

Researcher Development Programme 2025-26

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Our approach to research development at York St John

York St John University (YSJ) is a small university with big aspirations for impactful research.



Our approach to supporting the development of our postgraduate researchers recognises that there are a key set of personal and professional skills that underpins all successful research careers, but needs also vary depending on specific discipline and career stage. Our programme is coordinated by the PGR School and delivered by some of our most senior and experienced researchers, as well as colleagues from a range of professional services teams. It is an exciting programme and offers an array of activities and opportunities that will help you successfully complete your research degree programme.

Professor Andrew Hill, Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Research

Welcome to the PGR School Researcher Development Programme!

What is it?

The PGR School Researcher Development Programme is a suite of workshops, talks, and practical training sessions for postgraduate researchers (PGRs) at York St John University. Drawing upon the collective skills and experience of our academic and professional services staff, the Programme's diverse range of topics have been chosen to support your personal and professional development during your research degree. Each session is aligned with an area of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (which you can find more about on page 6-7), enabling you to monitor your progress against this nationally recognised framework.

The Researcher Development Programme is not a course you must complete in its entirety to obtain your degree. Instead, we encourage you to treat it as a set of resources from which to build a bespoke course that helps you successfully complete your project and grow as a researcher. The Programme's contents can be divided into three broad categories:

Researcher Development Essentials

All PGRs are strongly encouraged to participate in these sessions, which provide fundamental skills and important information at key points throughout your research degree. Essential training takes place online via Microsoft Teams and is grouped into three days per year, each of which is designed to be completed in the early, middle, and final stages of your degree.

Additional Researcher Development sessions

These sessions make up the bulk of the Researcher Development Programme. They span a wide range of themes and topics and can be completed at any point during your studies. Unless otherwise stated, these individual sessions take

place online via Microsoft Teams and are between 60 and 90 minutes in duration. While multiple sessions may take place on a given day, you are not expected to attend all of them; simply select the ones that interest you and best suit your training and development needs.

Researcher Development events

Structured around themes such as career development, practice-based research, or academic publishing, these events take the form of masterclasses or symposia and may either take place in person, online, or a combination of both. A typical event might include presentations, interactive workshops, and discussion panels, each focused on a different aspect of the day's theme.

All PGRs are required to complete a Development Needs Analysis (DNA) and Plan at the outset of their research degree (available [here](#)).

Once complete, this form will help you and your supervisors decide which Researcher Development sessions and events to attend and identify any other training you may need to undertake outside the scope of the Programme. We recommend referring to your DNA along with the resources in this booklet (including the Vitae Researcher Development Framework on page 6) in conversations with your supervisors about your training needs, updating your DNA as you make progress towards your goals.



How do I get involved?

Below is a quick step-by-step guide to booking and attending Researcher Development sessions:

- Use this booklet (referring to your DNA/project plan) to make a list of the sessions and events you are interested in.
- Head to the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#). As soon as bookings are open for a Researcher Development session or event, the details (dates, times and locations) will be published there, along with a link to an online registration form. If you can't find the session or event you're looking for on the Virtual Graduate Centre, it's likely that it's not yet available to book. Please check again at a later date or contact the PGR School (PGR.School@yorksj.ac.uk) if you have questions about a particular session.
- Sessions that take place online will be recorded and made available on the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#). If you are unsure whether a face-to-face session or event will be recorded, please check the online registration form or contact the PGR School.

The sessions that make up the Researcher Development Programme are scheduled on a rolling basis throughout the year. As such, dates and times for each individual session are not listed in this booklet.

Please consult the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#) for an up-to-date list of dates and times for upcoming Researcher Development sessions and events.

Our Essential training for PGRs at the initial, middle and final stages of their studies is delivered via three dedicated days of online training, one for each stage. Please see pages [10-13](#) for more information about these sessions, including when they will take place.

