INFORMATION FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL OF GEO SCIENCES

This document should be read in conjunction with The University of Sydney Postgraduate Studies Handbook that is mailed to each student or available from the Faculty Office in the Carslaw Building. It can be found on the web (along with many other handbooks) via: http://sydney.edu.au/handbooks/index.shtml

School of Geosciences
The School of Geosciences is located in the Madsen Building near the City Road entrance to the main campus of the University. Administration staff are found on Level 3 and academics and postgraduate offices are located on Level 4. More information about the School can be found on the School website: http://sydney.edu.au/science/geosciences/index.shtml

Induction
All new students are taken through the induction process by their supervisor (or a nominated representative) upon beginning their postgraduate studies.

During the induction process, students are
1. Shown where their office is
2. Provided with a key and security access to the building
3. Provided with a computer or shown how to obtain computer access
4. Introduced to key members of staff (including the administration team, the postgraduate coordinator and the postgraduate representative)
5. Given a tour of the Madsen Building, including photocopiers, mail room, bathroom and kitchen location

Please see induction information on the school website: http://sydney.edu.au/science/geosciences/admin/internal/ad_induction.shtml

OH&S (Occupational Health and Safety)
All students must be aware of the University’s OH&S policy. This policy can be found on the School website at: http://sydney.edu.au/science/geosciences/admin/internal/ad_ohs.shtml

The OH&S officer is:
Tom Savage
Madsen Room 305
Telephone: 9351 3390
Email: tom.savage@sydney.edu.au

SUPRA
Postgraduate students are represented at the University level by the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association. SUPRA is an independent representative association providing advice, advocacy and support services to the postgraduate students at the University of Sydney. More information on SUPRA can be found here: http://www.supra.usyd.edu.au/

The Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) produces a Survival Manual and a booklet called "The thesis guide: practical aspects of producing a thesis, treatise or dissertation at The University of Sydney". Students may find these publications helpful, especially in those final desperate hours! If you would like a copies contact SUPRA directly: 9351 3715 or via the SUPRA website.

Learning Centre
All postgraduate students are encouraged to attend free workshops put on by the Learning Centre. Topics covered include: Functional Grammar for Academic Writing, Critical Reading, Clearer writing, Oral presentation skills, working with your supervisor. Some programs are specifically intended for non-English speakers. The Centre is located at Room 722, Education Building A35 (Beside Manning House),

Telephone: 9351 3853
Email: learning.centre@sydney.edu.au

Information can be found on line at: http://sydney.edu.au/stuserv/learning_centre/index.shtml
**Supervisor**
The Supervisor of a student, in terms of a scientist with well-established expertise in the given research field, must be an academic member of the School of Geoscience who acts as the student's intellectual Supervisor. The supervisor is that member of the academic or, as appropriate, senior research staff, appointed to take primary responsibility for the conduct of the candidature. The supervisor must be available at all stages of the candidature for advice, assistance, and direction and is responsible for the progress of the candidature to the head of department/school and the faculty or college. At least one associate supervisor will also be appointed (see 'associate supervisor' below). A principle followed in the appointment of supervisors is that the candidate should, under normal circumstances, be able to expect continuity of supervision. This means not only that some form of supervision will be available at all times throughout the candidature, but that a staff member nearing retirement, for example, will not normally be appointed as supervisor unless prepared to undertake in writing to continue the supervision beyond their retirement.

The supervisor should also ensure that an acting supervisor is appointed during her or his absence from the University for any period of a month or more, and should assist the acting supervisor by informing them about the progress of the candidature.

*See also: Postgraduate Studies Handbook, The Role and Duties of a Supervisor:*

**Associate Supervisor**
An Associate Supervisor must be appointed from within the School or University to ensure that during the absence of the Supervisor, the Associate Supervisor can be appointed as Acting Supervisor. In view of the small size of the School, it may not be possible to find a second academic staff member with detailed expertise in the student's research area. However, the main role of the Associate Supervisor will be to act as an adviser, intermediary and spokesperson for the student, including assuming a quasi-pastoral role if necessary.

You must consult with your supervisor to make sure they have appointed (and you are aware of) an internal Associate Supervisor who is on the academic staff of the School. You must keep your Associate Supervisor informed of your progress.

Another Associate Supervisor can be appointed from outside the School or the University if this is deemed necessary for provision of scientific/intellectual input into the project, especially for projects in cooperation with another university, government agency, or industrial company. If persons from outside of the University are involved in supervising a student, it must be ensured that the direction of the student's work is entirely under the control of the University and the candidate.

