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**London
South Bank
University**

.....
London Doctoral
Academy

Doing a
research degree...
the essentials



contents



Key University reading and contacts	4
Research Degrees Code of Practice.....	4
Supervision Handbook.....	4
Training and development programme.....	4
Postgraduate Research Degrees.....	4
Overview of our research degrees	6
Structure and timing of your degree.....	6
Our research degrees... the difference	9
Core principles of research	10
Researcher integrity.....	10
Research ethics.....	10
Intellectual Property (IP) management.....	11
Our research community	12
Researcher training and development	14
Formal training.....	15
Commercial research project opportunities.....	16
Conferences, presenting and publications.....	17
Teaching skills.....	17
Exclusive research student spaces.....	18
Professional Services	20
Finances	21
Costs.....	21
Funding.....	21
Scholarships and studentships.....	21
Loans.....	21
Entitlements	22
Our top tips	23
Campus map	28

Key University reading and contacts

Research Degrees Code of Practice

Sets out the academic rules that govern your research degree, complementing our Academic Regulations.

Supervision Handbook

Essential reading giving you guidance on process and regulation as well as good practice. It defines roles and responsibilities and sets out what to expect from your Supervisor and School, as well as your own responsibilities as a research student. It explains how the University supports and evaluates progression from start to finish of your research degree. It also signposts key policies and procedures.

Training and development programme

We have a researcher training programme that is constantly updated including a mandatory Key Skills Development Programme, additional professional development workshops, methodology training and social events

Postgraduate Research Degrees

For administrative enquiries:

pgr@lsbu.ac.uk

Welcome to the London Doctoral Academy and our overview of the essentials for applicants or new students on our research degrees programmes at London South Bank University - PhD, Professional Doctorate or MRes. Our Research Degrees Code of Practice and Supervision Handbook will give you more detail on our standards and processes... and also what we expect from you.

We are passionate about research that makes a difference and about creating professional researchers who will make significant contributions in their future career... whether their ultimate ambition is to be a professional researcher, academic or work in other roles where the ability to think critically, analytically and creatively is valued. To achieve this from their research degree, students need to acquire both technical specialist researcher expertise and broader personal and professional skills. LSBU is Entrepreneurial University of the year 2016 so we understand the importance of professional skills to a successful career.

So how do we deliver? As well as teaching and supervision from our leading academics the London Doctoral Academy offers:

- A comprehensive researcher development programme that helps you attain the transferable specialist research skills to achieve your career ambitions;
- Exclusive facilities, just for research students and academic researchers. The spaces provide networking and socialising opportunities and offer bookable professional meeting and event rooms;
- Dedicated professional services with a separate administrative team for research students and online systems designed purely for the needs of research degree students;
- A vibrant research environment, with research students an integral part of our research culture and community. It's an environment that supports collaborative and inter-disciplinary working;
- Involvement of research students as colleagues with valuable inputs to the activities and governance of the London Doctoral Academy.

Welcome to the London Doctoral Academy



Professor Graeme Maidment

Associate Director of Research and Head of the London Doctoral Academy

Overview of our research degrees

These are our research degree choices, the programmes that will help you become a researcher – an innovative, critical, independent risk taker, an expert in your chosen field.

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Professional Doctorates in a range of areas including Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) and Education Doctorate (EdD)
- Master by Research, MA(Res) or MSc(Res)

More information on particular awards and their entry requirements is available from our Course finder.

Structure and timing of your degree

The formal output of these research degrees is a thesis on which you will be questioned at your *viva voce* oral examination. Your thesis sets the context, the current and past developments in your research area. It explains your original ideas, methods chosen, evidence, and your analysis and review and final conclusions. You will be guided by a Supervisor or Supervisory team who will support your development, provide technical expertise, and of course challenge your thinking.