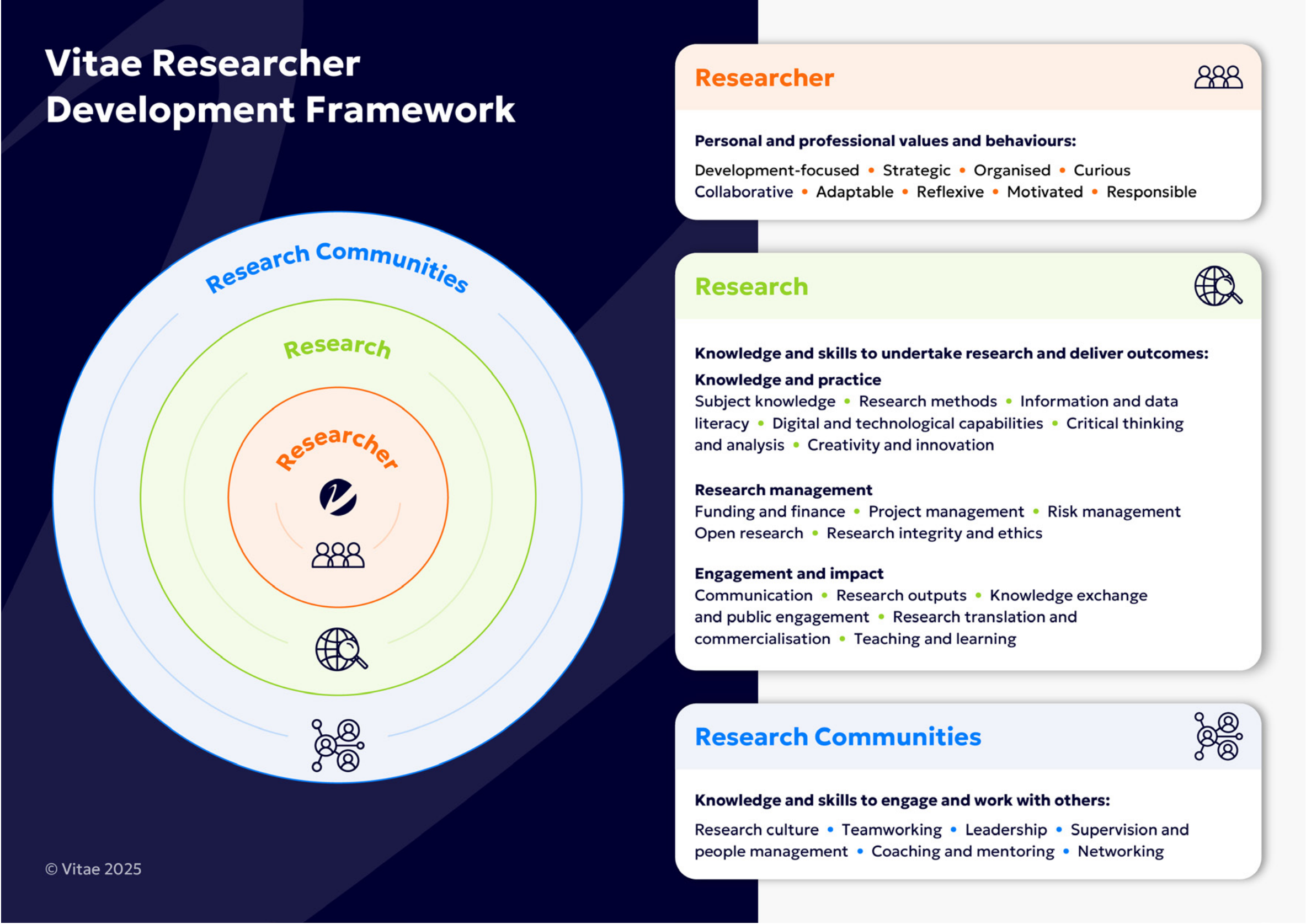
If you'd like to know more about any of the sessions, activities and events listed in this booklet, please feel free to contact the PGR School at PGR.School@yorksj.ac.uk

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF)

The RDF has been redesigned for 2025 and now comprises three key 'domains', indicated by the concentric circles in the diagram. Each domain comprises a range of 'descriptors': these represent 'the values, skills and behaviours of effective researchers' (RDF 2025). You can find more detailed information about the RDF and how to use it, along with many other useful resources, on the [Vitae website](#).

