



THE UNIVERSITY
of LIVERPOOL

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT
HANDBOOK

Edited by M. Zito

Contents

1	Introduction to the Department	4
1.1	Departmental Information	4
1.1.1	Computer Science Department	4
1.1.2	Director of Studies	4
1.1.3	Postgraduate Secretary	4
1.1.4	Student Office	5
1.1.5	Departmental Office	5
1.1.6	Resource Room	5
1.1.7	On-line Handbook	5
1.1.8	The University of Liverpool Postgraduate Society	6
1.1.9	Industrial Liaison Committee	6
1.1.10	Postgraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee	6
1.1.11	Departmental seminars	6
1.2	The University Approach to Disability Issues	7
2	Important Information for all Students	8
2.1	University Postgraduate Handbook	8
2.2	Plagiarism and collusion	8
2.2.1	Definitions of plagiarism and collusion	8
2.3	The Student Web	9
2.4	Health and Safety	9
2.5	The Guild of Students	10
2.6	The University Library	10
2.7	Computing Services Department	11
3	Admission	12
3.1	Introduction	12
3.2	Admission to the Department of Computer Science	13
3.3	Useful Websites	19
4	Progress	20
4.1	Progress Monitoring	20
4.2	Training	23

4.2.1	University Graduate School provision	24
4.2.2	Personal Development Record	24
4.2.3	Department of Computer Science Provision	24
5	Teaching and Demonstrating	26
6	Support Services for Students	27
6.1	Advisers	27
6.2	Student Support Services	27
6.2.1	Disability Support Team	28
6.2.2	International Students' Advisory Service	28
6.2.3	Financial Support and Advice	29
7	Other Useful Publications	30
7.1	Student Charter	30
7.2	University Complaints Procedure	30
A	Departmental Training Components	32
B	Attendance Record	36



A welcome to new students from the Head of Department, Professor Trevor Bench-Capon

Computer Science at Liverpool University has a history going back to the 1960s. As the subject grew in importance, the department of Computer Science was created in 1982, to provide a focus for continued development within the University. Since then the department has grown and flourished until each year we expect to welcome over 100 new undergraduate students, about 40 new postgraduate students, and many others embarking upon various joint degree and research programmes. Overall there will be approximately 400 students taking specialist degrees in computer subjects.

Like other University departments we see ourselves as having a dual role: in research, aimed at developing new knowledge and understanding of the subject of Computer Science, and in teaching and learning, through which we seek to pass on this knowledge and understanding to others. In a University, the two activities are interwoven, and both staff and students participate in both. The distinction between teachers and pupils is not as clear as it is, for example, in schools; we see learning as a co-operative process which requires effort from both sides.

You will probably find that study at the University will be more open-ended and less tightly structured than you have been used to. It may take you some time, also, to familiarise yourself with the organisation and ways of working of the University and the Department. Don't worry if you find these changes difficult at first; you will not be the only one feeling this way. I am sure that you will soon get used to the new way of life that you find here.

The purpose of this handbook is to give you at least some of the information you will need to help you find your way around the system initially; other parts will be useful for future reference. Please do look through this handbook, so that you know what it contains, and so that you will be able to find the information when you need it.

Finally, if you do encounter problems, with your work or otherwise, please remember that my colleagues and I are all here to help you in any way we can. We all hope that your time at Liverpool University will be a happy and rewarding experience for you, and will do our best to make it so.

I look forward to getting to know you during the coming years.

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Department

1.1 Departmental Information

1.1.1 Computer Science Department

The Computer Science Department is located in the Ashton Building (on Ashton street opposite Harold Cohen library). The Head of Department is Professor *Trevor Bench-Capon* whose office is on the second floor of the Ashton Building. If you have any difficulties that you cannot sort out otherwise, he may be able to help you (user id - tbc).

1.1.2 Director of Studies

The Director of Graduate Studies in Computer Science is Dr *Michele Zito*, who is responsible for all academic and administrative matters associated with your program.

You should contact Dr Zito if you have any queries or problems etc, on the programme. For more general queries it is best to contact the Postgraduate Secretary first (see section 1.1.3).

The director of studies will also wish to see you individually at certain times throughout the programme, in order to check that you have no problems and to allow you to comment on the structure and organisation of the programme. You can of course see him at any time, either by calling at his office (Room 3.06, Ashton Building) or by electronic mail (user-id michele). When people are busy electronic mail can be especially helpful either for giving quick answers to queries or for arranging appointments.

1.1.3 Postgraduate Secretary

The Postgraduate Secretary in the Department, is *Helen Bradley*. Helen can be contacted by phone on (0151) 795 4276 or by email (user-id - tigger1).

1.1.4 Student Office

The Student Office is located on the ground floor of the Ashton Building, room G.08, directly opposite the lifts and is the first point of contact for all students on undergraduate programmes. Postgraduate research students will mainly contact the Student Office in relation to teaching work they may undertake (see Section 5).

Contact details:

Janet Lowry Student Office Administrator - userid `lowryj`, tel: 0151 795 4234

Judith Lewa Undergraduate Secretary - userid `judith`, tel: 0151 795 4275

1.1.5 Departmental Office

The Departmental Office is on the ground floor of the Ashton Building and open from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday. There you will find the Head of Department Secretary, *Lisa Smith* (Phone (0151) 795 4233, user-id `lisa`), as well as the Postgraduate Secretary, Helen Bradley (see section 1.1.3).

The administrative staff will often be able to help or advise you. If you have a particular problem, they will help you find the relevant member of staff.

1.1.6 Resource Room

Both internal and external mail addressed to postgraduate students is delivered to the mailboxes located in the common room on the ground floor next to the Departmental Office. You *should* check your mailbox regularly.

You should also keep a regular check on your electronic mail, as it is the normal method of communicating day-to-day information throughout the department. Bear in mind that typically Departmental communications are sent to our local `csc.liv.ac.uk` e-mail addresses, whereas University messages normally are directed to our university addresses (suffix `liv.ac.uk`).

