

## Section 1: Introduction

Welcome to De Montfort University.

As a student studying for the award of MA or MSc by Research at this University you are required to undertake generic and Faculty level research training courses. These courses are not credit-bearing but they are a compulsory element of the Masters and attendance will be monitored. You may well have additional research needs specific to your area of research or project and you will be asked to discuss these with your supervisor so that all reasonable support can be offered to you.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a source of information about the training requirements and also a tool for you to consider the skills you already have and those you need to develop further.

The Masters by Research extends the skills required for the study of a discipline at degree level, but also requires higher level research skills associated with independent study and with managing and completing a substantial research project. The characteristics of Masters Graduates are outlined by the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in their *Master's Degree Characteristics* published in March 2010.

These include the possession of:

- in-depth knowledge and understanding of the discipline informed by current scholarship and research,
- the ability to study independently,
- the ability to use a range of techniques and research methods applicable to advanced scholarship in the subject,
- the ability to continue to learn independently and develop professionally , including the ability to pursue further research where appropriate.

### Action Required:

Please refer to **Section 2** which identifies the training courses you are required to complete. If you are not able to demonstrate that you have attended all the required training courses you will not be able to progress to submission of your thesis.

Please complete **Section 3 – Training Needs Statement** to identify your strengths and those areas you need to develop further.

## **Section 2: Generic and Faculty Training Courses**

As part of your Masters by Research award you are required to attend a number of generic and Faculty specific courses throughout your time at the University. These courses are not credit-bearing but they are a compulsory element of the Masters and attendance will be monitored.

The courses are organised centrally by the Graduate School Office.

*It is your responsibility as a student to ensure you attend and complete each training course.*

### **Course Bookings**

The bookings can be made through the Graduate School Office. Places on each course are limited, so booking is essential. You can check availability of places and book to attend a course by email at [rtp@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:rtp@dmu.ac.uk) or by phone on 0116 250 6242.

You will receive email confirmation of your booking and an email reminder will be sent to you approximately one week prior to the course taking place.

If you cannot attend a course for any reason it is vital you inform the Graduate School Office as early as possible so your place can be offered to a fellow student.

### **Attendance and Training Attendance Records**

Attendance is compulsory for the entire duration of each course, failure to complete to the satisfaction of the presenter will be deemed as non-completion.

An attendance register will be taken at each course; please ensure you sign the register each time you attend a course.

Individual training attendance records which provide an overview of the courses you have completed and those still outstanding will be posted twice a year to all students in July and December.

Attendance certificates will be issued upon completion of your Masters.

### **Course Completion**

This handbook provides full details of each of the courses offered. You are required to undertake all compulsory courses and these are assigned to a group, which indicates which stage of your research the course is most suitable for.

All compulsory courses must be completed before being eligible to progress to submission of the thesis.

We are aware part-time students have many commitments; if you are studying part-time you are given a longer time period to complete the compulsory training courses, in line with the expected timeframe for completion of your degree.

The following table indicates when you are expected to complete courses within each group.

Course Group	Expected Completion For Full-Time Students	Expected Completion For Part-Time Students
Group A	Within 3 months of enrolment	Within 3 months of enrolment
Group B	Between 3 and 6 months after enrolment	Between 3 and 6 months after enrolment
Group C	Within 9 months of enrolment	Within 18 months of enrolment

The Graduate School Office takes non-attendance very seriously and failure to attend courses booked, without prior notification, may affect your registration on the programme.

### Special Requirements

If you have any particular needs you would like the administrators or presenters to be aware of please notify us in advance of the course. Contact the Graduate School Office if you require:

- building or room access information,
- information on resources and equipment available to you,
- materials in an alternative format.

### Requirements For Students Where English Is Not The First Language

If you are a student studying in the UK at De Montfort University and English is not your first language you are **required** to attend an English language initial assessment session at the Leicester City campus **within 6 months** of commencing your research.