We encourage you to use the RDF to help you identify your training and development needs and plan accordingly. In the Session Catalogue section of this booklet, you will see RDF descriptors listed against each session, which you can use to help you determine which sessions are most appropriate for you.

The RDF supports the implementation of the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) – of which YSJU is a signatory - and the [QAA Code of Practice for research degree programmes](#).



Meet the team

PGR School team



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School Postgraduate Research Leads

Each school has a School Postgraduate Research Lead who has oversight of PGR student recruitment, experience, and progression, and takes a lead role on the development and implementation of School and University postgraduate research plans, and provides leadership and support for supervisory and examination teams.



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Session catalogue

This section lists all the sessions and events that make up the Researcher Development Programme for 2025-26. All PGRs are expected to complete the Essential parts of the programme; to help you decide which other sessions and events to attend, please use the catalogue alongside your Development Needs Analysis and Plan and the Researcher Development Framework. If you are still unsure which parts of the Programme are right for you, please consult your supervisors or the PGR School team.

Essential Researcher Development sessions

These sessions form the core of the Researcher Development Programme. They are grouped into three stages, each corresponding to the early, middle, and final stage of a conventional, doctoral-level research degree.

If you are a part-time PhD student, each stage equates to two years of study: so, for example, you can complete the Early Stages' Essential training in either your first or second year of part-time study. As a general rule, we recommend completing the Early Stages training before your transfer assessment if you are a PhD student.

If you are studying for a research degree other than a PhD (e.g. EdD, DMin, MA/MSc by Research, MRes), please attend the sessions that are most appropriate for you at each stage of your degree, consulting your supervisors if you are unsure.

The Essential sessions for early, middle, and final stages will take place online on the following dates:

Early Stages: Monday 20th October 2025

Middle Stage: Wednesday 25th February 2026

Final Stage: Thursday 16th April 2026

Registration links and information will be made available via the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#). All Essential sessions will be recorded; if you are unable to attend any Essential sessions for your stage of study, please make sure to catch up by watching the recordings on the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#).

Early Stages

Getting started with researcher development

Facilitator(s): Richard Bracknellin (PGR Training and Development Officer)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.7

Beginning a research degree is an exciting time. You are at the start of a process which will see you develop the skills and attributes you need to successfully complete an original research project in a topic you have chosen. In this session, you'll be encouraged to reflect on your previous experiences of research in order to help you plan your professional development and identify what kinds of training you may need throughout your studies. We will take a closer look at how to use the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and Development Needs Analysis form (DNA) to guide you through this ongoing process of reflection, planning, and development.

By the end of the session, you will:

- Understand how to use self-reflection to identify your training and development needs
- Be familiar with the RDF and know how to use it to structure your reflection and planning
- Be ready to complete the Development Needs Analysis form using the reflective tools and techniques introduced during the session.

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in the early stage of their research degree. Those at later stages are also welcome to attend.

Preparing for your progress reviews and transfer assessment

Facilitator(s): Richard Bracknellin (PGR Training and Development Officer); Ewan East (PhD researcher in Music); Dr Murphy McCaleb (Associate Head of School: Music)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.7, 3.2

Two of the key milestones you'll encounter during the early stages of your research degree are your first formal progress review and (if you are a PhD student) your transfer assessment. You may already have heard the terms 'review' and 'transfer' at your induction, from your supervisors or from other PGRs. But what exactly do they mean, and what do they have to do with you and your research?

In this session, we will explore what's involved in progress reviews and the transfer assessment. While they both perform an important regulatory function (to make sure you and your research remain on track and that you have the support you need in place in order to successfully complete your degree), they are also opportunities for you to share the work you've been doing with academic staff who are interested in hearing about your research. As well as finding out more about the administrative and procedural aspects of reviews and transfers, you'll also hear first-hand about what these meetings are like and how best to prepare for them from the perspective of a current PhD student and a member of academic staff

By the end of the session, you will:

- Know what progress reviews and transfer assessments are, including the differences between them
- Understand what is expected of you before, during, and after your review and transfer meetings
- Feel more confident talking about your research and personal and professional development in the context of a formal meeting.

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in the early stages of their research degree. Those at later stages are also welcome to attend.

