Break Time

THE SAPD EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A call from the wild

The past two years have been stressful, but for many PhDs, this is the first time they've been on campus and it is daunting to say the least. We all need to remember to be a little more tolerant in our responses to each other and to be realistic about what we can achieve with our very precious bandwidth. I know I'm guilty of raising my hand and volunteering too often, nor am I the only one out there with this little voice saying 'you've only got three years' in the back of my head. It's a harsh reality, but we're not all going to accomplish everything we want in our time at SAPD. What we can do though, is make the most out of the time we are here by doing our best work and sometimes, less is more.

So, take the weekends and decompress from your research. Go have a coffee or tea or pint with your colleagues and take the time to take care of you, because the work will still be there and the break will let your brain work through all those loose bits of information you were struggling to shove into place. UoR has a beautiful campus, go take a stroll around the lake, feed the birds (no bread please!) and stare out at nature for 5 mins.

Consider this your wake-up call from the wild.

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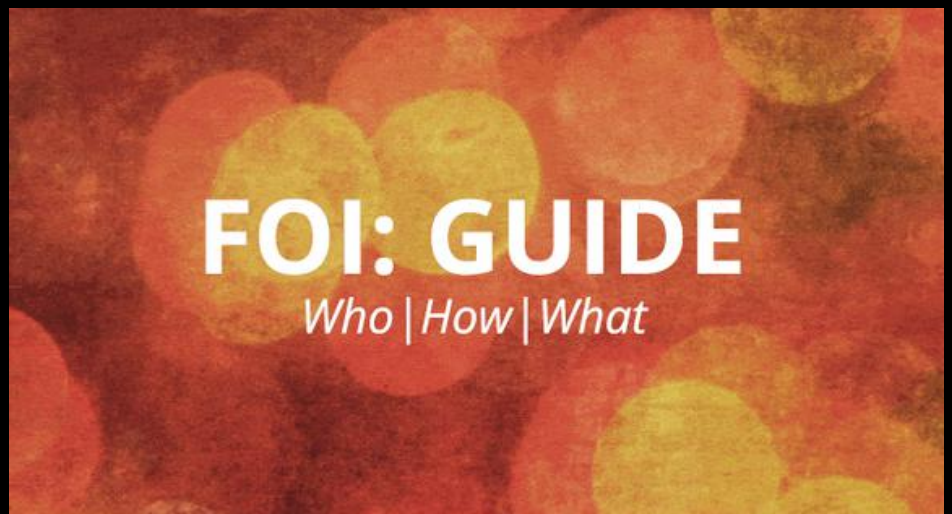In the Know:
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UoR Learn Cheatsheet #2

When you first get on UoR Learn with your temporary email, you'll notice that there are a few courses you are pre-registered for. They include Data Protection, Freedom of Information, Information Security and Sustainability. The second one we want to share with you is the FOI, or Freedom of Information Act which limits who can access what type of information, like your employment information, addresses, and medical data.

Almost all of the bodies that are covered by the FOI Act are classified as public authorities. The Act doesn't provide any strict definition of what a public authority is but as a rule of thumb, public authorities are organisatios that spend money collected from taxpayers. In most cases a public authority will be responsible for making, and acting upon, decisions that impact people's lives.

A good resource can be found here:
http://www.foi.directory/how-to-make-a-freedom-information-foi-request-uk/

FOI: GUIDE
Who | How | What

Careers Information:
https://www.reading.ac.uk/essentials/Careers/Events/Upcoming-events

Student Focus Group:
Participants are needed for the Farming Simulator 22 EIT Foods project! Have to be willing to play a video game and give feedback on features. Contact Tamisan Latherow for more information. Limited to the first 15 respondants.

- The UoR Lunchtime Seminar Series continue to take place during Autumn and Spring term time on Thursdays at 1 pm. Please contact Laurence Smith if you would like to present your research.
- International Women's Day Coffee Morning, Tuesday, 8th 10-11am Staff/PG Common Room GU07
- Bridging Worlds PGRA/Corteva Conference, March 31–April 1st. Registration now open for attendees! A great chance to hear what other ECRs and Agricultural stakeholders around the world are doing.