The Master by Research programmes normally take between one to two years to thesis submission depending on whether you choose full or part-time mode. The PhD target timeline is three or five years to thesis submission – depending on whether you choose full or part-time – plus an additional year for assessment and ratification. A Professional Doctorate will need extra time for the initial taught modules, one or two years depending on whether you choose full or part time. It is normally undertaken on a part time basis as the research element will be related to your profession. The research element of the Professional Doctorate programme will take between 3-5 years to submission of the thesis.

Our supportive systems ensure you stay on track with your research project. Your progression is assessed at a series of six monthly School Panel Reviews that act as a gateway for progression to the next six month stage. This means gaps in knowledge, skills or research development are identified early so it forms an important part of the learning process for both students and supervisors. The Panels also give you practice in presenting and defending your research so you can be confident you will perform well in the final *viva voce*.



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Our supportive systems
ensure you stay on track
with your research project



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Your research degree will be
unique in terms of content,
structure and engagement

Our research degrees... the difference

If you are considering, or have just started on a research degree, then you will have a good academic track record. But a research degree is likely to be very different to your previous academic experience. The creation of new knowledge or of applying existing knowledge in a new way which is central to a research degree is simply not expected at undergraduate or taught postgraduate level. You must work independently... determine your own focus of enquiry and direction... respond flexibly as new thoughts and information become available... you will be the expert. And of course you need a passion for the research topic which is going to dominate your life for a long period.

If you are studying for, or thinking about studying for a doctorate, you will find *The UK Doctorate: A Guide for Current and Prospective Candidates* helpful in giving an overview of the doctoral qualification and experience.

www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=53

Your research degree will be unique in terms of content, structure and engagement but all doctoral students should acquire a range of core professional skills. This list is from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), 2015 report 'Doctoral Degree Characteristics:

www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Doctoral-Degree-Characteristics-15.pdf

- Search for, discover, access, retrieve, sift, interpret, analyse, evaluate, manage, conserve and communicate an ever-increasing volume of knowledge from a range of sources;
- Think critically about problems to produce innovative solutions and create new knowledge;
- Plan, manage and deliver projects, selecting and justifying appropriate methodological processes while recognising, evaluating and minimising the risks involved and impact on the environment;
- Exercise professional standards in research and research integrity, and engage in professional practice, including ethical, legal, and health and safety aspects, bringing enthusiasm, perseverance and integrity to bear on their work activities;
- Support, collaborate with and lead colleagues, using a range of teaching, communication and networking skills to influence practice and policy in diverse environments;
- Appreciate the need to engage in research with impact and to be able to communicate it to diverse audiences, including the public;
- Build relationships with peers, senior colleagues, students and stakeholders with sensitivity to equality, diversity and cultural issues.

Core principles of research

Researcher integrity

You will be familiar from your previous studies with 'academic integrity', and in particular the importance of avoiding plagiarism, the presenting other people's writing or ideas as your own. This is important and attribution and citation/referencing remain essential but the concept of researcher integrity is far wider.

The 2012 Universities Concordat on Research Integrity describes the commitments of research integrity and sets out the responsibilities of researchers, employers and funders for the conduct and governance of research.

www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2012/the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf

It sets out the core elements that make up research integrity:



Rigour and integrity provide the basis for trust in all academic research which must also meet all relevant ethical, legal and professional obligations.

The primary responsibility for meeting the required standards lies with the individual researcher. With you. So as well as understanding the overall principles of professional conduct and appropriate practice in your discipline you will need to consider areas such as health and safety, ethics, intellectual property rights and copyright, legislation, conditions of funding, data management and conflict of interest. There is also a wider duty to consider how your work impacts on society and the wider public interest, so consideration for the principles of equality and diversity, community engagement and responsible innovation. Your Supervisors will be able to help you with this, and our training courses will cover the most important principles.

Research ethics

If your research involves human participants and the collection/study of data from human participants you will need ethical approval from the University before starting the study. Research in health and social care is likely to need separate ethical approval from the Health Research Authority (HRA) before applying for University ethics approval.

www.hra.nhs.uk

You might be surprised how many research projects need ethical approval, so it is best to check this out with your Supervisors. Again, training sessions will help you understand what's required.