GDPR and data management for PGRs

Facilitator(s): Liam Wilkinson (Information and Governance Assistant) Megan Kilvington (Copyright and Licensing Librarian, Library and Learning Services)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 2.3, 3.3, 3.5

In this session, you'll be introduced to some of the key concepts and issues surrounding research data management. We'll cover the basics of research data management, data management plans and the benefits of effective research data management. We'll also look at

open data repositories and what you need to consider when sharing and making research data open.

You'll also gain an understanding of the requirements of the current UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and learn how to remain legally compliant when collecting and using personal data as part of a research project. By the end of the session, you will:

- Understand the basics of research data management, data management plans and open data repositories.
- Be aware of the Digital Curation Centre and additional sources of support when writing data management plans.
- Know how to process personal data safely and securely in line with GDPR requirements

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in the early stages of their research degree. Those at later stages are also welcome to attend.

Research ethics and integrity at York St John University

Facilitator(s): Kat Eldred (Research Officer: Governance and Compliance); Charlotte Haines Lyon (Associate Professor and School Research Ethics Chair: Education, Language and Psychology)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 3.3, 3.5

York St John University is committed to supporting and delivering new and challenging research in a number of different fields. Part of that commitment is ensuring that all research is conducted in accordance with the University's policies on ethics and integrity, and in line with sector-wide best practice in these areas.

In this session, we will consider how we define research ethics and integrity and reflect on how they affect you and your research. You will gain an understanding of some of the pressing issues currently facing the research community, such as the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI), and become familiar with the processes and policies the University has put in place to help you maintain the highest standards of ethics and integrity in the face of these challenges. By the end of the session, you will:

- Understand what ethics and integrity mean – and why they matter - in the context of academic research
- Know how to apply for, and secure, ethical approval for your project (a requirement for all PGRs)
- Be familiar with the key policies and process around research ethics and integrity at York St John University

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in the early stage of their research degree. Those at other stages are also welcome to attend.

Middle Stage

Getting ready for the middle stage of your research degree

Facilitator(s): PGR School team; School PGR Leads

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.7, 1.8, 3.2

The middle stage of your research degree (Year 2 for full-time PhD students; Year 3 and 4 for part-time) can be an exciting time. For many PGRs, though, approaching the halfway mark can bring challenges too. As well as providing information and guidance on navigating this stage of your studies, this session gives you the chance to catch up with your fellow researchers, reacquaint yourself with the support available to you, and share any queries or concerns with the PGR School team

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for doctoral-level PGRs in, or about to enter, the middle stage of their degree. Those undertaking a Masters by Research are welcome to attend but are not required to do so, and may not find all the information provided applicable.

Open Research practices for PGRs

Facilitator(s): Megan Kilvington (Copyright, Licensing and Research Librarian: Student Success and Learning Services)

RDF descriptor(s): 3.4, 4.1, 4.2

This session is an introduction to Open Research, Open Access and Open Data. We'll cover what Open Research is and why it's important. We'll then look more closely at Open Access, Open Data and the benefits of Open Research. We'll look at the University's Open Access Policy and Research Data Management Policy. Finally, we'll look at RaY, the University's institutional repository for research outputs; RaYDaR, the University's open data repository; and ORCID iDs.

Through this session, you will:

- Develop an awareness of Open Research, Open Access and Open Data
- Learn about the University's institutional repositories, RaY and RaYDaR
- Learn about and create an ORCID iD

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in, or about to enter, the middle stage of their research degree. Those at other stages are also welcome to attend, particularly if considering publishing their research.

Funding your research at YSJU

Facilitator(s): Victoria Lain (PGR Officer: Funding and Scholarships) and Richard Bracknellin (PGR Officer: Training and Development)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.3, 3.1, 3.2

As a postgraduate researcher at York St John University, you can apply for financial support from the PGR School to help you fund your research and professional development. In this session, you'll find out about the different sources of funding administered by the PGR School; what kinds of expenditure they can be used to support; and how and when to apply for them.

As well as taking you through the application forms, guidance and criteria, we will reflect on what you can do to maximise your chances of making a successful application. We'll also take a wider look at how postgraduate research in the UK is funded and the impact this has on universities and researchers.

