

AGENDA



- 1400-1430 Transfer of Status Presentation
Prof. David Kay
- 1430-1500 “Owning” Your DPhil
Martin Dehnel-Wild, JCCG
Student Panel Discussion
- 1500-1515 Break, move to Atrium
- 1515-1600 Research Question Workshop
- 1600-1700 Wine and other drinks!



“OWNING” YOUR DPHIL

CS Dept. JCCG
22 Feb 2018

OWNING YOUR DPHIL...?

You've just heard all about the process and requirements...

...but how does it actually work --- and what goes wrong?

This is about **Project Ownership** and **Supervisor Relationships**

WHAT CAN POSSIBLY GO WRONG?

Supervisory relationships

- Good relationships lead to fewer delays and finishing sooner
- Understand what your supervisor expects and what you expect from your supervisor

Working Hours

- Studies have shown 4th year students tend to work 10 hours more per week than 1st years, on average
- Keep work-life balance! Consistency builds trust and fosters balance.

Deadlines & Goals

- Managing a long project takes practice & patience
- Your deadlines and progress are ultimately your responsibility

MANAGING YOUR DPHIL


Have you discussed expectations with your supervisor?

Project Ownership

- Do you have a plan?
- Are you ready for that plan to change?

Supervisor Relationships

- How often do you meet?
- How involved (personally, professionally)?
- Resources --- conferences, travel, equipment, space...



**“Your job is to keep
your project moving”**

**“taking responsibility
for the progress of
your own work”**

**“independence in practical
problem-solving, especially
in experimental work”**

PAST STUDENTS

“The major thing I'd say is don't be afraid to talk to your supervisor as often as you can. They find nearly everything else they do more boring than your results”

“Don't just go to your supervisor with problems and no solutions”

“Know what's a reasonable amount of time for things to take”

“Don't ignore problems. If is broken then tell your supervisor(s)”

“The key is to plan to complete and submit within the duration of the initial funding, to work consistently”

An ingredient for success is to write and submit one or more substantial papers before half-way through the funding.

“My work always went better when I was talking regularly to them”

“If you get to a point in your work where you can't make any progress due to one serious bottleneck, you need to start developing alternative strands of research”

RESOURCES

Internal

- CS Department Handbook
- Students (especially in your group/theme)
- Your JCCG representatives
- CoGS Coffee

Every Wed @1430, in the common room

External

- College advisor
- Oxford Learning Institute:
<http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/supervision/>
- Vitae: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/>
- MPLS division skills website:
<http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk>
<http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/skills/gap>
Training Needs Analysis:
<https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-and-resources-for-supervisors/tna-for-dphil-students>



STUDENT PANEL |

OH, AND THE WORK...

Along the way, you also need to do some research.

At transfer, one of the goals should be to have a solid **research question(s)/statement(s)**

Use as a vehicle to guide interactions with your supervisor

Recall the transfer requirements

- Topic and approach are suitable
- Clear knowledge and understanding of background
- An articulated plan
- You can describe your results

RESEARCH QUESTION WORKSHOP

Break into groups of ~4-5 with one or more academics

Move to the tables in the atrium

Take turns discussing your research questions

- Focus on the question/statement (not necessarily the research area, but the presentation)
- Use the feedback to see if you can refine
- Practice for your transfer interview, report preparation
- Non-judgemental!

Eat cake!

Goal: A clearly articulated question (or at least an idea about what it could be!)

RESEARCH QUESTION WORKSHOP (CONT.)

Example generic format for a research question / statement:

X is good for Y (in the context of Z).

X can be extended to achieve Y (in the context of Z).

The application of X to Y produces an improved result (in the context of Z).

The adoption of X facilitates Y (in the context of Z).

An X approach to the problem of Y avoids the need for Z.

Each supervisor/theme will have their own expectations!

RESEARCH QUESTION WORKSHOP (CONT.)

Examples:

- Too broad and does not define the segments of the analysis:

Why did the chicken cross the road?

(The question does not address which chicken or which road)

- Too narrow and overly specific:

How many chickens crossed Broad Street in Oxford, on February 6, 2014?

(Could be answered in one sentence and does not leave room for analysis. It could, however, become data for a larger argument)

- A more precise question:

What are some of the environmental factors that occurred in Oxford between January and February 2014 that would cause chickens to cross Broad Street?

(Allows the author taking a stand on which factors are significant and argue to what degree the results are beneficial or detrimental)



BREAK

1500-1515

RESEARCH QUESTION WORKSHOP

1515-1600