**Postgraduate Coordinator**
The Postgraduate Coordinator must be an academic staff member of the School of Geosciences. His/her role includes: overseeing and monitoring the execution of MSc. and PhD. projects in the time frame given. He/she shall arrange for adequate and prompt review of the proposal for a research project to make sure that the time schedule is reasonable, the project is scientifically sound, is appropriate to the resources available and fits the background of the student. Any proposed change of topic or direction of research raised by the Supervisor with the student must be discussed with the Postgraduate Coordinator, or with the Head of School, if the Supervisor and Postgraduate Coordinator is the same person.

The Postgraduate Coordinator and the Assistant Postgraduate Coordinator represent a second line of appeal on any matter to do with student problems after such problems have been raised with the Supervisor/Associate Supervisor. In the case where the Supervisor and Postgraduate Coordinator are the same person, the Head of School is the second line of appeal. The Postgraduate Coordinator shall organise the proposal review process and interviews for all candidates.

**Current Postgraduate Coordinator**

**Derek Wyman**
Madsen Room 464
Telephone: (02) 9351 2924
E-mail: derek.wyman@sydney.edu.au

**Assistant Postgraduate Coordinator**

**Bill Pritchard**
Madsen Room 450
Telephone: (02) 9351 3309
E-mail: bill.pritchard@sydney.edu.au
Postgraduate Student Representative
The School has a postgraduate representative who is elected annually by the postgraduate student body. The role of the postgraduate representative is to represent student issues at the School level. The postgraduate representative attends School Board meetings, staff/student liaison meetings and acts as your IT representative. In 2011, your representative is:

Laurence Troy
Madsen Room 420
Telephone: 9351 7669
Email: laurence.troy@sydney.edu.au

Library
The Geosciences library is the SciTech library located across City Road from Madsen, next to the Wentworth Building. This is your ‘home’ library. The School has been assigned a library liaison who helps address Geosciences-related issues. The liaison officer can assist with issues such as access to specialised databases, borrowing questions and Endnote. Our liaison is:

Troy Mutton
SciTech Library
Jane Foss Russell Building, G02
Telephone: 8627 8741
Email: troy.mutton@sydney.edu.au

Further information about the library can be found here:
http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/about/policies/liblo.html

Forms
Copies of Forms you need for application for extension, suspension, absence, time away and complete away, change in attendance status, withdrawal/discontinuation of candidature can be found at:

It is essential that you submit an “Intention to Submit” form three months before you submit your thesis. The University’s Academic Board now requires that you submit an explanation if you fail to provide this warning in time. Other forms for scholarship holders (including a Scholarship Payment Authority Form and a “Thesis Allowance Claim”) are available at:
http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/psa_forms.shtml

Information Technology
If you have problems related to computers then you need to contact ICT (Information and Communication Technology), who provide all desktop support for the staff and students of the School. To request IT support you MUST log a job with the ICT Helpdesk by calling x16000 or by emailing support@usyd.edu.au (recommended only for non-urgent enquiries).

Some information about the support arrangements and answers to common queries can be found on the School's website:

You can also familiarise yourself with ICT's website:
http://itassist.usyd.edu.au

Email and Internet
All Students are given a ‘UniKey’ account that lets them access services around the university. More information can be found at:

There are TWO email systems operated by the University that you will have access to. You should have already been provided with information regarding the student email system. This can be accessed through the ‘MyUni’ portal on the University webpage using your unikey and password. This email will be:
your_UniKey@uni.sydney.edu.au.

The second email system, which is the most important, is the Exchange staff based email system and is where all school related notices will be sent. This can be accessed from the University main webpage by clicking “Staff and
Careers” then “Email-Exchange” on the right hand side of the webpage. To log in you use your same unikey and password. This is the email address that will be set up in Outlook on your desktop computer by IT. This email address will be:
firstname.lastname@sydney.edu.au

If you have a problem accessing this email account you may need to ‘synchronise’ you passwords. This can be done via the following webpage:

It is recommended that you set up a forwarding rule in the student email system to your ‘Exchange’ email address then only use the one.

All official University and School communication is by email directed to the Exchange email address (@sydney.edu.au). Important information from the School is regularly distributed via email groups such as: 
“_Science Geo Postgrad” ( _ScienceGeoPostgrad@mcs.usyd.edu.au)

Note that staff do not get mail sent to this particular email group, which means that it can be used to discuss postgraduate-related issues without your supervisor seeing it!