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for doctoral-level PGRs in, or about to enter, the middle stage of their research degree. PGRs at other stages who want to know more about PGR School funding are also welcome to attend.

Careers advice and support at YSJU

Facilitator(s): Ruth Morris (Graduate Success Coach, Student Success and Learning Services)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.7

In this workshop, you will be invited to consider how the skills and experience you are cultivating as you develop as a researcher might equip you for the professional opportunities you encounter during and after your research degree. As well as providing an overview of the career planning and development support available at YSJU (which will remain available to you even after graduating), this session will introduce you to some key theoretical frameworks drawn from research into career development and share their insights into the UK labour market.

By the end of the session, you will:

- Know how to access the support and resources available from the YSJU Careers Service
- Have an enhanced understanding of the current conditions faced by research degree graduates entering the UK job market, and how to maximise your chances of success
- Be able to draw on relevant theoretical frameworks to help you plan your career development

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for doctoral-level PGRs in, or about to enter, the middle stage of their research degree. Those at other stages are also welcome to attend.

Final Stage

Getting ready for the final stage of your research degree

Facilitator(s): PGR School team; School PGR Leads

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 1.8, 3.2

In this session for doctoral students entering the final stage of their research degree (Year 3 for full-time students; Year 5 for part-time), you will be taken through the processes and timescales involved in preparing for your thesis submission and examination. As well as thinking about assessment, you will be encouraged to reflect on your PGR journey so far and begin to consider what options are available to you after completing your studies. PGR School team will be on hand to provide a reminder of the support and opportunities available to you.

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for doctoral-level PGRs beginning the final stage of their degree. Those undertaking a Master's-level research degree are welcome to attend but are not required to do so, and may not find all the information provided applicable.

Preparing for your viva

Facilitator(s): Professor Helen Julia Minors (Head of the School of the Arts)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.3, 1.7, 4.1

This workshop is designed for those approaching the end of their PhD and getting ready for the viva voce: the oral examination in which you will defend your thesis in front of a panel of examiners. The session will cover:

- The basic questions of a viva and its practical purpose
- The constitution of the viva panel and the practicalities leading up to the examination
- The kinds of questions your examiners are likely to ask
- Tips to help you through the inevitable nerves!

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in the final stage of their research degree, particularly those who are preparing to submit (or have already submitted) their thesis.

Editing and proofreading your thesis

Facilitator(s): YSJU Study Development team

RDF descriptor(s): 1.3, 2.2, 3.2

During this session, you will have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to shape your writing as it approaches completion. We will consider some strategies for objectively evaluating and revising your drafts, enabling you to address both the fine detail of your writing and the overall form and structure of your thesis.

Through attending this session, you will:

- Learn how to methodically plan and work through the process of editing and proofreading
- Develop your understanding of the revision process as a means to hone your argument
- Gain confidence in checking your own work and that of your peers

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in the final stage of their research degree. Those at earlier stages are welcome to attend but should already be working on a substantive piece of writing in order to benefit from the session.

Copyright and intellectual property

Facilitator: Megan Kilvington (Copyright, Licensing and Research Librarian: Student Success and Learning Services)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 3.5, 4.2

This session is an introduction to copyright and intellectual property. We'll cover what intellectual property is and why it's important for researchers to have an awareness of it. We'll look more closely at copyright, what it is, and the different ways you as a researcher will need to consider copyright, both in regards to your own work, but also the work of others. We'll then cover the University's Intellectual Property Policy and publishing contracts.

Through this session, you will:

- Develop an understanding of intellectual property and copyright.
- Learn about the University's Intellectual Property Policy and recognise the impact it has on your own work.
- Develop an understanding of publishing contracts and what you need to consider.

Who is this session for?

This session is essential for all PGRs in the final stage of their research degree. Those at earlier stages with an interest in this subject are also welcome to attend.

Additional Researcher Development sessions

The sessions and events in this part of the catalogue are supplementary to the Essential components of the programme. Some are suitable for all PGRs; others are designed around a more specific theme or topic. If you are unsure which sessions and events are right for you and your research, please contact the PGR School (PGR.School@yorks.ac.uk) or your supervisors.

