Queen Mary
University of London

BLIZARD INSITUTE
POSTGRADUATE
RESEARCH
STUDENT
HANDBOOK

2023-24
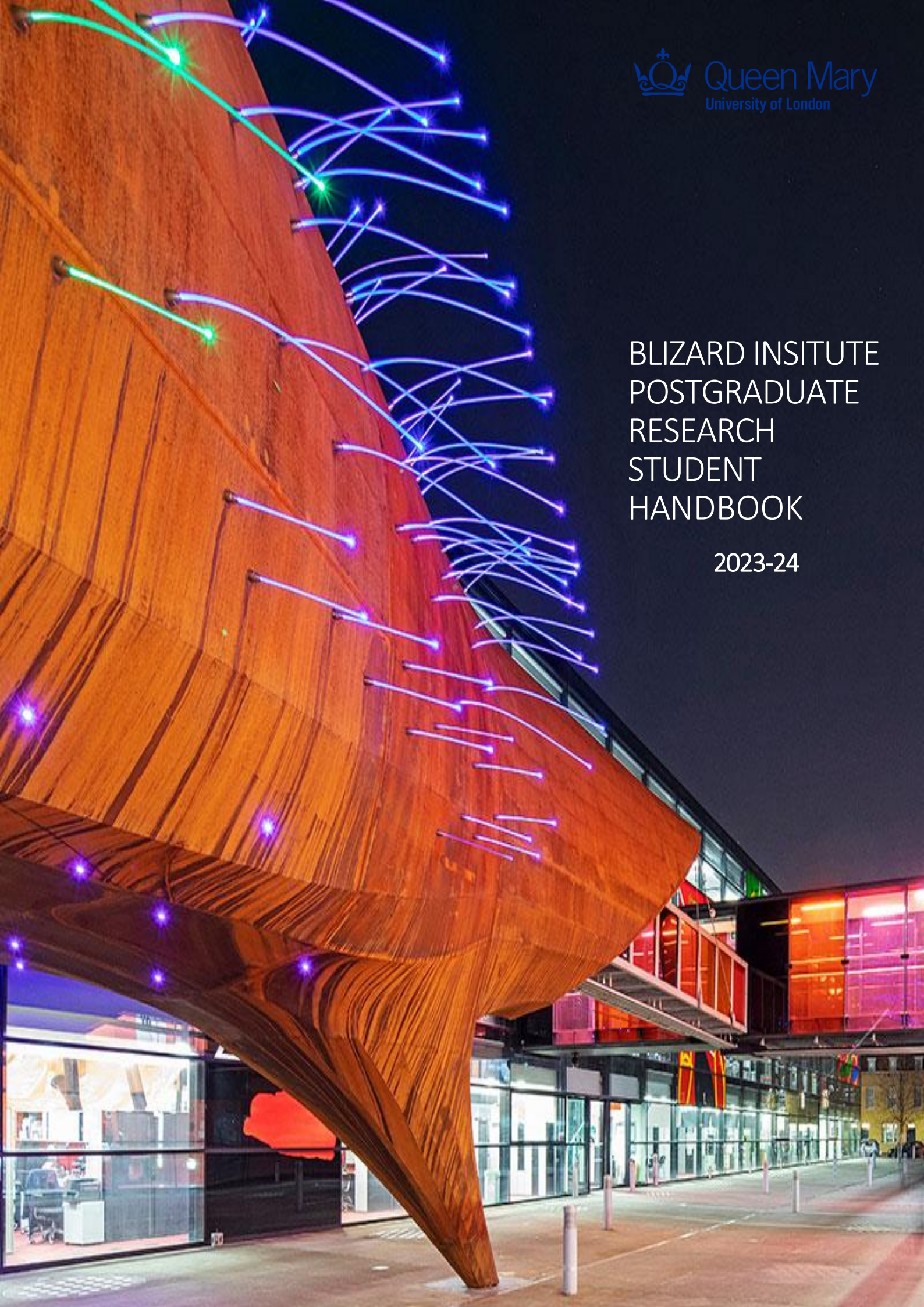
Contents

Introduction to the Blizard

In 1785, Sir William Blizard founded England's first hospital-based medical school at The London Hospital in Whitechapel, offering a new kind of medical education that taught theory as well as clinical skills. The Blizard Institute was established more than two centuries later, with Sir William's commitment to teaching and research continuing to inspire what we do today.

Institute Director

The Blizard Institute is led by Professor Mary Collins and is part of the Whitechapel campus of The Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

We constitute a world class biomedical research institute that integrates all stages of research from basic science through to clinical studies across a diverse range of fields including genomics, cell biology, translational immunology, neuroscience and trauma. Our research addresses the health needs of our local population, while delivering new treatments on a global scale.

Our research and commitment to high quality training and education aims to cultivate ideas to develop the next generation of scientists and clinicians, and deliver novel biomedical solutions to real-world issues.

The institute has five centres.