You must check your university email account regularly

Internet is available through the desktop computer provided by the school. If you require access to the internet on your own laptop, this can be done through the use of the University’s wireless network. You will need to set up a VPN connection on your laptop and enable access through IT. Once enabled, you will be able to access the internet anywhere on campus using the university wide wireless network. For more information and guides on how to set up a VPN connection please check the following website:

Employment

The School offers casual tutoring and occasional research assistant work to postgraduate students. To find out more about these opportunities please speak to your supervisor or the postgraduate coordinator.

School Travel Policy

The School must be aware of any official travel that you undertake and must provide you with prior approval. An appropriate form can be obtained from the School’s front desk (see Grace Zhang) or from the postgraduate coordinator via email. For more information about the School’s travel policy, see:

A good place to find out about University policy is the “Policy Online” page at:

Travel Insurance

The University provides free Travel Insurance (health, accident and theft) for field work beyond a 50km radius of the campus and overseas. In order to be covered it is the students responsibility to complete and submit a copy of the School’s Postgraduate Travel form (noted above).

Prior to fieldwork, students should read the information provided at:

Candidature Information and Time schedule

MSc: The MSc. thesis is by research. The timeframe for MSc. projects is 1 to 2 years. The MSc. project must have an objective that is distinctly different from the honours project and must represent a new research topic. It is not allowed to choose a MSc. topic which is based on the same data set used for an honours project or which only elaborates on existing work. If part of a student's background requires strengthening with respect to the research he/she has chosen to carry out, the student will be required to complete those units of study.

PhD: A PhD. thesis is distinguished from any other postgraduate degree in that a "substantially original contribution to a subject” is required. The timeframe for a PhD is years. It is important for PhD. students to have a clear understanding of their aims and research framework after one semester. See Faculty of Science Handbook.
Thesis Length: Please check with you supervisor early in your candidature how long your thesis is expected to be.

Changes to enrolment: Enrolment, suspension of candidature, changing from full-time to part-time, thesis submission and withdrawals must be done prior to the two census dates of 31 March and 31 August. This is particularly important if HECS fees or international student fees are involved.

Part-time candidature: In case of part-time candidature the time schedules outlined above are extended based on the individual schedule of the student which has to be determined by the Supervisor and Postgraduate Coordinator. See the Postgraduate Studies Handbook for further details.

Probation: All candidates are on probation for two semesters and must provide evidence of satisfactory progress to have their candidature confirmed. All students completing their second semester will be interviewed by the Postgraduate Review Committee (made up of the postgraduate coordinator and one other internal academic) about their progress and they must give an oral presentation to staff and other postgraduates (see Postgraduate Presentations for further information).

Progress Reviews of All Students: A first draft of a thesis project research proposal must be submitted by the student to the Supervisor in the first 6 months of their candidacy (~ September 1 or ~ 1 February). It should contain the academic aims of the project, ideas for a research plan and methodology, as well as an initial timetable. At this stage the proposal is not expected to be comprehensive, complete, or in its final form.

A typical structure for the PhD. thesis research proposal:
Length: 20 to 30 pages (1.5 spacing), depending on the advice of the supervisor
Content to include (but not necessarily restricted to)
- Abstract
- Aims (a problem statement is common in Human Geography)
- Background – Literature Review
- Research Plan and Methodology
- Data collection/research completed in the first 6 months (if applicable)
- Budget and Budget justification
- Time Table
- References

MSc students are also required to prepare a research proposal, which would have a similar structure but a shorter length. Again, please consult with your supervisor on the details of the proposal.

Postgraduate Presentations: All postgraduate students must present their work at the annual postgraduate presentation day(s). This is usually held in November, except for students who enrolled at mid-year. Students present for 15-20 minutes on an aspect of their work (this include 5 minutes of question time). Prior to presenting students must submit an abstract to the postgraduate coordinator. The abstracts are then circulated to all prior to the presentations. All postgraduate students and academic staff are expected to attend the presentations in November. In 2011, Assistant Postgraduate Coordinator Bill Pritchard will oversee the presentations of Geography postgraduate students.

Under achievement: The achievements of the student or lack thereof will be assessed mainly through the interviews by the Postgraduate Review Committee. Milestones of particular importance are the presentation of an initial research proposal after one semester, a complete research proposal and oral seminar at the end of two semesters as described above. If it appears that the student has not made sufficient progress in understanding the chosen subject and outlining a sound research proposal to make a new contribution to a subject, the proposal will have to be resubmitted within 3 months. Students can be dropped from the postgraduate program due to insufficient progress, such as failure to present a sound research proposal or insufficient progress in research.