To gain ethical approval, Postgraduate Research Students use the University's standard academic research applications process. Most applications are managed by individual Schools with only a limited number of research areas that we have identified as high risk needing referral to full University Ethics Panel. We monitor service standards on research degree student applications with a target approval time of six weeks for those without amends.

The University Ethics Code of Practice and suite of standard application documents are available from MyLSBU.

Intellectual Property (IP) management

IP as defined in the Copyright and Patents Act 1988 is 'creative work which can be treated as an asset or physical property' falling mainly into four main areas; copyright, trademarks, design rights and patents. You may generate new Intellectual Property of commercial significance in your research that you should consider taking steps to protect. This can be done by the filing of patents; design registrations; and trademarks, or can also be protected as copyright or in the form of know-how and trade secrets. You will need to consider intellectual property and confidentiality before presenting at a conference or publishing a paper.

Our Intellectual Property Policy covers staff and students.

www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures

Students assign their intellectual property to the University which allows the University to identify, assess and file intellectual property protection for the student should it be of commercial significance. If there is no intellectual property of value generated, then the intellectual property is simply assigned back to the student at the end of their studies.

The University's Research, Enterprise & Innovation team runs an extensive programme for students who would like to develop their ideas and will discuss how you can develop and commercialise your research.

Our research community

A research degree needs to be undertaken in the context of a high quality research environment and community.

Our research is highly applied and focuses on real-world challenges that are vitally important to people and environments across the globe. We work closely with industry, business, community and government partners to influence policy, build relationships, create new commercial opportunities and change the way that industry and businesses work.

We are investing in four Research and Enterprise Institutes and fourteen major research centres that address the global challenges faced by society. These centres are externally facing beacons of leading edge, timely research with an international reputation for achievement and innovation. An important role is to catalyse and support collaborations, especially in response to funding opportunities,

We also support thirty-three Research Groups which help create an inclusive research environment, enabling researchers to cohere around emerging research themes and inspire new internal research collaborations. These Research Groups enable academics to learn from their peers and support the development of early career researchers.

Our research degree Supervisors are of course established researchers and their work is typically linked to these areas of key focus: From Addictive Behaviours Research to Robotics, from Construction Management, Economics and Integrated Delivery to Business and Entrepreneurship or Digital Story Telling. Look at our areas of expertise and match to your proposed research topic, your passion!

Through our inter-disciplinary programmes, research events and shared social space we support research students working in a cross-disciplinary and collaborative way, learning and sharing with others working towards their research degree.



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Our research is highly applied
and focuses on real-world
challenges

Researcher training and development

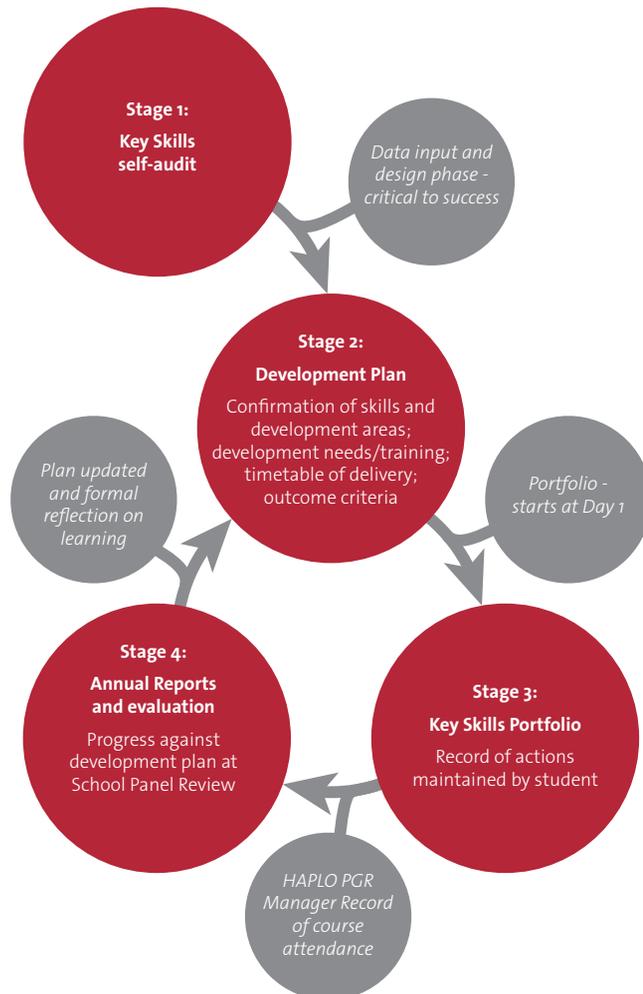
Integral to a research degree is the concept that students own their development process and should take all opportunities, formal and informal, to develop their skills. There is an increased emphasis on the development of generic and transferable skills in parallel to research specific skills.