Communicating your research

Publishing your research as a PGR

RDF descriptor(s): 2.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4

As part of this mini-symposium, you'll have the chance to learn more about what's involved in making your research available to a wider audience through publication. Through presentations, interactive workshops and discussion panels, we will explore themes and issues including:

- Deciding whether, when and how to publish during your research degree
- Becoming a reviewer for academic journals and other kinds of publications
- The processes and timelines involved in submitting an article to an academic journal
- How York St John University stores, protects and shares your publications and research data.

We encourage you to stay for the whole day if you can but understand this is not always possible. Keep an eye on your emails and the Virtual Graduate Centre for more information!

Who is this event for?

PGRs at all stages of study and from all disciplines are welcome to attend this event.

Presenting at academic conferences

Facilitator(s): Dr Fraser Mann (Senior Lecturer in English Literature, School of Humanities)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 5.6

'For most researchers, conferences are a fact of academic life and one of the key channels through which we share our research with a wider audience. If you're new to the world of academic conferences or haven't enjoyed attending them in the past, this session is designed to help you feel happier and more confident about presenting your work in this arena. As well as guiding you through the steps involved in getting ready for a conference, the session will include opportunities for you to ask questions, share your thoughts and experiences about conferences with fellow PGRs, and receive feedback on any abstracts or presentations you are currently working on.

Who is this session for?

PGRs from all disciplines and stages of study are welcome to attend this session, particularly those considering applying to present their work at a conference.

Q&A with journal editors

Facilitator(s): Academic staff with experience of editing academic journals

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 3.5

This panel event gives attendees the opportunity to learn more about the process of publishing academic research from three experienced journal editors drawn from across York St John University. The panel will share their cumulative experience, which spans a wide range of disciplines, and answer your questions about publishing your work.

Who is this session for?

PGRs from all disciplines and stages of study are welcome to attend this session, but it is aimed primarily at those actively looking for opportunities to publish their research.

Publishing in arts and humanities journals

Facilitator(s): Professor Matthew Reason (Director of the Institute for Social Justice at YSJU)

RDF descriptors: 3.4, 4.2

In this session for PGRs undertaking research in the arts and humanities, Prof. Matthew Reason will guide you through the process for publishing your research in arts and humanities journals, drawing upon his extensive experience as an author, journal editor, and reviewer. Attendees will gain an insight into the peer review process and learn some strategies for dealing with rejection and requests for amendments.

Who is this session for?

This session is designed for PGRs in the School of the Arts and School of Humanities, or those undertaking interdisciplinary research that includes an arts or humanities element. PGRs at all stages of study are welcome to attend but it is designed primarily for those actively seeking to publish their research.

Creating academic posters

Facilitator(s): YSJU researchers

RDF descriptor(s): 2.4, 4.1, 4.2

Poster presentations are an exciting alternative to the conventional conference paper, allowing you to share your research in an engaging and eye-catching format. In the first half of this workshop, you'll be introduced to some of the IT tools and techniques that will help you create informative, visually appealing academic posters. The YSJU researchers leading the session will share some of the posters they have created for past conferences and events, demonstrating how this style of presentation can facilitate productive conversations and help you connect with your fellow conference delegates.

Who is this session for?

This session is open to PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area, particularly those preparing to present their work at a conference.

Writing not reporting: thinking differently about thesis writing

Facilitator(s): Professor Tom Dobson (Professor of Education, School of Education, Language and Psychology)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.1, 2.2, 4.1

Research Methods books often dismiss the importance of the writing of research, assuming this as a neutral process of 'reporting'. For researchers working in paradigms that highlight ontological relativity and epistemological subjectivity, this is problematic as writing can never be neutral.

In this workshop, Tom explores different approaches to writing your thesis that will enable you to think differently about the act of writing. This will include: writing as process; writing as problem-solving; writing as performing theory; and writing as encapsulating research paradigms.

Who is this session for?

PGRs from all disciplines and stages of study are welcome to attend this session but it is aimed primarily at those who are currently (or about to begin) writing up a substantive portion of their research.