In the resource room you will also find useful items a fax, a printer, stationery, and cupboard with various forms (e.g. pre-paid interlibrary loan forms to request books or journals from the library, expense claim forms) that you may need to use during your degree. Ask the secretaries or your supervisors if you are in need of anyone of these items.

1.1.7 On-line Handbook

An on-line version of this Handbook is available on the department's web pages

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research/pgresearch.html>

The Handbook will be updated on a regular basis and students are informed of updates via email or 'message of the day'.

1.1.8 The University of Liverpool Postgraduate Society

The Liverpool Guild of Students ("The Guild") runs a great number of clubs and societies of which the University of Liverpool Postgraduate Society may be of interest. Further details can be found at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/gradschool/studclubs.htm>

1.1.9 Industrial Liaison Committee

The Department has an Industrial Liaison Committee, which meets once a year, in January. The committee consists of representatives of local employers of computing graduates and members of the Department. The intention of the Committee is to improve liaison with local industry and assist in making our programme more responsive to industrial needs.

1.1.10 Postgraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee

The department also has a postgraduate staff-student liaison committee (PG-SSLC) which meets several times a year. The committee consists of representatives from Postgraduate Computer Science and Computer Science related programmes of study. The aim of the committee is to provide a forum to allow issues of concern to be discussed and addressed. Postgraduate research students may be asked to nominate a colleague to serve on this committee. Currently the student representative is Mr. Matthew Webster (user-id matt, room 1.09). The current Secretary for the PG-SSLC is Dr Frans Coenen (user-id - frans). Further information can be found on the departmental web pages at

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~frans/PGstaffStudentLiaison/pgStaffStudentCom.html>

1.1.11 Departmental seminars

The Department runs several series of seminars. Notices are posted widely in the Department and on the electronic bulletin boards. Information can be found on the departmental web pages at

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research/seminars/>

Postgraduates are strongly encouraged to attend these seminars.

1.2 The University Approach to Disability Issues

The University is taking steps to encourage a supportive and accessible environment for disabled students. We would encourage disabled students to discuss their individual needs with their academic department and the Disability Support Team in the Student Services Centre in order that appropriate arrangements can be made. On request, information in this Handbook can be made available in your preferred format.

Chapter 2

Important Information for all Students

2.1 University Postgraduate Handbook

The University Postgraduate Handbook provides definitive information for students in a number of important areas. The University Handbook can be found at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/sas/administration/pgrhandbook.pdf>

2.2 Plagiarism and collusion

2.2.1 Definitions of plagiarism and collusion

University's Code of Practice on Assessment provides the following definitions of plagiarism and collusion:

"Plagiarism occurs when a student misrepresents, as his/her own work, the work, written or otherwise, of any other person (including another student) or of any institution. Examples of forms of plagiarism include:

- The verbatim copying of another's work without acknowledgement;
- The close paraphrasing of another's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement;
- Unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another's work;
- The deliberate and detailed presentation of another's concept as one's own."

All types of work submitted by students are covered by this definition, including written work, diagrams, charts and pictures."

"Collusion occurs when, unless with official approval (e.g. in the case of group projects), two or more students consciously collaborate in the preparation and production of work which is ultimately submitted by each in an identical, or substantially similar, form and/or is represented by each to be the product of his or her

individual efforts. Collusion also occurs where there is unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as the student's own."

Students found to have committed plagiarism or to have colluded in preparing assessments are liable to be severely penalised, e.g. they may be given a mark of zero for the module concerned or, in the most serious cases, may even be required to terminate their studies. Guidelines for dealing with Plagiarism and Collusion can be found at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/tqsd/Plagiarism/PlagiarismandCollusionintropage.htm>

2.3 The Student Web

This is a most important facility for students. It provides a PIN protected access to important personal and academic information. As well as being able to view their current registration details, students can also view a transcript of their studies showing the modules previously taken and the marks obtained for those modules. It also provides the means whereby students are informed of their examination timetable and the amount of fees payable by them in each session and it facilitates the requirement that students keep the University informed of their term-time, permanent and next-of-kin's addresses. Students are able to register changes in those addresses via the web. It is thus important that students familiarise themselves with this facility as soon as possible.

2.4 Health and Safety

Your safety is important to us. Ensuring the health and safety of students, staff and visitors is one of the University's highest priorities. The University is responsible for providing a safe environment and safe systems of work, but safety cannot be achieved without the full co-operation of everyone.

University Ordinances require every student whilst on University premises

- to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others;
- to act in accordance with University safety rules.

In all departments, students are required:

- to read the fire procedure notices and familiarise themselves with the alternative fire exits;
- to report accidents, near misses or dangerous conditions to a responsible member of the department;

- to co-operate with health and safety instructions.

On the University telephone system, the emergency number for fire, police or ambulance is 2222. In practical/laboratory departments there is a safety code/handbook which sets out departmental safety arrangements in detail. Further information is available at

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/department/safety.html>

If you have any problems or questions about safety, raise them with a member of teaching staff or with your Departmental Safety Coordinator, who is Mr Phil Jimmieson (user id - phil).

2.5 The Guild of Students

The Guild of Students is run for students, by students, and exists to:

- represent students at both a local and national level
- develop students through activities such as volunteering, clubs, societies, committees and LUSTI (free skills training for students)
- cater for students commercially with food, bars and entertainment offers
- provide welfare advice through the Advice Centre, which offers free, confidential and non-judgemental advice on issues ranging from housing to academic affairs and finance

The full-time Guild Officers are based on the first floor of the Guild and are:

- President, tel: 794 4122
- Communications Officer, tel: 794 4128
- Student Activities and Services Officer, tel: 794 4124
- Welfare & Equal Opportunities Officer, tel: 794 4123

2.6 The University Library

The University Library contains approximately 1.7 million books and journals. It subscribes to over 5,000 journals and also provides access to a large number of electronic journals, databases and networked CD ROMS. There are two main sites:

The *Harold Cohen* Library contains the main collections in Dentistry, Engineering, Life Sciences, Medicine, Veterinary Science, Computer Science and Mathematics. The main collections in Chemistry, Geology and Physics are housed in departmental libraries in the respective buildings. There are also branch libraries at the Veterinary Field Station on the Wirral and at the Marine Biological Station on the Isle of Man.