Centre for Cell Biology and Cutaneous Research led by Professor David Kelsell

Centre for Genomics and Child Health led by Professor Inderjeet Dokal

Centre for Immunobiology led by Professor Adrian Martineau
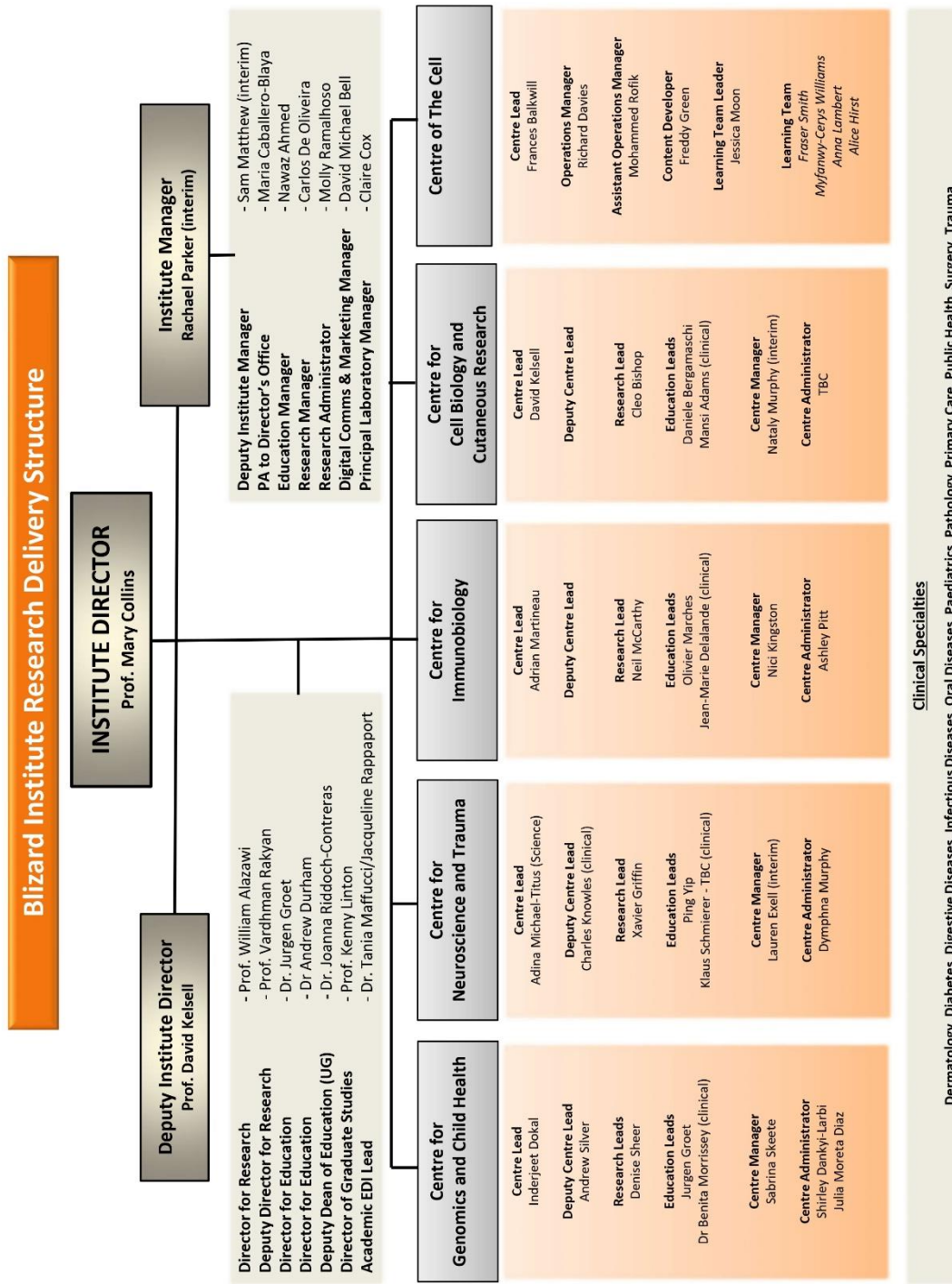
Centre for Neuroscience, Surgery and Trauma led by Professor Adina Michael-Titus

Centre of the Cell led by Professor Francis Balkwill

Blizard Institute Research Delivery Structure

Blizard Institute Research Delivery Structure

INSTITUTE DIRECTOR
Prof. Mary Collins

Institute Manager
Rachael Parker (interim)

Deputy Institute Director
Prof. David Kelsell

Director for Research — Prof. William Alazawi
Deputy Director for Research — Prof. Vardhman Rakyan
Director for Education — Dr. Jurgen Groet
Director for Education — Dr Andrew Durham
Deputy Dean of Education (UG) — Dr. Joanna Riddoch-Contreras
Director of Graduate Studies — Prof. Kenny Linton
Academic EDI Lead — Dr. Tania Maffucci/Jacqueline Rappaport

Deputy Institute Manager — Sam Matthew (interim)
PA to Director's Office — Maria Caballero-Blaya
Education Manager — Nawaz Ahmed
Research Manager — Carlos De Oliveira
Research Administrator — Molly Ramalhoso
Digital Comms & Marketing Manager — David Michael Bell
Principal Laboratory Manager — Claire Cox

Centre for Genomics and Child Health

Centre Lead
Inderjeet Dokal

Deputy Centre Lead
Andrew Silver

Research Leads
Denise Sheer

Education Leads
Jurgen Groet
Dr Benita Morrissey (clinical)

Centre Manager
Sabrina Skeete

Centre Administrator
Shirley Dankyi-Larbi
Julia Moreta Diaz

Centre for Neuroscience and Trauma

Centre Lead
Adina Michael-Titus (Science)

Deputy Centre Lead
Charles Knowles (clinical)

Research Lead
Xavier Griffin

Education Leads
Ping Yip
Klaus Schmierer - TBC (clinical)

Centre Manager
Lauren Exkel (interim)

Centre Administrator
Dymphna Murphy

Centre for Immunobiology

Centre Lead
Adrian Martineau

Deputy Centre Lead

Research Lead
Neil McCarthy

Education Leads
Olivier Marches
Jean-Marie Delalande (clinical)

Centre Manager
Nici Kingston

Centre Administrator
Ashley Pitt

Centre for Cell Biology and Cutaneous Research

Centre Lead
David Kelsell

Deputy Centre Lead

Research Lead
Cleo Bishop

Education Leads
Daniele Bergamaschi
Mansi Adams (clinical)

Centre Manager
Nataly Murphy (interim)

Centre Administrator
TBC

Centre of The Cell

Centre Lead
Frances Balkwill

Operations Manager
Richard Davies

Assistant Operations Manager
Mohammed Rofik

Content Developer
Freddy Green

Learning Team Leader
Jessica Moon

Learning Team
Fraser Smith
Myfanwy-Cerys Williams
Anna Lambert
Alice Hirst

Clinical Specialties
Dermatology, Diabetes, Digestive Diseases, Infectious Diseases, Oral Diseases, Paediatrics, Pathology, Primary Care, Public Health, Surgery, Trauma

Key Contacts

Professor William Alazawi **(Director of Research)**

The Director of Research ensures that the Blizard maintains its consistently high standards in all elements of research activity, and that staff are appropriately supported and trained for their academic duties.

Professor Kenneth Linton (**Director of Graduate Studies)**

The Director of Research Graduate Studies oversees all PGR related matters at the Blizard Institute and generally deals with more significant matters (for example: interruption requests, approval of progression reports, problems with your supervisory team, concerns about bullying or harassment).

Email: k.j.linton@qmul.ac.uk

Molly Ramalhoso **(PGR and Research Administrator)**

As research administrator, I am your first point of contact for institute based administrative queries. I provide administrative support to the Director of Graduate Studies, academic supervisors as well as PGR students. I am always on hand to assist with any matters relating to your studies so please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Email: m.ramalhoso@qmul.ac.uk

Supervisors

It is very important that you know who your primary and secondar supervisors are and that you are in regular contact with them.

You should contact them in the first place regarding:

- Project related concerns,
- Reviewing work,
- Clarification of expectations and requirements,
- Queries about interrupting your studies or withdrawing,
- Sickness, absence & annual leave.

Centres

When you join the Blizard, you will join one of our four Centres. The staff both academic and professional are also here to assist you during your time with us, however you are more likely to be in contact with your Centre managers and Centre administrators.

