

Introduction and Welcome

Congratulations on your decision to embark on a research degree here at Newcastle! I'm delighted you're here. Your degree will position you at the cutting edge of research in your field, and you'll be challenging yourself in all sorts of ways. If you ever start to worry that completing your degree is just too tough, just remember that we wouldn't have offered you a place if we didn't think you have what it takes to succeed. It's going to be a really stimulating time for you, and we're really pleased to be part of it.

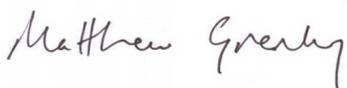
One of my jobs is to ensure that the University is doing its bit to ensure your success here. We have a carefully designed and very comprehensive package of support for you as you proceed through your degree. You'll find support in your School or Institute, from individual academics, and most obviously your supervisors. Our Professional Services colleagues are also here to help you navigate the degree. Each of our three Faculties has support structures in place. Faculties have Graduate Schools with staff who'll be responsible for assuring your progress. And we have a dedicated team based in the Doctoral College to support PGR students across the University. The Doctoral College can help you to gain the skills you need to advance your goals and enhance your career prospects. There's a Research Enhancement Fund for instance, which can provide bursaries and awards to support things like conference attendance, research in the field, student enterprise and so on. And of course you'll get advice, encouragement and friendship from other students in your community. You should also know that Newcastle University Students' Union has a dedicated Postgrad Officer, who can help you engage with the research student community and its activities and will be pleased to hear from you.

In this Handbook you'll find our policies and procedures, various guidelines, and our codes of practice. Some of these might not seem relevant as you start your degree but will be useful as you reach new stages of your work. Some sections are crucial reading now though, and we urge you to take a look as you begin your studies. There is advice here on choosing your topic for example and establishing good relationships with your supervisors. In fact, we hope that supervisors as well as students will read the handbook: there's great advice for everyone, including a whole section on 'Guidelines for Research Students and Supervisors'. Maybe that's the last thing for me to emphasise. Your experience here will be shaped by your relationship with your supervisory team, with other academics, with our postgraduate support teams, and with other students. As a research student at Newcastle, you're part of a community. It's something that will support you, but also something that you can help to shape.

Let me sign off by saying again how welcome you are here, wherever you've come from. I hope you have a wonderful, exciting, and enriching time here during your degree, and I wish you every success.

Professor Matthew Grenby

Prof-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation



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Postgraduate Officer, Newcastle University Students' Union