Our training programme and opportunities support the development of these wider professional and personal skills, in addition to the technical specialist requirements of your research degree.

Students have opportunities to develop their skills and competence in a range of areas, including research expertise and techniques, the research environment, research management, personal effectiveness, communication skills, networking and team working, and career management.

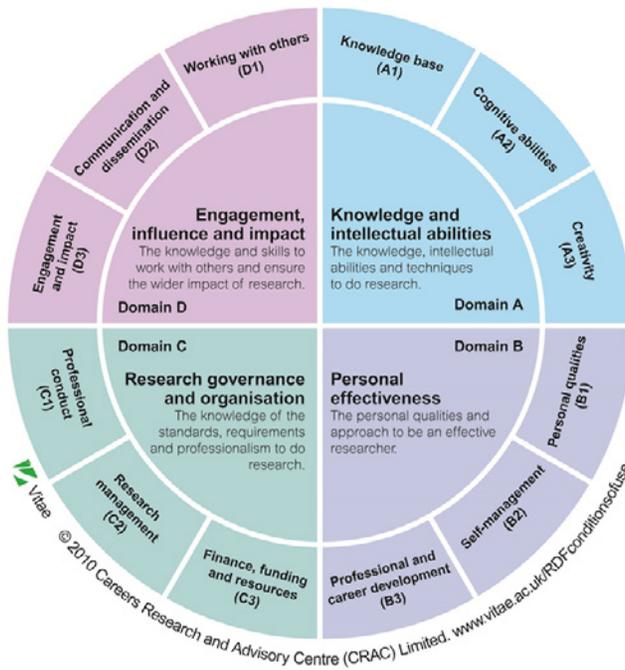
Your professional development process starts with a self-audit to identify your existing skills, followed by an action plan identifying your development and training needs. A process of evaluation and in-depth reflection then leads to revisions to the plan. Your record of the skills courses and development opportunities undertaken will form an important part of your portfolio as a professional researcher, potentially for a future employer.

Diagram: Research Skills Cycle



Formal training

We have a Key Skills Development Programme that you will be expected to attend during the life of your degree, plus an impressive range of courses, seminars and workshops to help your wider development. All of our courses are mapped to the nationally recognised Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development which describes the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers.



The RDF structures researcher development into four areas: Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities; Personal Effectiveness; Research Governance and Organisation; Engagement, Influence and Impact. You should use it as a diagnostic to identify your development needs in the initial self-audit that a successful development plan depends on. All our courses are coded to show you which areas of the RDF they contribute to so as to help you build your development plan effectively.