Students who have passed the necessary IELTS/ TOEFL course are also required to attend the initial assessment. The initial assessment requires you to undertake a written and spoken test to identify your level of English to determine:

- if the level of English is of a satisfactory standard for undertaking study at Masters by Research level, in which case you will not be required to attend any further sessions,
- if the level of English requires further assistance, in which case you will be advised how many classes you must attend to attain the required level.

The course duration is highly dependent on the needs of individual students. Courses are held exclusively for research students and are targeted specifically at your needs.

If you have been awarded the degree of MA, MSc, MBA, you will not be required to attend the English language sessions if the following two conditions are met:

1. the degree was awarded by a UK University within the 5 years prior to your enrolment on a DMU research degree programme,

and

2. your first supervisor confirms in writing, within 6 months of you starting your research degree, that your English is of a sufficient standard to undertake research.

## Summary Of Generic Courses

Below is a list of all generic courses that form part of your Masters by Research; refer to individual course descriptions for further information about the content of the course.

### Compulsory

Course Title	Group
English Language for Academic Research Purposes* (REST7104)	A
Literature Searching (REST7001)	A
Planning and Managing Research (REST7102)	A
Preparing For Your Viva (REST7303)	C

\* Refer to page 3 to see if you need to complete this course.

### Optional

Course Title
Intellectual Property Rights and Ethics (REST7103)
Research Ethics: Online Resource (REST7525)

## **Summary Of Faculty Courses**

Each Faculty has its own research methods training for MA/MSc Research students and are designed to facilitate the change in level from undergraduate to postgraduate study. The main aim of this training is to equip students with the tools and knowledge essential to effective research in their discipline.

Only when a student has successfully completed all components will they be eligible to progress to submission of the thesis. Faculty Heads of Research Students will assume responsibility, in liaison with supervisors, for recording successful completion of research methods training and will confirm this in writing to the Graduate School Office for their records.

In addition to the training courses you are required to complete Section 3 - Training Needs Statement in consultation with their supervisor.

## **Faculty Of Art, Design and Humanities**

You will need to complete the training most relevant to your area of research.

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Group</b>
Research Methods: Online Resource (REST7701)	A

## **Faculty Of Health and Life Sciences**

### **Compulsory**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Group</b>
Introduction to the Faculty (REST7016)	A
Health and Safety in Laboratories* (REST7015)	A
Principles of Research in the Health and Life Sciences (REST7028)	A

\* Only compulsory for students working in a laboratory or similar setting during their research

### **Optional**

<b>Course Title</b>
Presentation of Research Data and Participation in Analytical Discussion (REST7026)

## **Faculty Of Technology**

### **Compulsory**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Group</b>
Research Methods (REST7013)	A

### **Optional**

<b>Course Title</b>
Research Seminars (REST7610)

## **GENERIC COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

Courses are held regularly throughout the year and managed by the Graduate School Office.

To reserve a place on these course please contact the Graduate School Office on 0116 250 6242 or by email at [rtp@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:rtp@dmu.ac.uk).

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### **English Language for Academic Research Purposes (REST7104)**

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory - Group A

**Course Description:**

This course is compulsory for students where English is not their first language and is targeted specifically at individual needs. The following topics are covered:

- academic writing skills,
- presentation skills,
- general English language skills,
- advice on form filling,
- writing summaries, abstracts and journal articles.

By the end of this course students will be able to understand the writing conventions of a thesis/journal article and produce both genres using appropriate academic style and lexis.

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemption will be considered. Please refer to page 3.

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### **Intellectual Property Rights and Ethics (REST7103)**

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**Course Completion:** Optional

**Course Description:**

This is an introductory course to the concepts of and University regulations concerning intellectual property rights and ethics as they apply to research. This course will:

- introduce postgraduates to the concept of intellectual property rights (IPR) with discussion on, patents, trademarks, ethics, etc.; special emphasis will be given to copyright when conducting research,
- make postgraduates aware of the University's protocols regarding IPR arising from research and data protection,
- provide an overview of the ethical issues faced in conducting research,
- outline the impact of Data Protection and Freedom of Information Legislation and the management of research records,
- provide an understanding of the need to take account of information legislation in conducting research and know where to find assistance to deal with it.