Professional practice and conduct

Research ethics Q&A

Facilitator(s): Chairs of School Research Ethics Committees

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 3.5

This question-and-answer event gives participants the chance to discuss research ethics with a panel consisting of academic staff who chair their respective School Research Ethics Committees. You are invited to share any ethical queries or issues you have encountered so far during your research and receive feedback from your peers and the panellists. There will also be an opportunity to engage in a wider discussion of research ethics beyond the immediate context of your project.

Who is this session for?
This session is open to PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area.



Researching with children

Facilitator(s): Professor Tom Dobson (Professor of Education, School of Education, Language and Psychology)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 2.1, 2.2, 3.3, 3.5

Set against the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child's (UNCRC) decree (2010) that children have the right to participate, Prof. Tom Dobson will explore his own research with children and critically evaluate the extent to which he has enabled children to fully participate as co-researchers. This session will focus on Prof. Dobson's use of traditional qualitative methods like focus groups and individual interviews whilst also considering the current movement towards cocreation and coproduction.

Who is this session for?
PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area who are intending to involve children as participants in their research are encouraged to attend this session.

Research with vulnerable adults

Facilitator(s): Professor Divine Charura (Professor of Counselling Psychology, School of Education, Language and Psychology)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 3.3, 3.5

In this session we will explore methodological considerations, addressing the role of the researcher, data representation, and the ethical considerations necessary when conducting research with vulnerable groups. Prof. Divine Charura will give examples from their own research and share some of the challenges and insights from their experience of conducting research within vulnerable group populations including refugees and asylum seekers, as well as people living with dementia.

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Be able to identify some theoretical perspectives on the benefits and challenges of conducting research with vulnerable groups.
- Have explored a range of relevant research methodologies, techniques and their appropriate application within their own research areas.

Who is this session for?
This session is open to PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area whose research entails working with vulnerable groups.

Informed consent: what is it and why does it matter?

Facilitator(s): Dr Sarah Mallinson-Howard (Associate Head of School: Sport, School of Science, Technology and Health)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.9, 3.3, 3.5

Protecting participants in research is extremely important and one means to achieve this is through obtaining informed consent from participants. This workshop will explore: 1) what participants' rights are when it comes to informed consent and participating in research, 2) what gaining informed consent involves for the researcher and where permissions and briefings fit in, 3) what happens if it is not possible to obtain informed consent.

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the necessary components of informed consent
- Use appropriate methods to obtain informed consent from research participants
- Recognise when participants are - and are not - able to give informed consent

Who is this session for?
This session is designed for PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area whose research may require them to obtain consent from research participants.

Participatory research: challenges and strategies

Facilitator(s): Converge Evaluation and Research Team

RDF descriptor(s): 1.2, 1.5, 1.9, 3.3, 3.5

In this session we will consider the challenges of, and strategies for, involving people in research who may not have participated in academic studies before. We will look at the arguments for participatory research and its common pitfalls. Members of the Converge Evaluation and Research Team (a group of researchers with lived experience of mental ill health) will share their insights they have garnered from conducting mental health research that involves other people as participants.

Who is this session for?
This session is designed for PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area whose project involves other people as research participants.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI): issues and challenges for PGRs

Facilitator(s): Professor Esther McIntosh (Professor of Feminist Theology and Ethics, School of Humanities)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.7, 1.9, 3.5, 5.1

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is an often-heard umbrella term in Higher Education and occupies a prominent role in discourses surrounding academic policy and practice. But what does EDI really mean for us as researchers? In this session, Prof. Esther McIntosh will guide you through the basic protected characteristics as defined under the Equalities Act (2010) before drawing on her own research and professional experiences to reflect on how EDI issues impact on us as researchers and on the work we do.

Who is this session for?
This session is open to PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area.

Striving for rigour in qualitative research

Facilitator(s): Dr Garcia Ashdown-Franks (Research Fellow, Institute for Health and Care Improvement)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.5

The concept of rigour is central to the theory and practice of academic research. It's a term that you will hear – and likely have used yourself – no matter the context or discipline in which your research is situated. But what exactly do we mean by 'rigour'? More specifically, what definitions and criteria are being applied to qualitative research when it is described as rigorous? By reflecting on these questions and considering some practical examples, we can better understand how to embed rigour in the qualitative research we undertake. By the end of this session, you will:

- Understand what 'rigour' means in the context of academic research
- Know what rigorous qualitative research looks like in practice
- Be able to evaluate and articulate the ways in which your own research can be considered rigorous

Who is this session for?
All PGRs undertaking qualitative research are welcome to attend this session, regardless of discipline or stage of study.