Centre Managers

- Expenditure requiring use of Centre purchasing card (e.g. conference registration)
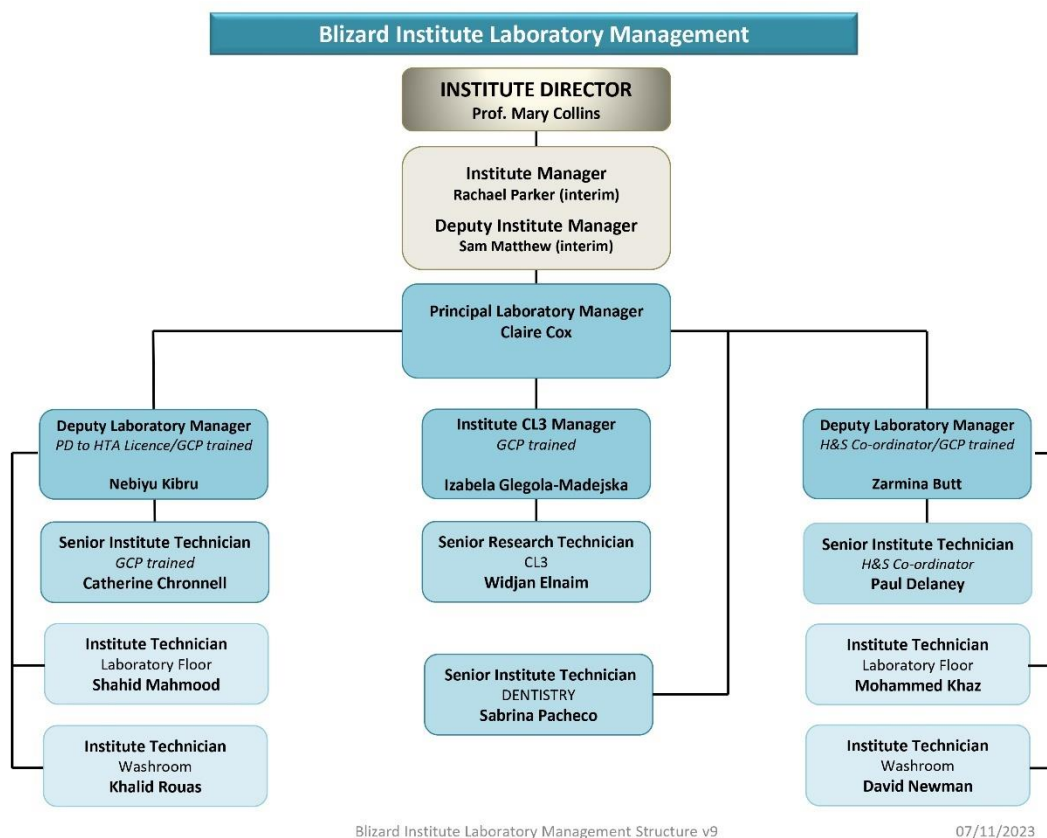- Initial contact for human resource issues

Centre for Cell Biology and Cutaneous Research (CBCR) Nataly Murphy (interim) n.murphy@qmul.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7882 5039	Centre for Genomics and Child Health (GCH) Sabrina Skeete s.skeete@qmul.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7882 2619
Centre for Immunobiology (CfI) Nici Kingston n.j.kingston@qmul.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7882 7191	Centre for Neuroscience, Surgery and Trauma (NST) Lauren Exell (interim) l.exell@qmul.ac.uk

Centre Administrators

- Requesting new college accounts + ID cards
- Ordering. *PGR Students often get Agresso access to place your own orders, however if you need an order raised Centre Admins are the correct contacts*
- Travel organisation and expenses (for conferences etc)
- Local computer issues

Centre for Cell Biology and Cutaneous Research (CBCR) Nataly Murphy n.murphy@qmul.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7882 5039	Centre for Genomics and Child Health (GCH) Shirley Dankyi-Larbi s.dankyi-larbi@qmul.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7882 2615 Julia Moreta Diaz j.moretadiaz@qmul.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7882 2618
Centre for Immunobiology (CfI) Ashley Pitt a.kingston@qmul.ac.uk	Centre for Neuroscience, Surgery and Trauma (NST) Dymphna Murphy d.murphy@qmul.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7882 5039

Laboratory Management

Blizard Institute Laboratory Management

INSTITUTE DIRECTOR
Prof. Mary Collins

Institute Manager
Rachael Parker (interim)

Deputy Institute Manager
Sam Matthew (interim)

Principal Laboratory Manager
Claire Cox

Deputy Laboratory Manager
PD to HTA Licence/GCP trained
Nebiyu Kibru

Senior Institute Technician
GCP trained
Catherine Chronnell

Institute Technician
Laboratory Floor
Shahid Mahmood

Institute Technician
Washroom
Khalid Rouas

Institute CL3 Manager
GCP trained
Izabela Glegola-Madejska

Senior Research Technician
CL3
Widjan Elnaim

Senior Institute Technician
DENTISTRY
Sabrina Pacheco

Deputy Laboratory Manager
H&S Co-ordinator/GCP trained
Zarmina Butt

Senior Institute Technician
H&S Co-ordinator
Paul Delaney

Institute Technician
Laboratory Floor
Mohammed Khaz

Institute Technician
Washroom
David Newman

Blizard Institute Laboratory Management Structure v9   07/11/2023

Our lab management team are on hand to assist you during your time with us.

- Health and Safety:
  Zarmina Butt and Paul Delaney are Health and Safety coordinators for the labs.

- Use of equipment
  Students should email blizard-lab-man@qmul.ac.uk

- Help with lab problems.
  Students should either email blizard-lab-man@qmul.ac.uk or see Mohamed Khaz and Shahid Mahmood who are based on the lab floor.

- Ordering consumables.
  The lab man team currently only order gloves, ethanol, and paper rolls for groups to buy back from us. This is due to expand in the future. Either Centre admins or groups buy their own consumables.

Please see our Blizard Lab Man Notebook page:
Blizard Laboratory Management Notebook

Progression

It is expected that there are regular meetings between students and supervisors and it is encouraged that notes are taken and actions agreed. At least 10 times a year notes of the meeting are logged in MySIS by the student and approved/commented upon by supervisor. In this way there is a record of regular supervision of use to student and supervisor. For PGRs studying with us on Tier 4 visas, this will also fulfil the need to demonstrate regular contact.

Progression is a formal process that reviews and assesses student development. The recommendation of the progression panel must be approved by the DGS for the student to continue to the next stage/period of their research studies programme. The minimum progression points for a full-time student occur between **6 to 9 months**, **15 to 18 months,** and **27 to 30 months**. For part-time students the normal progression points occur between **12 to 18 months**, **30 to 36 months,** and **54 to 60 months** with the same requirement. The 6 to 9 month progression point is undertaken in accordance with the approved requirements for the research studies programme and will include the submission of written work and an oral examination. **Please note that the examiners appointed to the progression panel cannot examine the candidate's final thesis.**

Progression is summarised in the tables below. Details of requirements are found here [FMD Progression April 2023](). Please see Appendix 1 for the detailed flowchart of progression milestones.