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemption will be considered.

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## Literature Searching (REST7001)

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory – Group A

### Course Description:

In this course we focus on how to conduct an effective literature search, which will form a critical part of your research. We will accomplish this by introducing you to library services, by showing you how to find published information and identifying key sources and best starting points. Using the library isn't just about finding books and journal articles, although that is very important; completing this online course will also help you to develop skills that you will use throughout your career as a researcher.

It is recommended you complete this course at the earliest opportunity as it forms an important foundation for your future research. This course will:

- Review how to develop a strategy for undertaking the initial literature search,
- Provide you with information on where to access information and secondary sources,
- Enable you to find semi-published material and content available through institutional and subject research repositories, including conference papers and theses,
- Offer advice on how to remain up to date with the literature throughout the course of your research,
- Provide an introduction to bibliometrics

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Develop and implement a search strategy using key resources relevant to their discipline
- Identify and use appropriate tools to stay up to date in your discipline

### Delivery:

This online course is delivered via Blackboard and compulsory for PhD students.

Complete units 1 to 4 online via Blackboard by engaging with the tasks and activities, then attend a 2 hour face-to-face session with a subject librarian to complete unit 5. This option is recommended for all UK students; and advisable for all overseas students, who can complete the face-to-face session when visiting the UK.

After completing the online units 1-4 you will write a brief outline of your learning in the faculty space provided within 'The Course'; this outline will be assessed by your subject librarian. Your subject librarian will provide you with feedback (via email) and inform you whether you can book the face-to-face session; you must wait for this email before you progress. Contact the Graduate School Office by email at [rtp@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:rtp@dmu.ac.uk) to book the face-to-face session. The face-to-face session will be with a subject librarian; it will provide you with complex and in-depth methods of literature searching, plus the opportunity to discuss with peers who have similar research topics; and have the facilitation and subject knowledge from a subject librarian.

### Exemptions

Requests for exemption will be considered.



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## Planning and Managing Research (REST7102)

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory - Group A

**Course Description:**

Starting a research project is a major undertaking for any student.

This course aims to help you through the early stages of the research process, preparing you to successfully determine the direction of your research and plan and manage your project.

This course will:

- establish the differences between undergraduate and masters level research,
- look at what makes a good research degree,
- provide assistance in defining your aims and objectives,
- enable you to review your current time management practices and develop new ones,
- assist you in scheduling and timetabling a project effectively,
- examine possible obstacles to achieving your goals and how to reduce or eliminate their impact.

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemptions will be considered.

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## Preparing For Your Viva (REST7303)

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory - Group C

**Course Description:**

This course is intended for students who are close to submitting their thesis and will offer guidance on preparing for your viva examination. This course is available to attend face to face or can be completed online.

At the end of this course you will:

- understand the format and purpose of the viva examination,
- know how to devise a strategy for preparing for the final viva,
- have gained confidence to perform well in your final examination,
- have viewed an example of a simulated viva examination,
- have participated in a role play of a viva,
- have had a chance to discuss your viva concerns with others.

By the end of this course you will be prepared for the viva examination.

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemptions will NOT be considered.

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## **Research Ethics: Online (REST7525)**

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**Course Completion:** Optional

**Course Description:**

This online Blackboard course is designed to give you some detailed understanding of research ethics and the role it plays in your studies as a research student.

The key learning objectives are:

- to understand the broad range of topics in research ethics,
- to understand the topics in research ethics specific to your discipline,
- to be able to identify and address the ethical issues specific to your research from inception through to completion,

**Exemption**

Requests for exemption will be considered.

## **FACULTY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

Courses are held throughout the year and can be booked through the Graduate School Office.