Contracts with industry/government agencies: Postgraduate research projects that are developed in cooperation with a government agency or industrial company may require a written agreement between the University and the agency/company/organisation involved. The conditions of it may affect a whole range of academic issues, namely access to data, confidentiality agreements, the supervisory process, students fulfilling School processes of review and assessment, publications rights and intellectual property, etc. Consequently postgraduate students should not sign any contracts or documents provided by companies/agencies without knowledge of the Head of School.

Publications: Students are encouraged to publish self-contained portions of their work. A student must be given the opportunity to be first author of a publication based on their thesis research. If a student declines to write a paper within a reasonable amount of time (1 year max.) after completing his/her thesis research, they surrender their right to be first author.
In terms of co-authorship, the minimum requirements are "participation in conceiving, executing, or interpreting at least part of the research reported" (see Postgraduate Studies Handbook). A student cannot be forced to accept "honorary authorship" of a co-author. For example if a company, agency or academic has contributed data to a project, this in itself is not sufficient for a company/agency representative to become co-author of a publication. A company's/agency's contribution of data should be acknowledged in the acknowledgments in a publication.

Copyright Basics: e.g., Can I adapt an existing diagram for research or study? It’s difficult to give a definitive answer as each case has to be judged on its merits. It is likely that adapting an image or diagram for the purposes of research or study would not be an infringement of copyright. You need to remember the moral rights clauses (http://sydney.edu.au/copyright/basics/key_concepts/what.shtml#moral) of the Copyright Act and acknowledge the creator of the original work. Any modifications you make to a work should not adversely affect the reputation of the creator or subject the work to derogatory treatment.

If you are planning to use the adapted diagram in a publication you may need to obtain permission after applying the following guideline: if you put the original work and your derivative work side by side and can still identify important or substantial parts of the original work in your derivative work, then you should obtain permission to make the changes and publish your derivative work. For further information see: http://sydney.edu.au/copyright/basics/copying/research_study.shtml

Thesis Submission

- 3 copies of the thesis are required for MSc
- 4 copies of the thesis are required for PhD

Students must submit their completed thesis to the Faculty Office along with a “Statement by Supervisor on Submission” form stating that the thesis is in a form of presentation suitable for examination. In the case of data in the form of spreadsheets it is recommended that the data also be included on CD’s or DVD’s in the back of the thesis in an envelope. Maps, seismic sections and published papers should also be included in the thesis in envelopes at the end of the thesis. Note that if your examiners agree, you may submit your thesis “electronically” for assessment. For more information on submission requirements and procedures, check the Faculty of Science website:

As long as the thesis is submitted before the HECS census dates of 31 March or 31 August the student will not be charged for an additional semester.

The School also requests that it be provided with digital versions of the thesis (e.g., pdf + data files). These serve as back up for lost theses and facilitate requests for copies of the thesis from other researchers, thereby increasing the work’s scientific impact. In the geosciences it is often the case that a large amount of data and maps is involved in a thesis.

Thesis Allowance: There is a sum of money available to cover costs of printing a thesis, which is a maximum of $420 for MSc students and $840 for PhD students. For more information on requirements and conditions please check the following website:
http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/psa_forms.shtml

Examination Process: Supervisor must appoint two examiners for MSc (at least one external) on the form available from the Faculty Office (the School Office also has copies). Three examiners are required for PhD (at least two external). Supervisors cannot be examiners. Supervisors must confirm that the examiners agree to examine the thesis in a timely fashion.

The examiners are asked to determine if:
1. the thesis is a substantially original contribution to the knowledge of the subject concerned;
2. the thesis affords evidence of originality by the discovery of new facts;
3. the thesis affords evidence of originality by the exercising of independent critical ability;
4. the thesis is satisfactory as regards literary presentation; and
5. a substantial amount of material in the thesis is suitable for publication.

Results can be expected from three months after submission. Assuming the thesis passes, students then go on to graduate. The University advises students of graduation dates.
Thesis by Published Work: To provide an incentive for publication of work during a candidature it is now possible to submit published work as your thesis. This would be of advantage in terms of, for example, providing critical feedback on your work during candidature, spreading and possibly shortening the writing period, providing a measure of the progress, adding to your curriculum vitae, etc.