Deadlines for FT students	Documents	Process
9-month report + Viva	**Students are required to complete Research Integrity training prior to this.** Student update form; list of itemised transferrable skills 3,000-4,000 words	Panel lead to upload directly to MySIS
18-month report + Viva	Student update form Max 20,000 words	Panel lead to upload directly to MySIS
30-month report	Student update form; summary of work to be done in remaining 6 months; timetable; draft of thesis contents 1,000 words	Panel lead to upload directly to MySIS
Transfer to writing-up form (36 months)	Detailed submission plan, timetable, and table of contents	Via MySIS
Exam entry	Exam entry form	Via MySIS 3 months before planned thesis submission
Thesis submission **(within 48 months of registration)**	Word count should not exceed 100,000 words for PhD students and 50,000 words for MD(Res) students (including footnotes; excluding appendices, bibliography)	Submit thesis to the Research Degrees Office

Deadlines for PT students	Documents	Process
18-month report + Viva	**Students are required to complete Research Integrity training prior to this.** Student update form; list of itemised transferrable skills 3,000-4,000 words	Panel lead to upload directly to MySIS
36-month report + Viva	Student update form Max 20,000 words	Panel lead to upload directly to MySIS
60-month report + Viva	Student update form; summary of work to be done in remaining 6 months; timetable; draft of thesis contents 1,000 words	Panel lead to upload directly to MySIS
Transfer to writing-up form (72 months)	Detailed submission plan, timetable, and table of contents	Via MySIS
Exam entry	Exam entry form	Via MySIS 3 months before planned thesis submission
Thesis submission **(within 48 months of registration)**	Word count should not exceed 100,000 words for PhD students and 50,000 words for MD(Res) students (including footnotes; excluding appendices, bibliography)	Submit thesis to the Research Degrees Office

If you do not think you are going to be on track for a progression point it is essential you contact the Research administrator and the Director of Graduate Studies, who will provide help and support.

Panel Selection

Your supervisor is responsible for panel appointment.

As per FMD guidelines, the members of the progression panel are preferably from a different Centre to that of the student and supervisor.

Appointments and any changes to the progression panel need to be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies (Professor Kenneth Linton).

Research Integrity Training

All PhD students need to undertake the centralised research integrity training, which is provided online by Epigeum. This is required before the 9 month progression point for full time students and before 18 month progression report for part time students.

Students are required to complete the Research Integrity Core course, which consists of 8 individual modules.

Instructions for students to log in to the system and undertake the training:

- Go to: https://courses.epigeum.com/register

- Complete the registration form, inserting the token that you have been given, which is **009a8e45**. *Please note this is restricted to Queen Mary email addresses.*

- Click on 'Register'

- Enter the requested information

- In the field called "Institution-specific field (optional)" (third from top) please enter your STUDENT ID NUMBER

- Check your inbox for an email from the Epigeum system. Click on the activation link therein.

- You will then be able to access the programme(s) by logging into https://courses.epigeum.com/login using your chosen username and password.

- Doctoral students should complete the 'Research Integrity: Core' course (modules 1 through to 8).

The Doctoral College produces a monthly list of those in each school who have undertaken the training and this is made available to PGR teams in schools.

Students who have completed the training will see this added to their Skills Points records by the end of the month.

Writing Up

Transfer to writing up status is an academic progression point. In order to transfer to writing up status, a student is required to have completed all experimental work or collection of material related to his/her thesis and, in the judgement of the supervisor, be in a position to submit the thesis within 12 months.

To transfer to writing up status, you must have completed the minimum registration period (2 years full-time, 4 years part-time) and not exceeded the maximum registration period (4 years minus 1 day, full-time, 7 years minus 1 day part-time).

The maximum period for 'writing up' is one calendar year for both full-time and part-time students.

Students with writing up status are not invoiced for fees; however, you **must** continue to re-enrol during the period of writing up until the award of your PhD, MD(Res), MPhil. If you fail to re-enrol at the beginning of each academic year, you will be deregistered.

Writing up status counts as part of the overall period of registration. Writing up status ends on the date of submission of the thesis; however, you **must** continue to re-enrol with the College until the Research Degrees Office has confirmed the award of your degree.

You must attach a Thesis Completion Timetable [DOC 66KB] to your writing up form on MySIS, which should include a table of contents and chapter headings. Applications are approved successively by the primary supervisor, DGS, and Deputy Dean http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/research-degree-students/writing-up/index.html

The application form for transfer to writing up status is available via MySIS in the Research Students Details page in the My Details section. Please select the Supervision and Progression tab. The Transfer to Writing Up task can be accessed by clicking the link in the Transfer to Writing Up section.

Nomination of examiners and examination entry

Examination entry

Examination entry on MySIS is the formal process by which a student notifies Queen Mary of their intention to submit the thesis and be examined for the degree for which they are registered. Examination entry is also the process by which the title of the thesis is notified and approved. Completion of examination entry opens up the next stage of the MySIS form for nomination of examiners to be completed by the student's supervisor, usually the primary supervisor.
The process for examination entry and nomination of examiners is initiated by the student. The student completes part 1 of the online form. In MySIS please click the 'My Research Details' page on the top menu, and then the 'Progression and Examination' tab. The links to the form and guidance notes are displayed under the 'Examination' heading.

A student and their supervisor should discuss the appropriate timing of examination entry and the nomination of examiners to read the thesis and conduct the viva voce examination **before the student completes their part of their form and before submitting your thesis**.

The MySIS form should be submitted to the Research Degrees Board at least three months before the proposed submission of the thesis. The submission of the thesis must take place up to twelve months after examination entry. After twelve months, if the thesis has not been submitted, the examiners must be re-nominated and approved by the Research Degrees Board. A re-entry fee may be required.

A thesis cannot be sent to the examiners until the Board has approved the student's examiners. Only the Research Degrees Office can send the thesis to the examiners.

Nomination of examiners

There are **two** examiners. The following two options will be considered by the Research Degree Programmes and Examination Board:

Either Model A
- one internal examiner from the academic staff of Queen Mary University of London who has not been involved in the candidate's work and has not been a member of the candidate's progression panel(s); and
- one external examiner.

Or Model B
- Where the criteria above for an internal examiner cannot be met or a school/institute considers it to be academically desirable, two external examiners may be appointed.
- Examiners should be experts in the field of the thesis but not necessarily in all parts of the precise topic.

If nominating two external examiners, please enter the details of the lead examiner in the section for examiner 1 on the nominations form. Examiner 1 is the lead examiner who takes responsibility for completing the examination outcome form and returning to RDO the form and the examiners' reports.

Criteria for Examiners

Examiners for MPhil, PhD, MD(Res) normally fulfil the following criteria:

- The examiners should have examined at least five research degrees of the same or equivalent level between them, of which a minimum of three examinations should have been for a research degree in the UK. For the MD(Res), at least one examiner should have previous experience of examining for the MD(Res).
- Nominated examiners must have had no direct involvement in the candidate's research and they must not have taken an active role in considering the student's progression.
- Examiners must not have any close connections or extensive recent (within the past five years) collaborations with either the supervisor(s) or student including joint publications or research grants which might inhibit a completely objective examination.
- An external examiner should not normally be appointed more than once during a given academic year by members of the same School/Institute.
- An examiner who is a member of QMUL staff may be appointed up to three times during a given academic year.
- NHS Consultants or the equivalent in the NHS who are not QMUL or University employees may be appointed as examiners but they should hold an Honorary Senior Lecturer or above contract with a College or University. Other professional experts may be appointed as external examiners, but the normal requirements for examining experience across the examination team will apply.
- Individuals who were previously members of staff, students or other members of Queen Mary University of London must not be appointed as an external examiner until a period of three years has elapsed.
- Individuals who have retired from academic positions at Queen Mary University of London or another higher education institution may be appointed as internal or external examiners if they remain active in their field of research.
- Overseas examiners are appointed as external examiners only in exceptional circumstances and where it is considered that such an appointment is necessary.