### **Faculty Of Art, Design and Humanities**

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#### **Research Methods: Online Resource (REST7701)**

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory Group A

**Course Description:**

This is a compulsory course delivered online with an additional opportunity to attend an 11 week lecture programme. The lecture programme is part of the Art, Design and Humanities taught postgraduate Research Methods Module. So you will get the opportunity to meet a diverse range of Art, Design and Humanities Post Graduate students.

The online resources cover Art, Design and Humanities (AD & H) Orientation and Research Methods. These resources will provide students with a broad range of materials. The resources begin with an introduction to Faculty and University Faculties, so you will become familiar with School procedures, organisational structures and the roles of a supervisor and a Post Graduate research student.

The academic content will introduce you to the entire research process, including: formulating research questions; sampling (probability and non-probability); measurement (surveys, scaling, qualitative, unobtrusive); research design (experimental and quasi-experimental); data analysis and writing the research paper.

**Exemptions**

Exemptions based on prior experience and learning will be considered. Students should contact the Faculty to obtain an exemption form and to discuss with their first supervisor.

## **Faculty of Health and Life Sciences**

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### **Introduction to Faculty (REST7016)**

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory Group A

**Course Description:**

This COMPULSORY course will provide an opportunity for you to meet your Head of Research Students, Dr Tina Harris, and to gain an understanding about the procedures that will govern your time as a research degrees student within the Faculty.

At the end of this session you will:

- be aware of facilities available for research students within the Faculty.
- understand the benefits of attending REST 7026
- have met with other research students from the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
- have had an opportunity to ask questions

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemption will NOT normally be considered.

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### **Health and Safety in Laboratories (REST7015)**

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory – Group A

**Course Description:**

This course is only COMPULSORY for students who will be working in the laboratory or similar setting during their research. This course will introduce postgraduates to the concepts and up-to-date regulations concerning safe working in laboratories.

By the end of this course you will have gained a sound understanding of the application of Health and Safety in a laboratory environment at DMU, it will give you basic information, sign posting and support to ensure you adhere to DMU policy and rules.

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemption will be considered.

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## **Principles of Research in Health and Life Sciences (REST7028)**

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory – Group A

**Course Description:**

This COMPULSORY course will discuss the principle elements of hypothesis-driven research methods, appropriate methods of data gathering and data analysis and the ethical constraints on research in Health and Life Sciences.

At the end of this session you will have had an opportunity to:

- outline your own research to other research students,
- discuss your proposed methodology with other research students,
- exchange information about useful approaches to data collection.

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemption will be considered.

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## **Presentation of Research Data and Participation in Analytical Discussion (REST7026)**

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**Course Completion:** Optional

**Course Description:**

These seminars are arranged to provide research students with the opportunity to present their work to an audience of students and supervisors. The sessions are chaired by the Head of Research Students and there are usually 3-4 presentations in each sessions.

The seminars provide an ideal setting within which students can apply knowledge gained from the generic training course 'Presenting Your Research to an Audience'. The stimulating discussions following each presentation provide opportunities to exchange ideas and learn more about research. By the end of this session:

- students listening to the presentations will have had the opportunity to hear about the research that their peers are carrying out,
- students listening to the talks will have had the opportunity to ask colleagues questions about their work,
- students presenting their work will have had an opportunity to prepare and present their work,
- students presenting their work will have had an opportunity to respond to questions about their research.

## **Faculty of Technology**

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### **Research Methods (REST7052)**

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**Course Completion:** Compulsory – Group A

**Course Description:**

*The aim of this COMPULSORY course is to prepare graduate students to undertake and fulfil the requirements for master studies.*

You will be required to complete this course before, if applicable, you transfer.

*Selected topics will include:*

*General*

- how to do research,
- how to theorise,
- carrying out a literature review,
- claims and disclaimers: knowledge, reflexivity and representation in computing and engineering research,
- deductive and inductive thinking,
- common errors made in research,
- defining the research problem,
- the evolution of research methodology,
- writing, presenting and disseminating research,
- the research process,
- on good research: persuasability and generalisability.