Our London Doctoral Academy training programme, with its mix of compulsory and optional courses, is supplemented by specialist technical sessions for researchers from Schools and the Library & Learning Resources. You may find other University-wide resources relevant, such as our taught Masters modules or the 6,000 Lynda online training modules available through the library. www.lynda.com

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I worked with The Hunger Project (THP) UK a global, non-profit, strategic organisation. It aims to end hunger through pioneering sustainable, grassroots, women-centred strategies and encouraging their adoption. The experience I gained within this 4 month project has given me a fresh perspective on my PhD research on Human Rights Education. I worked closely with the THP team to develop funding proposals and analytical reports on the programmes. It was the most exciting and hopeful time for my research.”

Nadia Imtiaz,
PhD student from School of
Law and Social Sciences



Commercial research project opportunities

Many of our research students go on to employment in commercial research or policy development. Developing the ability to work successfully with external organisations is essential for early-career researchers. The University funds a Knowledge Exchange Voucher (KEV) scheme with bursaries of £4,000 to support postgraduate research students to work with a partner company or organisation. We look for projects that create innovation in applied research, new products, services or processes.

The KEV scheme is promoted to all postgraduate research degree students. We also advertise the additional commercial opportunities that arise from our research and enterprise sales to external companies.

Conferences, presenting and publications

Sharing your research helps develop a wider and more in-depth understanding of your topic. You need to network and attend conferences, talks, debates, and other internal and external activities where there will be a large mix of individuals with different skills and roles. To help you the University provides a standard one-off conference allowance. You are also, of course, invited to all the research events that we run for our wider research community, many of which involve presentations from external organisations.

Where there are no confidentiality issues you should aim to present updates and findings from your research through presentation at seminars and conferences and papers for publication or exhibitions. It isn't necessarily more work as it can be linked to the literature review or thesis chapters. It will raise your professional profile and validate the quality of your research.

Teaching skills

Research Informed Teaching is integral to our overall teaching approach, ensuring we generate the fullest possible teaching value from all of our research and that what we teach our students is truly relevant to their future careers. This means we look for:

- Courses that reflect the most up-to-date disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and industry and professional knowledge;
- Opportunities for students to learn not just about the outcomes of research but also through engaging in the process of research including in workplace settings;
- Improving teaching on the basis of evaluation, enquiry and dissemination of research into teaching and learning;
- Advancing research knowledge, methods, dissemination and impact as an outcome of researchers engaging in teaching.

We know many research students will choose to go on to an academic career, so it is important to develop teaching skills at an early stage. The University's Centre for Research Informed Teaching (CRIT) provides training for postgraduate students to develop their teaching skills and undertake teaching duties. You can work towards Higher Education Academy Fellowship with 'Achieve' by gaining recognition as an HEA Associate Fellow, Fellow or Senior Fellow.

Exclusive research student spaces

We recognise the importance of creating a researcher community and have designed exclusive spaces just for our research students. The London Doctoral Academy is based in our London Road building, five minutes from Waterloo and close to Borough and London Bridge. So you can

- Drop in and socialise or study informally with other researchers;
- Use the kitchen facilities to grab a late coffee, relax and sit out on the terrace and share tips on how to actually get all the research written up in time!
- Book a meeting room with AV and video conferencing for business discussions or market research interviews;
- Attend research events in our conference room;
- Practice for that all important first conference presentation, and maybe use the recording capabilities.

Our space is open from Monday to Saturday, with evening access. You can book the meeting room and the events room up to six weeks advance.





Professional Services

Our standard University services provide much of the administration and support for research degree students. For example, support for employability, disability and dyslexia, mental health and wellbeing are all core services. As you would expect we have comprehensive online information systems in MyLSBU which houses our standard student information.

However, we recognise that research degree students and the type of study generate very different needs and expectations. That's why we created the London Doctoral Academy and its dedicated Postgraduate Research Degrees Team who only support research degree students. The team supports all our standard research systems and information, deals with ad hoc requests, like writing a letter to the local council so you can get a discount on your tax. They are also the 'go to' team when you have a problem and simply can't work out what to do next or who to talk to.