The *Sydney Jones* Library contains the main collections in the Arts and Social Sciences, except for Archaeology, Civic Design, Education, Law and Music, which are housed in departmental libraries in the respective buildings. This library also houses the Special Collections and Archives and the library of the Science Fiction Foundation.

The libraries provide about 1,000 study spaces and the two main buildings are equipped with PC workstations, scanners and wireless/plug-in connections for laptop computers; photocopying facilities are also available. The online catalogue (OPAC) can be accessed in the Library, from any PC connected to the University network or via the web. The Library homepage provides comprehensive information about the Library and the services it provides. Printed guides are also available.

Library Homepage: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/Library/>

Catalogue (OPAC): <http://library.liv.ac.uk/>

2.7 Computing Services Department

The Computing Services Department (CSD) provides central computing and information technology services to assist the University in carrying out its learning, teaching, research and administration.

There are a number of PC Teaching Centres, which are primarily used for teaching but, when not booked for classes, are available for individual student use. These are located in centres across the Precinct. There are also a number of Learning Centres, not bookable for classes, on the Precinct and in some of the Halls of Residence. The Teaching and Learning Centres each contain PCs linked together by a network. To use the PCs, you need to self-register by going along to one of the Centres with your student identity card.

The PC Teaching Service is based on Windows XP and provides access to a wide range of services, including electronic mail, the Internet, word processing, spreadsheets and databases.

There are a number of locations within the Precinct where you may use either WiFi (wireless) or a wired connection to connect your own portable computer (or PDA) to the University's network. The main CSD Helpdesk is located in the Brownlow Hill Building (with satellites in the two main libraries) and provides a full range of support services including problem solving, software sales and registration queries.

Full details of the services provided by CSD are at

<http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/csd/>

Chapter 3

Admission

3.1 Introduction

The Department offers a range of topics for research, particularly in the areas of agent technology, complexity theory and algorithmics, logic and computation. Detailed information on these research topics is available via

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research.html>

PhDs may be studied in either full-time mode (typically three years) or part time. The Department has funding to support PhD students, although this is limited. Funded PhD students have their tuition fees paid and also receive a bursary towards living costs. We welcome applications from students who wish to fund their own PhD studentship. Useful information about research degrees in the Department of Computer Science may be found from the following web site:

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research/pgresearch.html>

In order to be admitted onto a PhD program, an applicant needs a first degree in a related discipline. Usually we ask for a good honours degree in Computer Science or a related discipline, (e.g., Electrical Engineering) or else an MSc degree in a related discipline. Besides these general requirements, it is crucial that research interests of the applicant match as closely as possible those of the potential supervisors.

Institutional Context

1.1 The University's mission includes the commitment to deliver excellence in the quality of both its research and teaching at all levels. The University is committed to maintaining high standards in the operation of its recruitment and admissions procedures. It recognises the importance of implementing policies for the recruitment, selection and admission of students that are fair, clear, explicit and consistent.

1.2 The University's admissions practices are designed to ensure that applicants are treated wholly on the basis of their achievements and potential to complete successfully their chosen research project.

1.3 The University's admissions policies comply with current legislation affecting the admission of students, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and other relevant legislation, and are consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice on recruitment and admissions to post-graduate research programmes.

1.4 Our approach is consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education (September 2001)

3.2 Admission to the Department of Computer Science

2.1 Applications for all University research degree programmes are made via the UK Student Recruitment Office (UKSRO). Applications made through the University's authorised representatives overseas are made via the International Recruitment and Relations Office (IRRO).

Applications for MPhil /PhD research study in the Department of Computer Science should be done via the Postgraduate Recruitment Team (see <http://www.liv.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/con> by filling in the official Application Form which will be then passed to the Department for consideration.

However, it is especially advisable for applicants to become familiar with the Departmental admission policy and with additional information on the research being currently done in the Department. All this is available via

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research/>

or

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~pwg/PhD-info.html>

Entry Qualifications

2.2 The Department of Computer Science offers the following research programmes:

MPhil/PhD

Full-time

Programme code: MPHIL/SC/F

Major code: CSMR

Part-time

Programme code: MPHIL/SC/P
Major code: CSMR
Programme contact: Dr Paul Goldberg
Tel: +44 (0)151 795 4276
Fax: +44 (0)151 795 4235
e-mail: phdadmissions@csc.liv.ac.uk

Websites:

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research/pgresearch.html>
<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research/padmissions.html>
<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~pwg/PhD-info.html>

Normally, the annual intake is up to ten research students. To be eligible, applicants should possess at least an upper second class Honours degree (or its equivalent) in Computer Science or in a related subject.

Occasionally the Department may have funding for one or more PhD studentships (e.g. coming from the EPSRC Training quota). Typically these positions are only available to EU/UK applicants. An announcement is normally posted on http://www.liv.ac.uk/working/job_vacancies/ (see Research Posts), <http://www.jobs.ac.uk/> and the Departmental web pages presented above.

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning

2.3 The University recognises prior experiential learning (APL/APEL) as a valid route into study at the University. Further information on the University's APL/APEL policy may be found on the University's website at:

http://dbweb.liv.ac.uk/c11/cepd_docs/Policy10.2003.pdf.

The Department of Computer Science will decide on cases related to this issue on an individual base.

Policy on Deferred Entry

2.4 The Department of Computer Science is prepared to allow applicants to defer entry to the next academic year, if circumstances dictate (for example, if their funding arrangements are not in place). Decision will be made individually taking into account the specific situations.