*Specific*

- abduction? deduction? induction? is there a logic of exploratory data analysis?
- confounding variables and evaluation design
- general statistical concepts

Students will also be required to attend workshops on two or three talks from Active Researchers. Each module will consist of two full days with the appropriate number of lectures/workshops for this time scale. Selected topics will be given as lectures, each of 20-30 minutes duration. Teaching materials for the course will be made available for distance learning via Blackboard.

Each student will be asked to read a published paper and present his/her understanding of it and in particular the articulation of the research question and method of research conducted to obtain the result.

**Exemptions**

Requests for exemption will be considered.

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## **Research Seminars (REST7610)**

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**Course Completion:** Optional

**Course Description:**

This provides an opportunity for you to attend a number of guest seminars being delivered within the Faculty.

## **Contacts**

### **Training Course Enquiries**

Queries relating to training courses, information about the course schedules or reserving a place on a generic course should be referred to the:

Graduate School Office  
John Whitehead Building

Phone: 0116 250 6242  
Email: [rtp@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:rtp@dmu.ac.uk)

### **Research General Enquiries**

If you have any general enquiries regarding other aspects of your research programme these should be referred to the:

Graduate School Office  
John Whitehead Building

Phone: 0116 250 6309  
Email: [researchstudents@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:researchstudents@dmu.ac.uk)



## Section 3: Training Needs Statement

As a research student you are expected to take responsibility for managing your research project and assessing the skills you need to acquire, develop or refine in order to achieve successful completion. Completion of the Training Needs Statement is compulsory.

Your supervisor will be able to supply support and advice in assessing your additional training needs and the Training Needs Statement provides the opportunity for you to reflect on the skills you have and those you need to develop.


### Submission

The Training Needs Statement must be completed and submitted within three months of enrolment for full-time students and within six months for part-time students to the Graduate School Office. You are strongly encouraged to complete this document as early as possible after enrolment.

The completed document will be processed by the Graduate School Office. A copy of your Training Needs Statement along with the signatures and approvals page will be held in your student file and the original document will be returned to you.

### Completion

Completion of the following pages is **COMPULSORY**. Please discuss your completed statement with your supervisor and ensure the Signatures and Approval section on the inside back cover has been completed before submission of the document to the Graduate School Office.

-  Work through each section and tick [ ✓ ] the relevant boxes to identify areas you feel confident about and those you still need to develop further. Summarise your skills and development needs on pages 18 and 19; you may want to refer to pages 20 and 21 for a sample summary.

### Competency Level Criteria

Confident	You have a sound grasp of the relevant research skills or processes and are capable of carrying out the tasks without need for specific guidance.
Quite confident	You have some experience of the relevant research skills or processes and require guidance to consolidate or be fully conversant with the requirements and/or relevance of these tasks.
Not confident	You have almost none or no experience in this aspect of research practice or theory, and are in need of guidance with respect to understanding terminology, processes or the relevance of a particular skill or set of skills.

**a) Research Skills and Techniques**

Are you able to?	Confident	Quite confident	Not confident
	✓	✓	✓
1. identify your key research question			
2. deploy theoretical material related to your topic			
3. show knowledge of recent developments within your field			
4. be aware of the research methodologies you will need to use			
5. analyse and evaluate your findings			
6. summarise, document and reflect on progress			

**b) Research Environment**

Are you able to?	Confident	Quite confident	Not confident
	✓	✓	✓
1. understand the context in which research takes place			
2. be aware of issues relating to the rights of other researchers, research subjects and others who may be affected by the research			
3. understand relevant health and safety issues			
4. justify your own research			
5. understand how to exploit results in academic/commercial terms			

**c) Research Management**

Are you able to?	Confident	Quite confident	Not confident
	✓	✓	✓
1. set research goals, establish milestones and prioritise activities			
2. design systems for the acquisition and collation of material through effective use of appropriate equipment			
3. identify and deploy appropriate bibliographical resources and editorial styles appropriate to the discipline			
4. use information technology appropriately for database management, recording and presenting information			