Each School has a member of the Postgraduate Research Degrees Team allocated to its research students. You can usually find a member of the Postgraduate Research Degrees Team working in their shared office next to your social space, or just mail them on pgr@lsbu.ac.uk

We also have a dedicated online system, HAPLO PGR Manager specifically for Supervisors and research students. It gives an accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date record of progress on your research project, and alerts milestones. So at any point in time you and your Supervisors can check those follow up notes from a meeting, review the training sessions you have planned and taken, or look up the timing of your next formal School Panel Review.

Finances

Costs

This is a general guide to the cost of living you may expect in London over and above your fees. You will need to assess the full costs of doing your research degree and build your own budget. For example if you plan to do a lot of your research at home then utility/broadband bills may be higher, and travel lower. Depending on the type of research you may need to budget for fieldwork or equipment costs.

Expense (weekly)	Living in University accommodation (weekly)	Living in Private accommodation (weekly)
Accommodation	£118.50–£143.20	£120–£300
Food/household shopping	£40–£70	£40–£70
Utility bills	£0	£20–40
Local travel	£10	£15–£35
Study materials	£10	£10
Entertainment	£10–30	£10–£30
Other expenses	£10–30	£10–£30
Total weekly expenses	£198.50–223.20	£225–£515

International students need to show a minimum amount of funding to qualify for a tier4 visa
my.lsbu.ac.uk/my/wcm/connect/0674056a-9cc7-4534-ae46-1949633e93a2/Your+Finances+Jan+17.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

You also need to consider your income may drop. Research students are expected to study through the year so holiday work is

not an option though it may be possible to supplement your income with teaching or other university work.

Funding

Scholarships and studentships

We work with many businesses on major commercial research projects where a postgraduate researcher is incorporated in their projects, often along with additional academic research input from the University. The business and the University jointly cover the fees, provide an annual living allowance, and cover other fees such as extended conference funding.

The University also offers its own scholarships from time to time. We always advertise these opportunities on our web site.

Loans

For UK, and possibly EU students, loans are available with repayment delayed to after qualifying.

For the MRes the standard Postgraduate loan scheme (£10,280 in 2017) can be used.

www.gov.uk/postgraduate-loan/overview

A new government scheme offering PhD loans of up to £25,000 is planned for those beginning a PhD from 2018-19, though full details are not yet available.

www.findaphd.com/funding/guides/uk-phd-loans-scheme.aspx

Entitlements

In addition to Supervision, teaching and our training programme there are other areas where we want to be clear what you should expect from the University:

- Networking and engaging with external organisations, businesses and other researchers in your field is essential to developing your research. We all have smartphones, but business cards still make for easy exchange of contact details and ensure you are recognised as part of the University's research community. So order your London South Bank University branded business cards immediately you arrive. You will be set up on our internal phonebook and email systems and our welcome stationery pack will help you get started quickly on your research;
- To support your development as a researcher we provide a one-off allowance of up to £500 for a relevant conference of your choice. The next step, hopefully on your way to getting published, is presenting your research at an academic workshop or conference. The University will consider additional funding for these presentations which we see as demonstrating the strength of our researcher base.
- We realise that in today's paperless society effective working doesn't always quite manage to be entirely paperless. There are all those journal articles that you want to print and make notes on... the conference hand-outs ...the poster you need for your three minute thesis presentation.... follow-up minutes of client and partner meetings. So research students have a monthly print/copy allowance of £10 for full-time and £6 for part-time students for our campus-wide networked printers;
- You either have an individual desk space with PC or access to a hot desk in your School. This varies by School, and the need for research for lab space versus a desk is taken into consideration. Similarly, phone access is either individual or shared. All Schools have lockers though we cannot guarantee availability;
- You can use standard equipment in the School on the same basis as a member of staff. Additional specialist equipment may be available if you have joined to work on a specific research project with client or funder grants for specific equipment;
- Tea and coffee are provided free in our social space reserved for research students. You can also book the exclusive research student rooms for your personal research.
- And when you have been awarded your research degree we print your thesis for you; the final hard bound gold lettered copies that underline your achievement. One for you, and one for you to present to your Supervisor.