Supporting Programmes

2.5 The University offers a number of programmes designed to support postgraduate study. These include pre-sessional and in-sessional language programmes provided by the English Language Unit (ELU). If applicants for postgraduate programmes have not met the required level of English language, departments may make an offer conditional on meeting the required score in

one of the recognised international tests or successfully completing a pre-sessional programme of six or ten weeks. The length of programme necessary should be decided in consultation with staff in the English Language Unit. Further details of both pre-sessional and in-sessional English courses can be found at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/english/elu/index.htm>

Further Advice to Applicants

International Qualifications

2.6 International qualifications will be evaluated on the basis of guidelines from the National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) and guidance notes circulated to admissions tutors by the IRRO.

English Language Qualifications

2.7 Applicants to the University must be able to demonstrate proficiency in the English language. The University expects that all students will have obtained a qualification in English language at the minimum level of GCSE Grade 'C' or equivalent. International students must have an internationally-recognised English language qualification and a full list of acceptable qualifications can be found at the following website:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/international/applying.htm>

In line with the Faculty of Science current requirements the Department of Computer Science will normally require the following scores or their equivalent for admission to research degrees:

- British Council IELTS test: 6.5.
- TOEFL test (paper-based): 580.
- TOEFL test (computer-based): 237.
- GCSE in English Language (from a UK examining board): minimum Grade C

The Department normally allows perspective students to take a pre-sessional English language course, provided by the University English Language Unit (ELU), in lieu of the stated English language requirement. For example, an offer conditional on the achievement of IELTS 6.5 or 6.0 plus successful completion of the ELU's six-week or ten-week pre-sessional course is a valid possibility.

Further advice on the acceptability of a fuller range of English language qualifications for students whose first language is not English may be obtained from the International Recruitment and Relations Office (IRRO) or at

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/international>

Applicants with Disabilities

2.8 The University welcomes applications from students with disabilities or learning support needs, and their applications will be considered on the same academic grounds as those of other students. Applicants will be invited to discuss their support needs with a member of the Disability Support Team so that any necessary support can be discussed and arranged. Further information on the Disability Support Team may be found at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/studentsservices/disst.htm>

What will happen to your application?

2.10 When your application arrives at the University, the UK Student Recruitment Office will send you an acknowledgement letter to confirm that it has been received and will then forward the application to the Department of Computer Science Admission Officer. UKSRO will also send you a copy of the 'Fee Status Questionnaire' if your fee status is unclear.

The main duty of the Admission Officer in the Department of Computer Science is to drive the application evaluation process. Determining eligibility, and suitability of the candidate as well as identifying supervisors and determining the direction of the research will be done individually, within the Department on the basis of the available documentation. Applicants are, in particular, invited to submit, along with the standard documentation a detailed proposal for the research they plan to undertake.

The evaluation especially the applicant Research Proposal and, possibly, on the base of contacts with the applicant. Final title of the research project is usually determined upon arrival the candidate.

Applicants will only be admitted to a research degree where a minimum of 2 appropriate supervisors can be identified and provision made for constant supervision throughout the period of registration.

Once the Departmental process is concluded the individual application packages are forwarded to the Faculty of Science office for further checking. Eventually an offer letter is sent to the candidate from the Department detailing the University final decision in relation to the particular case along with any conditions imposed on the acceptance of the candidate.

2.11 If you have applied through one of the University's authorised representatives overseas, your application will be sent by the representative to the IRRO. The IRRO will acknowledge receipt of all applications via the representative.

Applications for research projects will be forwarded with an advice sheet about your international qualifications to the department concerned via the UKSRO and will then be assessed in the way outlined in sections 2.12 to 2.15 below.

Methods of Selection of Applications

2.12 Applications will be assessed by a Departmental selection committee. Normally the assessment will be based on the content of the candidate application form, on the reference letters

provided and on a Research proposal submitted along with the application form. Such a proposal is of paramount importance in the process of finding suitable supervisors and eventually come up with a decision concerning the particular applicant. The actual Research Topic on which the applicant will embark after starting her/his degree may not coincide with the one described in the initial Proposal, as the goal of the initial Proposal is primarily to enable the Departmental selection committee to come up with a good decision on the applicant. An evaluation interview may be required in some occasions.

Applicants for a Departmental studentship should also apply in the ordinary way, but they are considered separately. They are first of all short-listed on the base of the application material. Short-listed candidates will be interviewed by a panel formed by members of the Departmental Research committee.

In all cases, successful candidates should show some knowledge of the chosen research area, a clear idea of their research plan and good use of the English language.

Telephone interviews might be arranged instead of viva-voce events for overseas candidates.

2.13 The Department of Computer Science seeks to admit students who are able to benefit from the opportunities available. Applicants will be assessed primarily by reference to prior academic achievement.

The applicant should present his/her Research Proposal (as well as any other relevant data like CV, work experience, qualifications, etc.) which would be helpful for finding a supervisor and making decision.

2.15 At all times, the Department of Computer Science strives to ensure that any assessment methods used are reliable and valid, and are proven to give an accurate indication of potential to complete successfully an applicant's chosen programme of study.

Offers

2.16 Offers of admission will vary according to circumstances. The whole selection process lasts for about 2-3 months, depending on the availability of all the necessary documents, including Research Proposal by the applicant. Final decision on making an offer is being done by the Faculty of Sciences on the base of the documents submitted with the Application Form and the positive decision of the Department. Offer letter is accompanied by key information on programme of study; year of entry; duration of programme and fees. It may be conditional, e.g. subject to satisfactory English language attainment; subject to gaining an upper second honours degree.

Induction

2.17 The Department of Computer Science places great importance on its role in training post-graduate students in research and encouraging the highest standards of scholarship.