- **Early notification!! AEM/ID PGR Conference May 5-6. Send titles and confirmation to Karen Garrod by March 18th and abstract to Young Kafwembe by April 1st!!**

BRIDGING WORLDS CONFERENCE

As part of the PGRA/ECRA agenda this year, we will be hosting the Bridging Worlds Conference sponsored by Corteva and the University of Reading SAPD on March 31st and April 1st, 2022. Registration is now open and we will be reaching out to those who submitted proposals asap!

Register to attend:
https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bridging-worlds-sustainable-agriculture-conference-tickets-268883476717?aff=ebdssbdestsearch

BRIDGING WORLDS
Sustainable Agriculture Conference
31 March to 1 April 2022

University of Reading

SYMPOSIA SERIES
REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCIENTISTS SINCE 2008.

CORTEVA agriscience

Bridging Worlds: Sustainable Agriculture Conference

Join us at the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development at the University of Reading for our Bridging Worlds Conference!

Eventbrite / Mar 31

Bookmark that link!

JobsonToast has a great list of resources for those getting ready to graduate and looking for jobs outside of academia. Don't forget to send them a note with any resources you've found useful yourself!

http://jobsontoast.com/resources-phd/

We also recommend Scribbr for those starting their writing journey.

https://www.scribbr.co.uk/category/thesis-dissertation/

Gold Stars and Brownie Points:

Congrats to the following members for presenting, publishing or otherwise being awesome! If you have news to share, send us an email for inclusion in the next newsletter.

- The following for passing their VIVA In February 2022!
  - Caroline Harkness
  - Agnese Rondoni
  - Rebecca Smalley

Congrats to all the new Doctors!

COR
GUIDELINES

Confirmation of Registration

By the end of your first year, you should be in discussions with your supervisor about your Confirmation of Registration, aka. COR. For full-time students, this is scheduled to take place between 12 and 15 months from the date of initial registration. CoR meetings are held once a term, in November, February and May. The purpose of the CoR is to ascertain that you have made sufficient progress in your PhD to date and are able to successfully complete your PhD in the future.

For the FULL REQUIREMENTS please go here:
https://www.reading.ac.uk/graduateschool/currentstudents/gs-policies-and-procedures.aspx

There are a lot less rules for the COR, than the VIVA, but there are still some tips and tricks to know to make everyone's lives less stressful.

Download the form and read through the instructions. You need to fill out the form, send it to your PI for signature, then send it in to the APD admins after submitting through Turnitin. You will be required to send the filled in report and deliver a 10-15 min presentation at the beginning of the meeting to explain about your topic.

You need to include the following items in the report:

1) A summary of how your research project has progressed, including a reflection of how this relates to agreed plans and timescales.
2) Reference to any unanticipated difficulties that have impeded your progress over the period.
3) Information about any written work produced over the period (e.g. draft thesis chapters, publications, conference papers, etc.).
4) An outline of your project plans for the coming year, including a detailed plan to completion with realistic timescale.
5) A summary of the subject-specific and generic research skills training that you have undertaken during your registration.

Let's go through the different requirements...

COR GUIDELINES

The confirmation report must contain the following (in less than 25 pages):