Our top tips

We thought you would like to find out more about the personal face of the University so we asked staff and students to give us their top tips for research degree students.

“

Your PhD is your offspring - it has a personality and identity of its own and consequently it can be infuriating and frustrating. It is also a unique experience and can be incredibly rewarding, so stick with it! Don't try to 'do it all at once'. It's like climbing a mountain. You stand at the bottom and see a huge vertical surface in front of you, but, like a mountain, it is comprised of smaller vertical climbs with flatter resting places. So keep climbing slowly and surely and you WILL get to the top!”

Dr Deborah Andrews,
Associate Professor, School of
Engineering

“

Perfect is the enemy of good”

Dan Bibalo,
Built Environment and
Architecture doctoral student

“

The doctoral journey is one like you will never experience again, it is the one time in your life that you get to investigate something you are passionate about, to become an expert in that particular element or field. It is by no means an easy feat. If it was everyone would have one! There are really exciting times ahead, but also darker times. Don't worry because you will overcome them and this will make you stronger as an individual and as a researcher. The journey will change you, sometimes in ways you would never have expected. Don't leave writing all your chapters to the end; write them as you go along even if you spend only a short time writing every day. Good Luck.”

Louise Thompson,
Research Degrees Programme
Manager and part-time Applied
Sciences doctoral student

“

Worldwide, millions of people have successfully completed the PhD journey, so learn from their successes and study their mistakes. Find yourself a role model. This could be a newly completed PhD or an established academic. How do they manage their time and get things done? What are their personal short-cuts to success?”

Dr Karl Smith,
Research Impact Manager,
Research Enterprise and Innovation

“

Research is much more than the study itself, it's about your own development journey. Don't miss out on development courses and networking opportunities provided by LSBU. Above all, seek out the opportunities to present your research and network with your peers and the wider research environment. This will help you grow as a person, and to take vital steps forward in getting your hard work recognised by the people who need it most.

Professor Peter Doyle,
Research Environment Coordinator,
Research Enterprise and Innovation

“

In the immortal words of Dr Allen Tyler (alumni doctoral student), 'Don't get it right. Get it written'. It helped me a lot to remember you have control over the quantity, if not the quality of your work - sometimes the biggest obstruction to actually doing a PhD is a misplaced idea of it having to be 'perfect'.

Katie Anderson,
Applied Sciences doctoral student

“

1. Discuss concerns openly with your supervisory team, rather than become angry
2. An hour of study a day is better than trying to catch up with three months of none
3. Add your RES form submission timeline dates to your Gantt Chart

John Harper,
Research Degrees Support Officer





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In the first week, get an experienced PhD student to take you around the entire university (1-2 hours), showing you where to find

1. Buildings (e.g. Learning Resources Centre/London Road/Clarence Centre)
2. Important people (Stores/admin/HR/procurement/The Dean/finance/Research and Enterprise Team/Supervisors)
3. Your PhD colleagues

Tara Ghatauray,
Engineering doctoral student

“

My regular ‘mantras’ for doctoral candidates

1. Less is more
2. The literature review identifies a gap in the market
3. Create a regular rhythm for your week, including breaks
4. When you feel uninspired, talk
5. Engage in relevant conferences
6. Word count can be your best friend
7. Be on top of your argument.
8. Nothing is obvious
9. The conclusion becomes the introduction
10. Ensure the Abstract corresponds to the aims and insights of your actual thesis

