn Campuses. The Penglais Campus prayer room is situated in the Faith Centre, Arts Centre. The Llanbadarn Campus prayer room is above the Blas Padarn cafeteria, room number 1.01.

Students' Union Advice Service

The Students' Union Advice Service offers free, confidential and independent advice to all Aberystwyth students. Students' Union Advisors are trained staff that can help you with a range of issues and specialise in providing advice and support on University processes and procedures. SU Advisors can also act as an independent advocate for you in meetings and hearings.

You can just drop in to speak to an Advisor – just ask at the Students' Union reception or head to the back offices on the ground floor or you can contact us online or via email: union.advice@aber.ac.uk. Check out Abersu.co.uk/advice for more information.

Help and Assistance with Accommodation

If you have any problems in your room or flat, e.g. you are locked out, are unwell, need a repair or have a problem with a neighbour, we have staff on hand 24 hours a day to help. All Residences are served by the Residences Team, and you can also contact our friendly porters out of office hours. For more information please refer to the following webpages:
https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/accommodation/living-residences/help/

Resident Assistants
As a fellow student, your Resident Assistant is here to provide support and guidance to create a positive living and learning environment and ensure that the residential community you live in can flourish. This may include guidance on resolving flat disputes, how to combat exam stress, or simply where to find the best cup of coffee in Aber! If they can't help or don't know the answer, they'll signpost you to someone who can. They can also put you in touch with a whole host of events, activities, sports and entertainment provided by the Students' Union and Sport Aber, to enhance your student experience. In addition to this, throughout the year, they will be arranging small residential events between flats and in the communal spaces around your accommodation, giving you the opportunity to meet new people and perhaps try something new.

Each Resident Assistant is responsible for their own 'patch' of students and they will be on hand over the Big Welcome Weekend, and the weeks that follow, to help you settle into your accommodation. Throughout the year your RA will call in to see how things are going, check if you have any worries or concerns that they can help with and provide you with up to date information on all the amazing events and activities that are going on around campus and within your residence.

However, if at any point you need someone to chat to, or you have a concern and your just not sure who to speak to, you can contact the Res Life team through the 24 hour Campus Life Helpline on 01970 622900 and we will arrange for your RA to call round.

Further information can be found here: https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/accommodation/

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuing professional development (CPD) is an expected component of professional working life and, therefore, engaging with CPD is a normal part of your postgraduate training. CPD will help you to achieve your potential both academically and personally, as well of giving you hands-on experience of a transferable professional process that will meet throughout your chosen career. The Aberystwyth University CPD reflects the requirements of many UK professional associations and is further underpinned by the Research Councils Joint Skills Statement (JSS).

In IBERS you will be supported in the CPD by your supervisors and assessor, during your regular review meetings. CPD will give you the opportunity to reflect on your learning, achievement and skills both in your academic work and in your wider life, and plan for your future personal and professional development within this structured and supportive framework.

The skills self-assessment within the CPD process will help you to identify your individual training requirements, and provide a platform to plan an individual training programme each year with support from your supervisors and assessor. It is important that you keep an individual training record of all training activities you undertake, and please use the Training Record Form available at **http://www.aber.ac.uk/postgrads/en/cpd.shtml.**