Candidates should pay particular attention to the declaration on the examination entry form. By signing this declaration and entering the examination, you authorise Queen Mary to make your thesis publicly available on the open-access institutional e-repository, Queen Mary Research Online (QMRO), according to the conditions set out in the declaration. Please refer to the Library's guidance on publishing e-theses for more details about the inclusion of your thesis in QMRO and the implications of this (for example about how it may affect future publication). You may indicate on the examination entry form that you wish to apply for restriction of access to your thesis for twelve months.

Examination entry and nomination of examiners are considered by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board. The board meets monthly to consider applications received in the preceding month, according to the schedule in the table below. The Research Degrees Office will inform your supervisor of the Board's decision after the meeting.

Dates for RDPEB meetings and paperwork deadline

Paperwork to RDO deadline	RDPEB date (third Wednesday each month)
02 August 2023	16 August 2023
06 September 2023	20 September 2023
04 October 2023	18 October 2023
29 November 2023	13 December 2023
03 January 2024	17 January 2024
07 February 2024	21 February 2024
06 March 2024	20 March 2024
03 April 2024	17 April 2024
01 May 2024	15 May 2024
05 June 2024	19 June 2024
03 July 2024	17 July 2024
07 August 2024	21 August 2024
04 September 2024	18 September 2024

Dates are subject to change. Please check the [Research Degrees Office webpage](#) for updates.

If the Board does not approve your examiners, your supervisor will nominate an additional or alternative examiner, depending on the Board's requirements. Your supervisor should nominate an alternative examiner using the MySIS task.

Thesis Submission

To submit your thesis for examination you must submit an electronic copy of the thesis to the Research Degrees Office in the approved format (a digital (PDF) file) by email to researchdegrees@qmul.ac.uk. The email submitting the thesis must be received in the RDO by **23:59** hours on the thesis submission deadline.

Please find full guidance on thesis submission here Thesis submission and the viva - Academic Registry and Council Secretariat (qmul.ac.uk)

Viva

Your supervisor is responsible for arranging the viva and keeping you and the Research Degrees Office informed of these arrangements. If you have any queries about the viva, please speak to your supervisor in the first instance.

Research degrees oral examinations may be held remotely with all participants attending online or face to face on a Queen Mary campus in line with health and safety and travel guidance in place on the day of the viva. All participants must agree the format of the viva. One examiner can attend remotely if the student and other examiner can attend in person together.

PGR Exam Guidance Notes August 2023 [DOC 67KB]

You must not contact the examiners yourself. You or your supervisor must not send the thesis to the examiners. Your examination may be declared invalid if you do.

Please ensure that you or your supervisor(s) make it clear if your thesis needs to be printed and a hardcopy is to be dispatched to the examiner.

QMUL Support Services

Research Degrees Office (RDO)

The Research Degrees Office (RDO) provides an administrative service to research degree students in the Doctoral College and staff involved in their supervision.

The Research Degrees Office is based on the second floor of the Graduate Centre, room 213, Mile End Campus

Opening hours:
Monday (not Tuesdays) - Friday: 10am-4pm
Tuesdays: 11am-4pm
Email: researchdegrees@qmul.ac.uk

Among a long list of their responsibilities, the RDO can assist with **thesis submission, examination, changes to student status** and **official letter requests**. Essential information on the services provided by the RDO, along with all the latest versions of pertinent forms and documentation are available on the Research Degrees Office webpage: http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/index.html

Code of Practice and Academic Regulations

All PGR students should read the forms in conjunction with the Academic Regulations 2023/24 and the PGR Code of Practice 2022-23 [PDF 392KB]. The requirements for research degrees (MPhil, PhD, MD(Res) are set out in Appendix 1 of the Academic Regulations.

Enrolment and Registration

Whether you are a new student or are continuing your studies, **it is essential that you enrol with the College every year**. Re-enrolling students should re-enrol via the MySIS portal. You are expected to enrol up until you are awarded, therefore even if you have submitted your thesis you will still be listed as a student and **must be enrolled to sit your viva voce.**

Stipend Payments

Those students in receipt of a stipend should receive payment quarterly on (or around) the following dates - 1st October, 1st January (although this is usually paid before Christmas), 1st April, 1st July. We are transitioning to monthly payments in 2024.

If you enrol between the above dates, you will receive the pro-rata stipend for your first quarter shortly after you have completed enrolment.

College email

Once you enrol as a student, it is college regulation for all QM students to only use their QM email accounts when liaising with QM staff. QM will communicate with students only through the QM email address so please ensure to monitor your QM emails. **Make sure you do this!**

Doctoral College

All students studying for research degrees are automatically enrolled in the Doctoral College. The Doctoral College works with schools, institutes, and academic services across QMUL to oversee the recruitment and admission, training and development, academic progression and examination of QMUL's PhD students.

The Doctoral College provides a number of events and activities tailored specifically to PhD students – including a college wide induction for all new students, cohort training days, and an annual Graduate Festival – designed to further develop your research skills, foster conversations and collaborations between our research students and staff and promote a cohesive and supportive PhD community.

Web: www.qmul.ac.uk/doctoralcollege

Funding Opportunities

There are two QMUL funds/schemes that are open to all our PhD students:

- The **Queen Mary Postgraduate Research Fund (PGRF)** provides funding of up to **£2000** per student to support their PhD research, for example, field costs, conference presentations (capped at £1,000), and visits to overseas institutions.
- The **Queen Mary Doctoral College Initiative Fund (DCIF)** provides funding for events organised by and for Queen Mary's PhD students to enhance the College's research environment and training.

Details for both schemes can be found here: http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page_id=2083

Researcher development

The Doctoral College works alongside the Researcher Development team in Centre for Academic and Professional Development, and with Schools and Institutes and DTPs to ensure that appropriate researcher development opportunities are offered to all PhD students across QMUL, to provide a wide array of research skills training offered by these units across Queen Mary. In addition, the Doctoral College runs a series of its own events designed to provide additional researcher development skills, further develop a sense of cohort amongst our students, and support inter and multi-disciplinary research.

- Year 1 College wide PhD induction in October, with a second Induction for late starters in Semester 2.
- Year 1 PhD Cohort Day - Networking and making the most of your first academic conference.
- Year 2 PhD Cohort Day - Understanding the Impact of your research.
- Year 3 PhD Cohort Day - Careers and opportunities beyond academia.
- GradFest - a week long programme of training events, workshops, seminars and conferences showcasing the research of QMUL's PhD Students.