In addition to the Graduate School Skills Programme (see section 2.5), the University also provides an annual introductory event for new postgraduate students in early October each year. Induction events also take place at departmental level. Details are normally advertised on

<http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/research/pgresearch.html>.

Feedback

2.18 The Department of Computer Science undertakes to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants on request.

Data Protection

2.19 By signing the application form or submitting an online application, applicants give permission to the University to process their personal data for the purposes of managing the University's selection and admissions procedures and for the University to use this data for maintaining its student records. This information will also be used to make statutory returns to bodies such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

2.20 Applicants and their referees should note that, under the Data Protection Act 2001, references are no longer confidential and details of references will be released by the University upon request by the student on payment of the appropriate fee.

Criminal Convictions

2.21 Having a prior criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent you from being offered a place at The University of Liverpool, but the University may contact you to request further information about the nature of your conviction and any sentence served or caution received.

Fraudulent Statements/Omissions

2.22 The University reserves the right to reject applications where any details provided by the applicant are found to be fraudulent.

Complaints

2.23 The University recognises that there may be occasions when applicants feel that they have grounds for complaint. Full details of the University's complaints procedure for admissions may be found on the University website.

Ordinances and Regulations

2.24 Full details of the Ordinances and Regulations relating to admission as a postgraduate student may be found on the University's website at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/commsec/calendar/calendar.html>

3.3 Useful Websites

The following sources of information and policy documents give further guidance on the University's recruitment and admissions practices.

- Postgraduate Prospectus (Obtainable from the UK Student Recruitment Office and on the University's website at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/courses/index.htm>)

- The University of Liverpool's Disability Statement (Obtainable from the Student Welfare and Disability Team, Student Services Centre, The University of Liverpool and on the University's website at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/student-services/dsconts.htm>)

- International Recruitment and Relations Office (IRRO) Information for international students on studying at The University of Liverpool

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/international>

- Graduate School

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/gradschool>

- UK Student Recruitment Office

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/intranet/uksro>.

Note: This policy is reviewed from time to time. Applicants and their advisers should be aware that the current version is that which appears on the Department's website at (insert URL).

Chapter 4

Progress

4.1 Progress Monitoring

Soon after the starting of the research degree, each student should start working towards defining a clear and detailed research plan. Additional details of what this involves are given in relation to the first end-of-year report further on in this section. The student progress throughout the degree will be measured against such plan.

In particular all postgraduate research students are required to:

1. *Take part in the Annual Departmental Postgraduate Workshop.* The event usually takes place in January each year. Each student gives a short talk describing her/his work. At the end of each talk time is allocated for questions and remarks. The talks are open to all members of the Department. Feedback on the student performance is requested from one of the student assessors and returned to the student after the event have taken place.
2. *Fill the Faculty Annual Progress Report.* This is normally circulated (electronically) over the summer.
3. *Fill the Departmental end of the year report.* Guidelines on how to fill such report can be found in the appropriate paragraph further down this document. For students who started their degree at the beginning of an academic year, a submission deadline is normally set (except for first year students) each year around the end of May. Progress interviews (involving the student his supervisors and the student academic adviser) are arranged soon after the report is submitted. Feedback from the assessors is returned to the student after these events have taken place.

Special arrangements will be made for part-time students who find it difficult to complete these duties. The student involved should present her/his case to the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies as soon as it arises.

The remaining part of this section gives more details about each of these events.

Departmental postgraduate workshop. This is an annual event in which PhD students present their work in the form of a talk. The talk lasts 25 minutes and 5 additional minutes are allocated at the end of each talk for questions and remarks. The event is open to everybody in the Department. Anybody in our Department can give a talk at this event. Attendance of the thesis adviser for each student giving a talk is mandatory. The adviser will be asked to fill a feedback form that is eventually returned to the student. Such form should contain comments on the student talk and on her/his overall research activity.

Faculty Annual Progress Report. The completion of an Annual Faculty Progress Report is the main mechanism through which student's progress is monitored by the Faculty. If progress is satisfactory the student is automatically re-registered for the following academic year. Normally the process takes place in the final term of each academic year (during the summer). Reports become available to students through the STUDENT WEB interface. Electronic messages are sent around when this happens. The process is web-driven and well commented through the aforementioned web site. Normally no recommendation for upgrading the student status will be made through this report. In particular the decision to upgrade the student registration status from MPhil to Phd will be made following the Departmental end-of-year review which will normally take place in September/October.

Departmental end-of-year review. It is now generally agreed to be good practice that research postgraduate students should have, on an annual basis, the opportunity to discuss their research and its progress with members of the academic staff other than their supervisor. As well as providing feedback from people external to the project, this also gives students the opportunity to raise any issues on which they would welcome some independent comment. The chief aims are:

- To help students to refine their ideas and to take stock of where they are in the PhD process;
- To provide some objective comment on the research;
- To identify any potential problems as early as possible;
- To give students experience in explaining their work, and answering questions on it;
- where appropriate, to form the basis of a decision on transfer to PhD status.

To inform the discussion it is necessary that all such students provide a report describing their progress over the past 12 months. The content of such report varies depending on the stage of the particular research degree. In broad terms the report should contain the following elements:

1. A succinct statement of the area of work, and the main contributions to the area that the work is intended to make (1 page):
2. A description of the work completed so far (about 5 pages is a reasonable length for this document, less than 4 pages, especially if including pictures, would seem rather short);

3. A description of items of work to be completed during the forthcoming year (1 page)
4. A time-tabled plan for completion of the thesis over three years.

Any published or unpublished paper produced during the time period described by the report may be submitted along with the report.