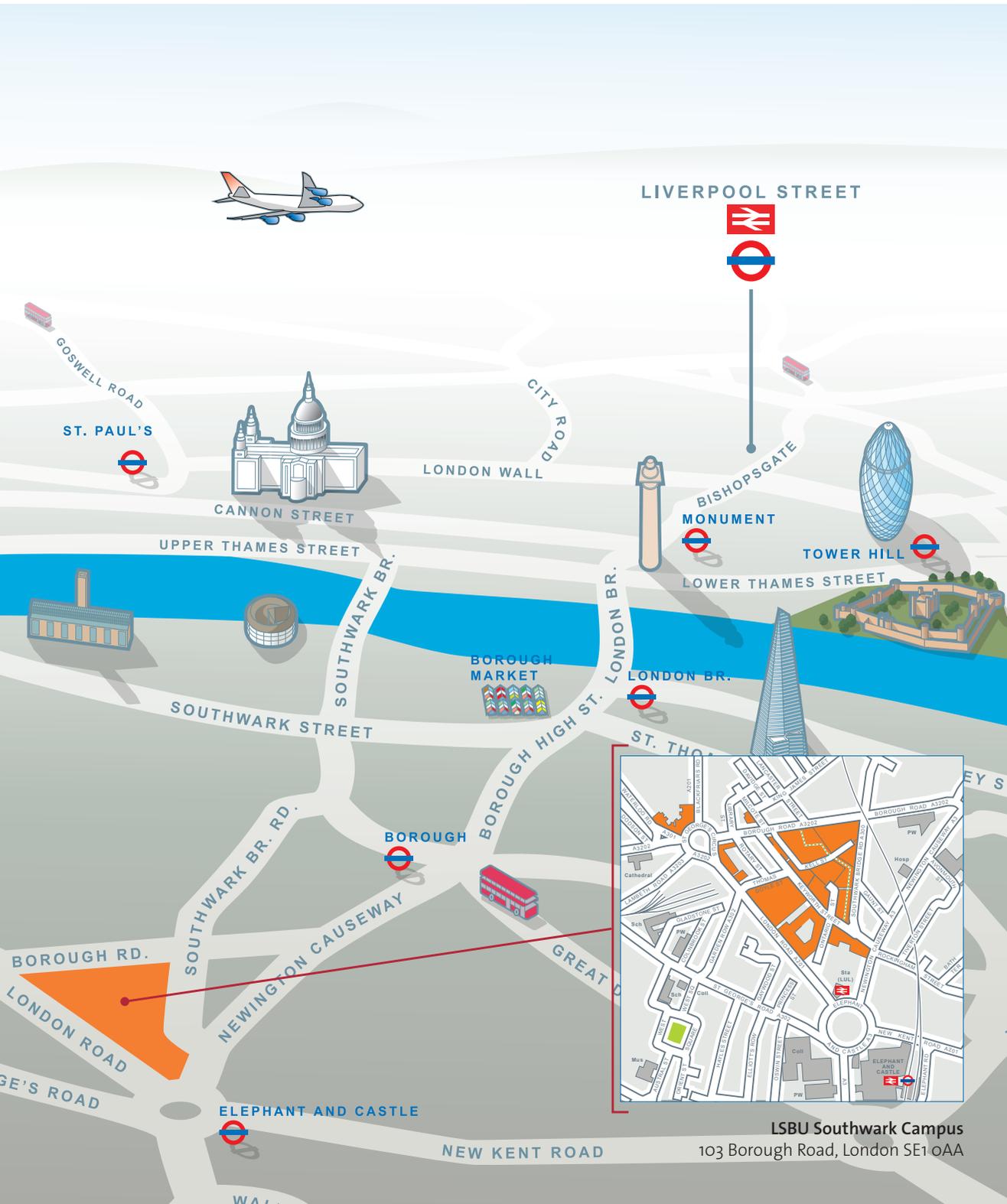
Professor Hillegonda Rietveld,
School of Arts and Creative Industries

“

A PhD is a fantastic, life-changing experience. My advice is work hard (and smart), listen to your Supervisor and enjoy it!

Professor Graeme Maidment,
Associate Director of Research and
Head of the London Doctoral Academy





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