The Doctoral College also work closely with the Researcher Development team in CAPD, who are responsible for Queen Mary's Skills Points Database https://webapps2.is.qmul.ac.uk/sps/, and encourage students to attend CAPD researcher development courses and the regular events hosted by CAPD for PhD students including:

- Café Scientifique - A thrice yearly event where PhD students present their research in a convivial environment, usually involving food, drink and a 'pub style' quiz.

- 3MT – Three Minute Thesis – A national competition which asks students to present their research in three minutes with only one slide.

For more information contact Zi Parker - Doctoral College Manager - z.parker@qmul.ac.uk
or Nancy Schumann n.schumann@qmul.ac.uk

Skills Training

UKRI expects all PhD students to undergo 210 hours of training /development during their PhD, The PhD Skills Points Database should be used to record training and development activities and to keep track of the points you have accrued. Your supervisor is responsible for monitoring your engagement with training, and ensuring you complete the minimum each year. A spreadsheet describing the training undertaken should be presented to your progression panel. For further information on lease refer to the Skills Point System webpage here Skills Point System - Doctoral College (qmul.ac.uk)

Skills training is available in several forms at Queen Mary, most notably through both internal and external training providers and subject specific training workshops run by your academic school or institute.
- In-person and online training and development events run by the Doctoral College.
- Online, self-study materials and resources.
- Subject-specific training run by your academic School or Institute.

Keep up to date with forthcoming events via the Doctoral College events calendar here Training calendar - Doctoral College (qmul.ac.uk). All activities listed on the calendar are open to all Queen Mary PGR students.

A step by step video of how to use the skill points system can be found here: Section: How to use the Skills Points System | Doctoral Researcher Landing Page | MyQMUL

If you have any questions or queries about The Doctoral College, PhDs at QMUL, training opportunities or Doctoral College events, please email: doctoralcollege@qmul.ac.uk.

For information regarding upcoming events please visit:
https://www.qmul.ac.uk/doctoralcollege/phd-students/training/events/

The Doctoral College also maintains a blog you can use to keep up to date with news and events
https://www.qmul.ac.uk/doctoralcollege/about-the-doctoral-college/news-and-blogs/

Health and Wellbeing Services

Mental Health First Aiders

Mental Health First Aiders provide initial support to those with developing mental health issues or those in mental health crisis.

Blizard Institute Mental Health First Aiders are Julia Diaz m.julia-diaz@qmul.ac.uk and John Connelly j.connelly@qmul.ac.uk

We also have a QM wide list maintained by Queen Mary Health and Safety Directorate which can be found here: http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/a-z/mental-health-first-aid/

Alternatively, you may contact Security (3333) to ask for a Mental Health First Aider.

Disability and Dyslexia Services

The Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL).
QMUL has a Mental Health Coordinator and a Mental Health and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) adviser who can offer confidential support and advice, separate from your academic department.

You can book appointments with them through the following web inquiry form:

http://www.dds.qmul.ac.uk/about/index.html#ddscontactform

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

At the Blizard, we are committed to upholding equality, diversity and inclusion and encourage students to engage with our EDI initiatives. Please find further information via the following links:

Bullying and Harassment
EDI Suggestion Box
EDI training for staff

Who Can I Talk To?

If you're happy to speak to your Line Manager, they should be your first port of call.

If not, there are several members of staff you can reach out to for support. You can contact:

- Your Centre Lead
- The Blizard Dignity and Respect Champion (Louisa James, louisa.james@qmul.ac.uk)
- The Blizard EDI Academic Lead (Tania Maffucci, t.maffucci@qmul.ac.uk)
- The Institute Director (Mary Collins, mary.collins@qmul.ac.uk)
- The Institute Manager (Rachael Parker, rachael.parker@qmul.ac.uk)

Student Health Service

The [Student Health Service](#) (SHS) is a free National Health Service (NHS) providing a wide range of services. Students living in Queen Mary accommodation at Mile End or Whitechapel and students living in the borough of Tower Hamlets (E1, E2, E3 and E14) are encouraged to register with the SHS (located on campus in the [Geography Building, Mile End (number 28 on map](#)). You can see a doctor or nurse there every weekday. If you cannot register with the SHS, you can find your nearest doctor through the [NHS website](#). Queen Mary students who are not registered patients may be able to use the service in certain circumstances. Please, visit [SHS](#) for further information.

Students can also access services online and through the Suttons Wharf Health Centre premises (26 Palmers Road, London, E2 0FA, Tel: 020 89803023

Advice & Counselling

The Advice & Counselling Service at QMUL provides a range of specialist, professional and confidential services to support students with financial, welfare, legal (including visa-related matters), emotional and psychological issues. As well as the information and advice they offer to all students, they offer international students specific advice on money, immigration and other practical aspects of coming to live and study in the UK. Their services are free and confidential for all students, these include:

- Welfare advice and advocacy
- Counselling
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisers
- Sexual Assault and Harassment Adviser
- Frontline team

Where to find Advice and Counselling and how to contact them.

- Email enquiries via website
- Ground floor, Geography building, Mile End campus
- www.qmul.ac.uk/welfare/about-us/contact-us/
- 020 7882 8717, 10am - 4pm Monday – Friday for general queries or information
- facebook.com/QMACS
- @QMUL_ACS

You can find information on their website about [alternative sources of support](#) for when they are closed, as well as [help in a crisis](#).

If you are a current international student at Queen Mary with a question about your immigration or funding, please submit your enquiry through [MySIS](#) **instead** of using the form above, as they can process your enquiry quicker.

Careers Service

Careers and Enterprise iQ East Court, Room 0.08 Mile End Road E1 4GG 020 7882 8533 careers@qmul.ac.uk @qmcareers @qmcareers facebook.com/qmcareers https://www.qmul.ac.uk/careers/

PhD Support Groups for 2023/24

PhD students may find out more and refer themselves easily and quickly here [PhD Support Group - Advice and Counselling Service (qmul.ac.uk)](qmul.ac.uk).

The group is suitable for any PhD student who feels alone with the struggles associated with a PhD including: isolation; finding it hard to maintain confidence or motivation; worries about career prospects; relationship with supervisors; stress, low mood anxiety or other worries and their impact on research progress. All applicants are offered an individual meeting before joining a group. Most students who attend such a meeting end up joining a group. The group is in its fifth year and has received consistently positive outcomes and feedback.

Each support group will run at the Mile End campus for 8 weekly sessions on Thursdays from 11.00am to 12.30pm, with a maximum of 9 participants in each group. You are expected to attend all 8 sessions of your allocated group. You are also expected to attend an individual appointment with the facilitator before you join any group.

Places will be offered on a first come, first served basis.

The dates of the groups are:

Group A: 5 October – 23 November 2023
Group B: 11 January – 29 February 2024
Group C: 14 March – 9 May 2024 (excluding 28 March)

If you would like to join a group please [complete this short form](). The facilitator will be in touch soon to arrange an appointment.