A collection of disparate publications, no matter what their quality, is not appropriate for the award of a PhD. Rather, it is assumed that the candidature has been responsibly planned and supervised as an integrated project and that the publications represent elements of a connected whole, as they would, for example, as chapters in a thesis in advance of publication. This option should be discussed with your supervisor. To be examined:

- The Faculty is notified by the Head of School (or Postgraduate Coordinator) that the thesis is to be examined under these provisions.
- The Head of School provides a statement with the thesis certifying the extent of the candidate’s contribution and input to the published work.
- In addition to copies of the published work, the thesis should contain an introductory section in which the student places the thesis critically in the context of the field, the student’s summary of the contribution of the work to the field and the student’s critical evaluation of the role of the thesis in informing further research in the field.
- The examiners are advised of the nature of the publications and are given a copy of the certification of the candidate’s contribution and input to the published work.
- The examiners be asked to record whether, in addition to the provisions of Academic Board Resolution 2(5), the extent of the student's contribution and the vehicle(s) of publication are appropriate for the award of the PhD.

Scholarships

APA and UPA: Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) and University Postgraduate Awards (UPA) for stipends can be applied for during candidature. Closing date is 31 October. Check Scholarships Office and notice board for other scholarships.

Scholarship holders note: If you intend to suspend your enrolment then check very carefully to find out when your scholarship can or will re-commence. It may not begin again until after the next census date.

Other Scholarships are listed by School or Department near the back of the Science Faculty Handbook (not the Postgraduate Handbook), which is also available at the handbook webpage:
http://www.usyd.edu.au/handbooks/

Funds for postgraduates

Any additional funds for your research project normally come from your supervisor’s research grants, as confirmed by your supervisor on your application for postgraduate study. Some additional funds may be available, however, under several schemes (see ‘scholarships”).

PRSS: Postgraduate Research Support Scheme (PRSS) for Postgraduates making an oral or poster presentation or incidental expenses related to you research

Applications: Twice a year, although in Geosciences these funds are usually only allocated once per year in April.

Amount awarded: Up to $1200 depending on location, registration fees, financial circumstances and previous support. Note that the funds actually available rarely correspond to the maximum value allowed for in the award.

Updated Guidelines including application submission dates are provided each year by the postgraduate coordinator.

Grants-in-aid: Grants-in-aid (GIA) are available to provide students with travel grants to support short-term periods of research overseas; applicants must be citizens or permanent residents of Australia. Most grants are open only to full-time students enrolled in a research degree, although some are offered to undergraduates. Individual grants vary in value and purpose with most approximately $1,500. Some GIA are open to applicants in any research area or faculty, however many awards are targeted at students in particular faculties, departments or research areas. For example, the The Edgeworth David Traveling Scholarship is directed at students in Geological Sciences.

Application dates are relayed to students by the Postgraduate Coordinator. They are generally in April. Information on the Various GIA can be found at:
http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/
**School Facilities**

**Office space:** The School allocates office space to all postgraduate students. Keys to the office and building are allocated administrative Staff.

**Telephone:** Reasonable access provided for local business calls. Supervisor to authorise work related STD calls.

**Computers:** Full time students who are not provided with a computer by their supervisor will have the use of a leased (desk top) computer. At present, attempts are made to provide part-time students with other, non-leased, computers in the School. Additional Postgraduate computer facilities, plus colour scanners, and printers are available in the Geoscience Postgraduate Computer laboratory in Madsen Room 304. Integrated printer-photocopier-scanners are available in the Madsen mailroom (Room 354) and in Room 443.

**Filing Cabinets:** The school provides lockable filing cabinets. This needs to be authorised by supervisors and organised through Nikki Montenegro in the office on level 3.

**Laboratory space:** To be organised by your supervisor. To access most of the facilities listed below requires discussion with your supervisor for authorisation and account to be charged.

**Vehicles and boats:** Available for field-work and research provided the student has a valid licence and has completed the driver training course organised through Risk Management (see Tom Savage to organise). Supervisor to authorise and provide account number for vehicle log book.

**Photocopying:** Students have access to free photocopying and printing in the Madsen Building. A photocopy card for use in the Library is available from the Office.

**Thin-sections:** Supervisor to approve and submit samples through Dr Wyman (not locally available at this time).

**Microscopes:** Research microscopes are available in Room 329.

**Electronics/mechanical workshop/field equipment:** Advice and facilities available and should be organised through your Supervisor.