Details specific to each year of study are as follows (described only in the case of a full-time degree, they apply *mutatis mutandis* to part-time degrees as well)

Year one For students in their first year of study the end-of-year report is of particular importance. On a careful assessment of such document depends the decision, made by a Departmental Progress Board, of upgrading the student's registration from MPhil to PhD. For this reason it is expected that this report will be longer and more detailed than the similar document that student will submit in subsequent years. The report should contain a minimum of 25 pages (A4 paper, 11pt font). The general suggested structure (aims/achievements/plan) should be kept but particular attention should go into making sure that the document contains a complete, fully specified, and reasonable research plan (complete of contingency plans in case things go wrong, for instance). It is expected that any academic in this Department should be able to fully understand the document so the report should be as self-contained as possible. Reference should be used appropriately to cite other people's work. It is reasonable to assume that the length of the bibliography should not be more than 3-4 pages. Alternatively, if the student managed to produce one or more research papers already appeared in (inter)national conferences or journals, the report could consist of a short introduction detailing problem addressed in the student work and the student research plan, along with copies of all published papers.

The deadline for submitting the first year report will usually be around the end of September. Progress interviews will take place in October. The viva voce interview will involve the student, his first supervisor and the Departmental Progress Board, a committee formed by one professor from each research group and the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies.

Year two or three The report should follow the general guidelines outlined above. For year three students the report should include a thesis Table of Contents.

The deadline for submitting the report will usually be around the end of May. Progress interviews will take place in June.

Year four A draft of the thesis would serve as a report in this case. No progress interview will be arranged.

In the first two years of study, preparation of this report counts as 7 hours of research training. The subsequent interview counts as 1 hour of research training.

The student should bear in mind that this is a purely internal report. There is no need for it to be highly polished. However a good level of clarity would be beneficial as the report may be

read by people who are not necessarily specialists in the student's research area. Eleven point Times-Roman font should be used, with one inch margins all around (A4 paper size).

An electronic copy of the report (in pdf format) should be mailed by the given deadline to the DDGS, and a printed copy (signed by you and your supervisor(s)) and a copy of the Training Attendance Record (again signed by student and supervisor(s)) should be returned to the DDGS. After the report is submitted an interview, chaired by the student adviser, is run. Normally the event will involve the student, the adviser and the second supervisor. Following the discussion written feedback will be returned to the DDGS and, from him, forwarded to the student and the relevant supervisor.

Additional remarks:

- The end-of-year report is normally due by the end of May each calendar year. First year students, though, are expected to complete it in September. It is in any case advisable that such report be drafted before filling the electronic Faculty Progress Report. This will be very useful as the more detailed internal report may be used as a basis to complete the report that is handled by Faculty.
- As mentioned above, thesis pending students should submit the end-of-year report as well. However, if already after the first half of this (final) phase of work, the report should contain a thesis outline including table of contents, draft version of existing chapters, and writing plan for the remaining period of time.

4.2 Training

“The University of Liverpool requires all of its postgraduate research students to complete a training programme, or gain exemption from all or part of it, to gain a minimum of 180 training credits (or 90 training credits for an MPhil which includes 1 Research Skills Workshop, 1st year subject specific training and one year of PDR) before they can submit their thesis.

Year 1 Complete skills training to gain a minimum of 60 training credits. This includes required attendance of a Research Skills Workshop (30 credits). Complete your Personal Development Record (PDR) and Annual Progress Report. If you started PhD/MPhil after 1st September 2004 you are required to complete the PDR. Exemption can not be gained from the PDR. If you are an MD (except those from the Divisions of Child Health or Surgery and Oncology) or DClin Psychol. student you are not required to complete the PDR.

Year 2 Complete skills training to gain a minimum total (in years two and three) of 60 minimum training credits. Attending a Career Skills Workshop (30 credits) is a requirement for either the 2nd or 3rd year. Attend the 'Research in Progress Day' (aka 'Postgraduate Poster Day') in March. Complete your PDR and Annual Progress Report.

Year 3 Complete skills training to gain a combined total of 90 training credits. Attending a Career Skills Workshop (30 credits) is a requirement for either the 2nd or 3rd year. Complete your PDR and Annual Progress Report.”

Postgraduate training is provided through a number of training components (or modules). Each year, students should register as soon as possible after the anniversary of their starting date for all training components they expect to complete within one CALENDAR year.

Students can register for each training component by accessing the Student web interface. A copy of the modules they are registered for must be returned to the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible after registration.

All requirements and choices available are detailed in the forthcoming sections.

4.2.1 University Graduate School provision

All postgraduates automatically belong to the University Graduate School on registration. As part of the University’s commitment to provide excellent facilities and training for its research students, personal development and key skills training programmes will be provided via¹ the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL).

4.2.2 Personal Development Record

The University has put a high priority on giving to each student the resources to complete a *Personal Development Record* (PDR). It is a learning tool, a valuable career resource and most importantly a permanent record of the student research activity and meetings with supervisors. Showing the record to the supervisors is also a required part of your PhD programme. The Graduate School Skills Team will show you how to do yearly skills audit, how to record supervisory meetings and how to note generic skills activities such as teaching, demonstrating or joining journal clubs, during PDR workshops.

For more information have a look at

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/gradschool/PDRworkshops.htm>

4.2.3 Department of Computer Science Provision

The Department must provide a total of 30 hour training over three years. This should be easily exceeded if the student enters all activities that can qualify as training additional to the normal day-to-day running of her/his project. These will include *core training* that is concerned with the monitoring and assessment of the PhD programme of study. *Other activities* that can qualify include:

1. Attendance at Departmental seminars.

¹Contact Richard Hinchcliffe (e-mail: r.hinchcliffe@liverpool.ac.uk) for any query related to University training.

2. Specialist provision of training in a new technique or operation of instrumentation taught inside the Department.
3. Attendance at workshops/scientific meetings directly relevant to your research area.
4. Any University courses attended e.g. training for demonstrators, safety, or training provided by the Computer Services Department to learn applications of new/existing software.

Attendance to core training components is mandatory for all students. Full-time students should comply with their training requirements within their third year of study. Part-time students should comply with their requirements within their sixth year of study.