Please use the above link to sign up but if you have any other queries about the PhD Support Group please email pgr-supportgroup@qmul.ac.uk

PGR Student Support Services

Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC)

Rachel Wilson (GCH) rachel.wilson@qmul.ac.uk

Tatenda Mutshiya (NST) t.r.mutshiya@qmul.ac.uk

Danylo Gorenkin (SBBS) d.gorenkin@qmul.ac.uk

Hamish Miller (IB) h.miller@qmul.ac.uk

Metka Gorkic (CBCR) m.gorkic@qmul.ac.uk

This committee is made up of a PhD/MD(Res) student representative from each Blizard Research Centre and as your student reps they will represent you at the Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings, to consider and discuss various matters, such as the content and organisation of programmes of study and any proposed changes, the provision of academic facilities, School / Institute social activities, etc. If you have any issues or feedback that you want raised on your behalf at these meetings, please contact your rep(s).

PGR Club

Our PGR Club serves as a social forum for PGR students in the Blizard. We are currently looking for new members, so if you are interested please contact

Ami Vadgama, a.vadgama@qmul.ac.uk
Molly Ramalhoso, m.ramalhoso@qmul.ac.uk
Kenny Linton (DGS), k.j.linton@qmul.ac.uk

Opportunities for engagement

Blizard Club Seminars

During your time at the Blizard we encourage your involvement in the wider research community, beyond your immediate research centre. To aide in this we encourage you to attend our Blizard Club seminars.

These seminars normally occur weekly on Wednesday starting at 1:30pm in the Perrin or Clark Kennedy Lecture Theatre. The seminar details are circulated weekly.

Graduate Studies Day

The Blizard spends a day showcasing the work of our postgraduate research students. It is a whole day event and an opportunity to see what projects are happening at the Blizard and to meet your fellow students. During the day there are posters presented, a selection of talks are given by research students, prizes are awarded for the best posters and talks. All research students and supervisors are expected to attend this annual event. This is a great opportunity to find out what your colleagues in other Centres are doing and to support each other.

Blizard Institute Summer Symposium

This half- day event takes place annually during summer and features talks from colleagues across the Blizard. It is an opportunity to hear about the work being done across the Institute, featuring talks and prizes.

Postgraduate Open Events

The Doctoral College Open Events are the perfect opportunity for you to learn more about the world-class teaching and research conducted at Queen Mary University of London. Keep up to date with events here: Postgraduate Open Events

PGR Coffee Morning

The Student Staff Liaison Committee and PGR Club will be running a series of coffee mornings for Blizard PGR students. This will be serve as a good opportunity for you to regularly meet other students and engage with the SSLC to see how they can best support you during your time in the Blizard.

Details to follow shortly!

QMUL Student Systems

MySIS

MySIS (https://mysis.qmul.ac.uk) is the University's student records database.

You should use MySIS for the following:

- Annual enrolment
- Updating your personal details (e.g. address and contact number)
- Logging meetings with your supervisor (your supervisor will approve these records / action points / comments)
- Requesting Transfer to Writing Up
- Submitting Examination Entry Form
- Request annual leave – log the request as a communication to your supervisor

You will also be able to view the following information:

- Your personal and programme details (including your start and expected end dates),
- Details of your milestones, once completed,
- Details of your supervisors and recorded meetings.

Supervision may include for example one-to-one meetings, telephone conversations or Skype meetings. Research group meetings, lab meetings and email conversations are not supervision meetings. There should be a minimum of ten supervisory meetings per academic year for full-time students (pro rata for part-time students) held at regular intervals up to the submission of the thesis. This is broadly equivalent to one meeting per month for FT students and one meeting every two months for PT students. Supervision meetings may be held with any member of the supervisory team. Students and supervisors must use the online **Supervision Log**, via MySIS. It is the responsibility of both students and supervisors that supervisions are recorded on the log. Please refer to Appendix 2 for potential consequences of insufficient supervision logs recorded on MySIS.

QMplus

QMplus (http://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk) is the University's e-learning platform. You will have access to QMplus once you have enrolled and received your IT account login.

QMUL Mobile App

Queen Mary's mobile app 'QMUL' is available as an app for Android (version 2.3.3 or higher) and iOS (version 6.0 and above) devices. Just search for 'QMUL' in your app store. You can also use the web app for other mobile devices, laptops, desktop PCs and Macs via most browsers. You can access the web app at qmul.ombiel.co.uk

Other Useful Information

Accommodation

If you are a postgraduate, study abroad or Associate student, you can find out more about accommodation opportunities available to you here Accommodation - Queen Mary University of London (qmul.ac.uk)

Additionally, there are several options for alternative accommodation ranging from private accommodation through to hostels and short stays. Please visit our alternative accommodation webpage here Alternative accommodation - Accommodation (qmul.ac.uk)
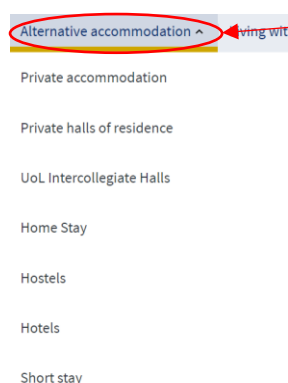
For general queries relating to accommodation, please contact our Housing Services team at housingservices@qmul.ac.uk

Travel

You can use a contactless payment card, Apple Pay or Oyster card on buses and tubes throughout London.

Closest tube stations:

Whitechapel (District, Hammersmith & City, Overground, Elizabeth Line)
Shadwell (DLR)
Aldgate East (District, Hammersmith & City)

For tube maps & live updates on services: https://tfl.gov.uk/. You can also find more pricing information for the most suitable formula (weekly/monthly subscription, pay as you go with your contactless card etc.)

The CityMapper app is a very useful and accurate tool to see live updates on tube and bus services and can be downloaded on Android smart phones and iPhones - https://citymapper.com/apps.

Annual Leave

For full-time students the annual holiday entitlement is 30 working days plus the eight UK public holidays and the four Queen Mary closure days. Holiday entitlement is pro rata for part-time students. For example, if you started your PhD on 30 September 2023, the 30 days are from 30 September 2023 - 29 September 2024; if you started in Jan, the annual leave year runs from Jan - Jan etc. You cannot carry any remaining annual leave over to the following year.

To request annual leave, you log the request as a communication to your supervisor via MySIS. You keep the same annual leave request form per year, and this will allow you to see how many days you have remaining.

- All annual leave should be requested in advance (1 month in advance for 2 weeks' leave; 1 week in advance for 1-2 days' leave) and approved by your Primary Supervisor.
- For urgent annual leave, this notice period may not be possible. Therefore, please discuss with your Supervisor asap.
- You are entitled to take up to 2 weeks' annual leave at a time. If you require a longer time, please discuss with your Supervisor regarding any exceptional circumstances.

Sick Leave

Students may not be absent without permission from their Supervisor. In cases of illness or injury, the student needs to inform the Supervisor, the Centre Administrator and the Teaching Office of absence from studies. Currently there is no official form in use for this.

On the eighth day of the student's sickness (including non-working days) the student should supply a doctor's certificate for any further absence and provide this to Institute.