Format–

- A title page giving your name and a signed declaration that the report being submitted is your own authorship – ex. "Declaration: I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged."
- An overview of the aims, objectives and the key research questions (and hypotheses set up for investigation) to be answered by the proposed research, along with any results that have emerged from experiments, surveys, reviews, as appropriate, indicating the place of the student's research in the context of the current literature in the topic.
  - Main points emerging from the literature review on the topic of the research that provide a critical assessment of own work done to date and, which may form part of a future chapter of the thesis (this review itself may be appended to the report)
- A research plan or Gannt Chart, that includes a clear understanding and exposition and justification of the chosen methodology, and timetable of key activities.
  - a brief statement on where the work is being done and the respective dates of periods to be spent away from Reading, if you are working away from Reading
  - an outline of the research accomplished to date since registration, including a reflection of how this relates to agreed plans and timescales, to provide evidence to judge a student's ability to conduct research in a timely manner and any unexpected difficulties that have impeded your progress.
  - an outline of your project plans for the coming year, including a detailed plan to completion with realistic timescale
- An outline of the thesis, including chapter headings
  - Information about any written work produced over the period (e.g. draft thesis chapters, publications, conference papers, etc.)
- A brief curriculum vitae, previous university education and qualifications, any other relevant experience, date of registration for a Higher Degree at Reading and source of financial support.
  - A summary of the subject-specific and generic research skills training that you have undertaken during your registration.

Your COR panel will consist of the Chair (the group admissions lead normally) and your assessor.

Possible recommended outcomes from the COR meeting are:
- **Confirmation of PhD registration**
- **A deferral of the decision until the submission of a further report at a future specified date**
- **Transfer to a registration of MPhil**
- **Recommendation of termination of registration**

Following a successful completion of the COR, you will receive official confirmation of registration from the Graduate School.

COR TIPS

While there is no specific format as to how the COR report should look, we recommend asking to see examples from other PhDs and see what works best for your project in consultation with your PI.

A few tips-

Use a Gannt Chart to show your progress and timing for the next year. Color coordinate your timing by using Excel (see below).

Add your RRDPs and Conferences to the CV portion.

Use the Thesis template for your title page.

Add a mini-background section incase your examiner isn't an expert in your topic. This can double as the literature review portion if you cite it properly and discuss your methodologies and theoretical framework.

Don't forget to mention if you already have your ethical clearance (if this is something you need).

Create a Table of Contents in your word processor and just copy and paste the text to make your life easier.

Don't forget a References page!

In the Know

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

University of Reading's Gender History Research Cluster presents

Professor Maria Helena Machado, **University of São Paulo and Leverhulme Visiting Professor**

A Brazilian Woman's Story: Changing Identity between Slavery and Freedom in the 1880s

2nd March, 4pm: Hybrid online and face-to-face event
Zoom link: us02web.zoom.us/j/82793598488
Register attendance by emailing chessie.baldwin@reading.ac.uk

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

In the Know

CONTACTS FOR GETTING ADDED TO THE SEMINARS

AEM: LAWRENCE (L.G.) SMITH
ID: HENNY OSBAHR AND FERDOUSI RAHMAN
CS: DR. ALEXEY MIKABERIDZE
AS: HOLLY HOLDSWORTH
SLM: STUART EDWARDS AND LAURA REEVES
PHD SEMINAR: JULIETTE SHILLINGS

SPRING SEMINAR SCHEDULE
(all 13-14:00 unless otherwise listed)

AEM MARCH
3 - Jo Smith and Sally Westaway, MV Arc/Royal Agricultural University (from 15-16:00)
Making hedgerows pay their way: the economics of harvesting field boundary hedges for bioenergy

10 - Pierre Marie Aubert, Institute du Development Durable et des Relations Internationales
Designing Just Transition Pathways

17 - Georgiso Pexos and Yiorgos Gadanakis, UoR
Methods for engaging stakeholders in the co-production of services

24 - Richard Kipling, Sustainable Food Trust
The Global Farm Metric- developing a framework for measuring on farm sustainability

AS MARCH
4 - Ian Givens
Improving the iodine status of young women in the UK: the role of the dairy cow

11 - Kareemah Chopra, University of Essex
Social networks of dairy cows

18 - Eric Newton and Sabrina Ormston

25 - Amy Nicosia and Vicky Hicks
Bioaccessibility of Lipids from Dairy Products: The Cheese Matrix

Contact us, we're here to help.
http://www.reading.ac.uk/apd/PhD-programmes/apd-
PostGraduateResearchAssociation.aspx

SAPD PGR/POSTDOC ASSOCIATIONS