All training received during each ACADEMIC year must be logged on the Training Attendance Record form. Such form is available on the last page of this document. This must be countersigned by your supervisor, and given to the Postgraduate Training Manager along with the end of year report, before the end of year interview.

Chapter 5

Teaching and Demonstrating

The department of Computer Science employs postgraduate students to aid module lecturers in their teaching. The majority of the Undergraduate first- and second-year modules, and some third-year and Masters modules make use of postgraduate teaching assistants (“demonstrators”). Demonstrators may assist module lecturers in a variety of ways; the most common tasks are:

- being in charge of timetabled Practical sessions
- marking set assignments, and
- presenting tutorial classes.

Responsibility for the conduct and delivery of a module lies entirely with the module lecturer; this includes the responsibility to ensure that any demonstrators employed on the module are

- fully briefed on and prepared for the tasks they are required to carry out, and
- given any teaching material that will help them carry out their tasks in good time.

Postgraduate students are very warmly invited to participate to the Department’s teaching by assisting lab classes and giving a helping hand with assessments. This gives the postgrads some useful job experience (not to mention the financial side of it!) and provides an immense help with teaching in the Department.

The document “University Policy on PGs Undertaking Teaching Duties” (kindly maintained by colleagues in the Earth Science Department) is an additional source of information

<http://pcwww.liv.ac.uk/earth/PG/Demonstrating/Unipolicy.doc>

For further information on how to take part in such initiative please contact Dr. *Irina Biktasheva* (userid - ivb).

Chapter 6

Support Services for Students

6.1 Advisers

It is required by the University Code of Practice for PGR students (see the University Postgraduate Handbook) that each PhD student have, a part from a supervisor, at least one "Thesis adviser". It has been departmental practice for the last three years that students with a single supervisor should have two advisers, whereas people with two (or more) supervisors can have just one additional adviser. The adviser(s) will be involved in the assessment/monitoring of the student progress, but (s)he/they would also represent an alternative point of contact for the student in his/her everyday life. The adviser(s) can be any academic in the Department. All students that do NOT have such adviser(s) (particularly first year students) should liaise as soon as possible with their supervisor(s) and let me know their choices.

Every postgraduate student in the University is assigned to a member of staff who will act as his or her personal tutor. In the case of students enrolled on the department's Postgraduate research programme this person is chosen during the first year of study in agreement with the supervisors and the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies.

6.2 Student Support Services

There is a well established network of advisory, support and welfare services for students and all students are encouraged to make use of the services. Information is available on the web at

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/studentsservices>

and in the publication 'Your University'.

A number of services are located in the Student Services Centre including the Student Support Services as follows:

6.2.1 Disability Support Team

The student Disability Support Team offers students help and guidance with disability, specific learning difficulties and welfare issues. The University actively encourages students with disability or support needs to contact the Disability Support Team as soon as possible. Adopting a person centred approach the team can, with your consent, create an individual support plan known as a student support document which enables the team to inform academic departments, services and contacts of any support requirements. The team can also support you in applying for Disabled Student Allowance and in arranging specialist equipment or assessments including those for dyslexia. They can also refer you to a wide range of internal and external contacts for specialist advice on a range of issues including personal trauma or illness etc. Students are seen on a drop-in basis and by appointment.

Contacts

Pauline Campbell	794 4714
e-mail	p.v.campbell@liv.ac.uk
Debbie Sweeney	794 6676
e-mail	sweeneyd@liv.ac.uk

The team's webpages, including the Guide to Support and Services for Disabled Students are at

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/sas/studentsservices/>

6.2.2 International Students' Advisory Service

The International Students' Advisory Service offers specialist advice, guidance and help to international students and their families. The Advisers give assistance and advice with immigration, personal, legal and other issues. There is a range of facilities and a support network for international students and their families to ensure students enjoy their studies here and this office is the central point of reference for these. The Service produces the booklet 'Coming to Liverpool: Pre-arrival Information for International Students'. This guide, as well as helping overseas students prepare for their journey and their stay in Liverpool, includes information concerning immigration and visa controls, living costs, and local facilities and services of particular interest to those newly arrived from abroad. A 'Welcome Guide' for all new students and a booklet 'International Families in Liverpool' are also available. Information is also available on the web at

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/studentssupport/ist/index.htm>

with guidance notes and information available online, together with drop in and appointment times.

Contacts

International Students' Adviser
Sue Haines
email

794 4712
shaines@liv.ac.uk

International Students' Adviser
Joanne Bainbridge
email joanne.bainbridge@liv.ac.uk

794 6669

International Support Assistant
Diane Flanagan
email

794 4716
d.flanagan@liv.ac.uk

6.2.3 Financial Support and Advice

Applications for Hardship Loans and for assistance from the Access to Learning Fund are dealt with by the Student Financial Advisers who can also advise you on budgeting and managing your money.

Applications for Student Loans are made through your Local Education Authority but you can contact the financial advisers for advice and information. Information together with drop in and appointment times is available on the web at

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/studentssupport/finance/index.htm>

Contacts

Senior Student Financial Adviser
Linda Christian
e-mail

794 5860
l.s.christian@liv.ac.uk

Student Financial Adviser
Caroline O'Connell
e-mail

794 5861
c.a.oconnell@liv.ac.uk

Chapter 7

Other Useful Publications

7.1 Student Charter

The University of Liverpool Student Charter is issued jointly by the Senate and Council of the University and by the Representative Council of the Guild of Students. It makes explicit some of the reciprocal responsibilities which members of the University, both staff and students, have to each other and which policies and procedures in individual areas of the University should reflect. All students receive a copy of the charter upon registering with the University.

The annexe to the Student Charter is updated each year. It contains the details of all Heads of Departments, Heads of Research Centres, Institutes and Units, Heads of Academic Services provided by the University, names of the Wardens of the Halls of Residence, and the names of the Heads of Non-Academic Departments and other units.