For a shorter period: sick leave, but if a student is expected to be absent for a month or longer (whether consecutively or cumulatively): official interruption should be completed (full details about the interruption process is on the Queen Mary website). Interruption in effect 'stops the clock' in the PhD progression.

Funding during interruption depends on the sponsor / funding body; some cover interruption periods, in other cases the stipend stops during interruption.

Study Spaces

Please find here some information about quiet spaces across Queen Mary campuses that you can book if required to study or to write your thesis, including the spaces that are run by the Library Services: a comprehensive list of study spaces.

In some areas, for example the libraries, you need to book a study space in advance or if there are free spaces you can book on the spot. Read the Library Services' guide on how to book study spaces for more information, you will need to check in within 30 minutes of the booking to retain it.

QMUL has 3 libraries available for PhD students to use, based in St. Bartholomew's Hospital (West Smithfield Campus), Whitechapel Campus and Mile End Campus. For individual study spaces in the libraries, please book from the following link (https://www.qmul.ac.uk/library/using-library-services/opening-hours/)

The Multi-Faith Centre

The Multi-Faith Centre is located on the second floor of the Students' Union Hub and provides a space for quiet reflection, contemplation and prayer for students and staff.

The Multi-Faith Centre consists of two rooms, a lobby and ablution areas. The rooms are assigned to particular faiths and faith groups at different times. This timetable is decided in consultation with student groups and varies according to the time of year. During Open Prayer times, the rooms can be used by all students and staff of Queen Mary University of London for quiet reflection, contemplation, and prayer. Please find all information here Multi-Faith Centre (qmsu.org)

Multi-Faith Centre
Students' Union Hub, 2nd floor
329 Mile End Road
London E1 4NT
020 7882 8030

IT

QMUL IT Helpdesk

For IT help and support please contact the QMUL IT Helpdesk:
Tel (24/7): 020 7882 8888
In person: Queens' Building, Room W209, Mile End (8am-6pm Mon-Fri)
Email: servicedesk@qmul.ac.uk
Raise a ticket: https://helpdesk.qmul.ac.uk/
Issues: email / account / password issues, general access / permissions, MySIS, QMplus

Security Card

You receive your security card from the Research Degrees Office following your enrolment, and you are also given your Queen Mary login details and email address at that point.

Your Centre Administrator will make sure you have access with your card to all the areas you need.

APPENDIX 1

Progression Milestones

9-month	18-month	30-month
- supervisor and student to start arranging panel & viva at around 6 months	- supervisor and student to start arranging panel & viva in good time prior to deadline	- no viva
- supervisor to complete supervisor update form and send to student	- supervisor to complete supervisor update form and send to student	- supervisor to complete supervisor update form and send to student
- student to complete student update form (incl. training record)	- student to complete student update form (incl. training record)	- student to complete student update form (incl. training record)
- student to submit report, student update form and supervisor update form on QMplus	- student to submit report, student update form, supervisor update form on QMplus	- student to submit report, student update form and supervisor update form on QMplus
- student to send the report and the panel progression form to the examiners at least 2 weeks ahead of the viva	- student to send the report and the panel progression form to the examiners at least 2 weeks ahead of the viva	- student to send the report, student update form, the supervisor update form, and the panel progression form to the examiners at least 2 weeks ahead of the report deadline
- student to bring report, student update form and supervisor update form to the viva (or for online viva, to provide these electronically for the examiners)	- student to bring report, student update form and supervisor update form to the viva (or for online viva, to provide these electronically for the examiners)	
- after the viva, examiners complete and sign the panel progression form (typed only, no handwritten notes!)	- after the viva, examiners complete and sign the panel progression form (typed only, no handwritten notes!)	- examiners complete and sign the panel progression form (typed only, no handwritten notes!)
- examiners to email the panel progression form to student, supervisor, and Academic Coordinator	- examiners to email the panel progression form to student, supervisor, and Academic Coordinator	- examiners to email the panel progression form to student, supervisor, and Academic Coordinator

Progression reports are compulsory and necessary to ensure the successful and timely completion of the programme. Any extension to a progression deadline requires approval by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Consequences for late reports (more than 4 weeks late) for PhD students:
- Students will not receive any internal funding (including bench fee top up funding, travel bursaries, requests for PhD stipend extensions, etc.) if they have any outstanding milestones or if their most recent report submission was >4 weeks late.

Consequences for late reports (more than 4 weeks late) for primary supervisors:
- Supervisors will not receive any internal funding if they have any students with outstanding reports or if 50% or more of their students' most recent report submissions were >4 weeks late.
- Supervisor's student progress reports will be included as part of their appraisal.
- Introduce negative marking for poor supervision when shortlisting internal PhD projects.

Detailed process

9-month report	**18-month report**	**30-month report**
- Automatic reminder is sent from MySIS to student and supervisor - According to Code of Practice this report needs to be completed 6-9 months after the start of programme, therefore the official submission window on MySIS opens at 6 months and closes at 9 months – **please note that the actual due date is at 9 months** - Reminder also includes a prompt regarding the progression panel	- Automatic reminder is sent from MySIS to student and supervisor - According to Code of Practice this report needs to be completed 18-24 months after the start of programme, therefore the official submission window on MySIS opens at 18 months and closes at 24 months – **please note that the actual due date is at 18 months** - Reminder also includes a prompt regarding the progression panel	- There is no automatic alert email sent from MySIS, however, there is a reminder from the
- Supervisor / student to arrange progression panel, it is advisable to start making arrangements at around 6 months - Supervisor or student to let Academic Coordinator know the names of the examiners (panel chair & panel member) and thesis title, AC then sets up progression panel on MySIS	- Supervisor / student to arrange progression panel in good tome prior to the viva - Any change in panel membership from 9-month to 18-month viva must be approved by the DGS (Professor Kenneth Linton)	Same progression panel, no viva

Academic Coordinator sends reminder one month ahead of due date (including a reminder about viva arrangements where applicable)

Supervisor / student arranges viva. Student sends the report to the examiners at least 2 weeks ahead of the viva and provides the panel progression form for the examiners		No viva Student sends the report & panel form to the examiners in good time prior to the due date.

Student to submit documents on QMplus:
- Copy of the report (3000-4000 words)
- Supervisor update form
- Student update form, including training record

Student to submit documents on QMplus:
- Copy of the report (no more than 20,000 words)
- Supervisor update form
- Student update form, including training record

Student to submit documents on QMplus:
- Copy of the report (1000 words)
- Supervisor update form
- Student update form, including training record

Viva takes place.
Students may be asked by the panel to access Lab Archives during the viva to go through aspects of their original data.

Panel discussion takes place.

- Examiners complete and sign the panel progression form (provided by the student prior)

- Panel progression form must be typed up (no handwritten comments / notes!)

- Panel sends the progression form by email to the student, the supervisor, and the Academic Coordinator

Academic Coordinator submits complete report on MySIS

Director of Graduate Studies approves progression outcome on MySIS

Progression outcome is confirmed by automated email from MySIS sent to student and supervisor, including comments from the panel progression form.

Any follow-up actions