**d) Personal Effectiveness**

Are you able to?	Confident	Quite confident	Not confident
	✓	✓	✓
1. demonstrate the motivation and self-discipline to embark on a substantial research project			
2. be creative, innovative and responsive to your material			
3. demonstrate flexibility and open-mindedness			
4. draw upon sources of support where appropriate			
5. show initiative and work independently			

**e) Communication Skills**


Are you able to?	Confident	Quite confident	Not confident
	✓	✓	✓
1. write clearly and in a style appropriate to your discipline and the project			
2. construct and sustain a coherent argument, formally and informally, verbally and in writing			
3. defend research outcomes at seminars and conferences and in a viva examination			

**f) Career Management**

Are you able to?	Confident	Quite confident	Not confident
	✓	✓	✓
1. show commitment to continued professional development			
2. take ownership of and manage your career progression, set realistic and achievable career goals and develop ways to improve employability			
3. demonstrate insight into the transferable nature of research skills to other work environments and the range of career opportunities within and outside academia			
4. present your skills, personal attributes and experiences through effective CVs, applications and interviews			

## Summary

Completion of this section is **COMPULSORY** for all research students.

-  Complete this section by summarising your strengths, weaknesses and areas for development for each of the categories. Discuss your development plan with your supervisor.

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Development and Action Plan
Research Skills and Techniques			
Research Environment			
Research Management			

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Development and Action Plan
Personal Effectiveness			
Communication Skills			
Career Management			

## SAMPLE Completed Summary

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Development and Action Plan
Research Skills and Techniques	I have a clear idea of the general area in which research is located with a wide range of current sources identified and located.	I need to refine my topic to a project which is manageable in the time frame.	Attend as many research training sessions as possible.  Work with supervisor to define clearly the scope and limits of the project.
Research Environment	I have a general awareness of environmental issues relevant to my research eg. ethical approval requirements, non-disclosure agreements and intellectual property issues.	I am unsure as to the specific procedure for these issues.	Attend Intellectual Property Rights and Ethics modules.
Research Management	I possess good searching skills, including knowledge of appropriate databases.	I am unsure of how to set specific goals and milestones within the research trajectory.  I have insufficient knowledge of approaches to managing references.	Work with supervisor to establish overall timeline for project, with appropriate detail for each stage.  Attend Literature Searching and Reference Management module.
Personal Effectiveness	I am very keen on my subject area and strongly motivated to do research, and have confidence about my ideas.	I am less confident about expressing my ideas and knowing how they fit a wider intellectual or creative context.	Attend as many subject specific research seminars, presentations by visiting speakers, etc as possible.

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Development and Action Plan
Communication Skills	I have good writing skills and know how to structure an argument well.	I am less confident about verbal presentations and discussion around my research ideas and findings.	<p>Make active contributions to research seminars and where possible put myself forward to report my research at appropriate forums in consultation with my supervisor.</p> <p>Attend Preparing for Your Viva training session.</p>
Career Management	I have a sound knowledge of how my subject specific skills relate to job opportunities in my field, and how to present my CV.	<p>I am less certain about how to present my subject specific skills in ways that demonstrate those skills are transferable to make me more widely employable.</p> <p>I am unsure whether I should consider moving into research at doctoral level.</p>	<p>Seek advice from Student Services.</p> <p>Discuss options with my supervisor and subject research coordinator.</p>

## Signatures and Approval

### Research Skills Evaluation (Supervisor to complete)

I have discussed this statement with the student and agree with the summary of their skills and also the areas identified for development.

Additional Comments:

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Research Skills Evaluation (Student to complete)

I have discussed my Training Needs Statement with my supervisor and have identified areas for development.

Additional Comments:

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### For Completion By The Graduate School Office Only

Training Needs Statement Approved and Recorded: **YES/NO**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_