The Student Charter and Annual Annexe are available from the Faculty Offices, the Guild of Students and Senate House reception. An electronic version of each document can be accessed at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/tqsd/Charter/studentcharterbackground.htm>

7.2 University Complaints Procedure

The University operates a student complaints procedure, to be used when students have a complaint against the University. The procedure provides for complaints to be dealt with, as far as possible, on an informal basis, but it also sets out a formal route for the consideration of complaints, should informal processes fail to resolve a complaint satisfactorily. The complaints procedure can be accessed at:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/tqsd/Charter/studentcomplaintsprocedure.doc>

Where the complaint is about an academic decision regarding assessment, the Academic Appeals procedure should be followed:

http://www.liv.ac.uk/sas/administration/assessment_appeals_ug&pgt.pdf

Complaints relating to the conduct of students are dealt with by the University's Disciplinary Procedure, which is administered by the Division of Student Administration and Support.

Appendix A

Departmental Training Components

Below is a summary of the available training activities (in thick bold characters are those that are part of the core training).

Component	Name	Description	Dates	Value	Skills area	Year
CSCR001	Literature Survey	Knowledge of Project Area. Use of databases and Library. Report normally due in second semester.	6th month of study	12	1 and 4	1
CSCR002	Preliminary Report	Report normally due at beginning of semester 2	8th month of study	6	1, 2 and 4	1 and 2
CSCR003	Postgraduate Workshop	Oral presentations	Normally May	10	3	1
CSCR004	First Year report	Scientific Writing, viva practice (the submission of a report is followed by a viva with assessors).	At the end of the first ACADEMIC year of study	6	3, 4	1
CSCR005	First year viva with assessors	Progress interview with second supervisor and adviser	Beginning of summer	5	1, 2 and 4	1,2
CSCR006	Seminars	Seminars within the department (to get credits over a year) attendance to at least 10 seminars is required.	Anytime	1	1, 2 and 4	1
CSCR007	Attendance to lectures	(e.g. Introduction to agent systems)	Term-time	10	1	1
CSCR008	Faculty of Science Poster Day	Preparation of poster and dissemination of project data	Second semester of second or third ACADEMIC year of study.	6	3	2 or 3
CSCR009	Postgraduate workshop	Oral presentations	Normally May	10	3	2
CSCR010	Second Year report	Scientific Writing, viva practice (the submission of a report is followed by a viva with assessors).	At the end of the second ACADEMIC year of study.	8	3, 4	2
CSCR011	Second year viva with assessors	Progress interview with second supervisor and adviser	Beginning of summer	1	1, 2 and 4	1,2
CSCR014	Symposium	Participation to Departmentally organised workshop/meeting.	Anytime	16	1, 2 and 4	2

The following paragraphs give more details about some of these activities.

CSCR001: Literature Survey. All full-time MPhil/PhD students should submit a Literature Survey by the end of their first six months of study. Part-time students may submit this document by the end of their first year of study.

Compiling a literature survey should not be a very difficult task, as most students in their first six months of study will probably be involved in some kind of literature survey/exploration. It shouldn't take more than a day to complete this report (perhaps picking from the various log files and little notes that the student must have no doubt collected on her/his desk).

As to the format of the report, as a rule of thumb one page of references without anything else would look rather "slim", but a 3-4 page document (depending on font, spacings, etc) containing half a page summary of the student research and an annotated bibliography would look quite appropriate.

An electronic version of such document (preferably in PDF format) should be sent by e-mail to the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies.

CSCR002: Preliminary Report. The students registered to this component should prepare a 4 page report by the end of their 8th month of study (twice this period for part-time students).

An electronic version of such document (preferably in PDF format) should be sent by e-mail to the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies.

CSCR003 and CSCR009: Postgraduate workshop. Attendance to the departmental postgraduate workshop (see Section 4.1) counts as departmental training.

A student should register for CSCR009 the year AFTER (s)he registered for CSCR003 (two years after in the case of part-time students). A full-time student whose registration started between September and December of each year should register for CSCR003 before Christmas and attend the next session of the event. A full-time student whose registration began before September may register for CSCR003 the following October.

CSCR007: Attendance to lectures. Some Postgraduate Research Students may find it beneficial (esp. at the beginning of their research degree) to attend one or more modules among those offered to undergraduate or taught postgraduate students. For instance during the first semester of the MSc program offered by our Department, we run a module called *Research Methods* (COMP516) which may provide a research student with an array of useful techniques and skills. Interesting modules may be run in other Departments (e.g. Mathematics).

It is strongly recommended that the student asks permission to the lecturer in charge of the particular module before the start of the lecture period.

CSCR008: Faculty of Science Poster Day. For several years the faculties of the University have coordinated a week (normally before Easter) in which second year PhD students have presented posters of research in progress, with each faculty or combinations of faculties presenting for successive single days. All Staff and research students of the University and affiliated institutions are asked to attend and support the event. An abstracts volume will be produced, for

distribution at the meeting. Details of the event are normally made available to people involved in January each year.

Attendance to such event (plus all necessary preparation leading to it) counts as part of the Departmental postgraduate training.

Appendix B

Attendance Record

On the following page there is a copy of the training attendance record that each student needs to return to the Departmental Director of Graduate Studies to get credit for the training undertaken each academic year.

Training attendance record. Specify all training components you have undertaken over the last ACADEMIC year.

Component	Name	Attended (insert a tick or a date)
CSCR001	Literature Survey	
CSCR002	Preliminary Report	
CSCR003	Postgraduate Workshop	
CSCR004	First Year report	
CSCR005	Viva with assessors (first year)	
CSCR006	Seminars	
CSCR007	Attendance at Honours lecture course	
CSCR008	Faculty of Science Poster Day	
CSCR009	Postgraduate workshop	
CSCR010	Second Year report	
CSCR011	Viva with assessors (second year)	
CSCR014	Symposium	

Any other University training undertaken over the last 12 months:

Student name and signature:

Supervisor(s) name(s) and signature(s):