Methods, tools and techniques

Writing in practice-based research

RDF descriptors: 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.6

Creative practice-based research has a complicated relationship with the written word. While other disciplines have also begun to challenge the historic, artificial separation of research and writing, and the primacy of writing in the generation and communication of new knowledge, in practice-based research these questions assume a particular urgency.

In this group of workshops, we will examine theoretical and practical perspectives on the role of writing in practice-based research. Drawing on examples from the facilitators' own research, we will explore how you can effectively integrate writing with other elements of a practice-based methodology. There will also be opportunities to work on your own writing, and to receive feedback on any obstacles or issues you have encountered during the writing process.

Who is this event for?

Anyone studying for a practice-based PhD or MA by Research is encouraged to take part in this event. If you are undertaking a standard PhD or MA by Research in an arts or humanities discipline, you are also very welcome to join.

Systematic review masterclass

Facilitator(s): Dr Adam Gledhill (independent researcher and Fellow of the Chartered Association of Sport and Exercises Scientists)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5

In this masterclass, Dr Adam Gledhill will guide you through the entire process of undertaking a systematic literature review, from planning to writing-up. If your postgraduate research involves conducting a systematic review, don't miss this opportunity to get to grips with the tools, techniques, and practices involved in this rigorous methodological approach.

We encourage you to stay for the full day if you can, as the four workshops that comprise the masterclass are designed to complement one another; however, if you are unable to attend all four, you can sign up for and attend any combination of individual sessions.

Dr Adam Gledhill is an experienced researcher, practitioner and educator with a passion for helping develop people, teams and organisations. With approaching 200 research and knowledge exchange outputs, including systematic reviews published in world-leading, peer-reviewed journals, Adam is experienced in conducting and communicating research with and for a wide range of audiences.

Who is this event for?

The masterclass is designed for PGRs who will be undertaking a systematic literature review as part of their methodology. If you are unsure whether this applies to you, we encourage you to attend Adam's preliminary session, 'Lost in the literature', listed separately in this catalogue, and to speak with your supervisors.'

Lost in the literature: finding your way through types of literature review

Facilitator: Dr Adam Gledhill (independent researcher and Fellow of the Chartered Association of Sport and Exercises Scientists)

RDF descriptors: 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5

With the myriad of literature review types available, it is easy to get lost in the literature when you commence your research journey. In this session, Dr Adam Gledhill CPsychol FCASES will support you through exploring the different types of literature review to decide which is the most appropriate for your programme of research. By the end of this session, you will:

1. Know the different types of literature review
2. Understand the differences between the reviews and how this informs your choice of review
3. Be able to choose an appropriate type of review for your programme of research.

Who is this session for?

PGRs in the early stages of their research degree (and who have therefore not yet begun conducting a literature review) are encouraged to take part in this session. It is not discipline-specific but Adam's examples will be taken from his own work in sport and exercise psychology.



Autoethnographic research

Facilitator(s): Professor Tom Dobson (Professor of Education, School of Education, Language and Psychology)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.7, 2.2, 2.5

In this session, Tom will illustrate the philosophical reasons for undertaking autoethnography by explaining how his own PhD project started out as ethnography and ended up as autoethnography. He will also explore the use of creative writing for retrospective autoethnography. In both instances, Tom will identify the complex ethical issues involved with this methodology.

Who is this session for?

This session is designed for PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area who are using (or considering using) autoethnography as part of their project.

Ethnographic fieldwork

Facilitator(s): Professor Lee Higgins (Director of the International Centre for Community Music, School of the Arts)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 3.3, 3.5

In this session, we will discuss an ethnographic approach to research with particular attention to participant observation. We will locate the strategy as a form of qualitative research developing from anthropology. Examples will be predominantly taken from an ethnomusicological perspective and provide an opportunity to critically consider the approach.

Who is this session for?

This session is open to PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area who are conducting (or intending to conduct) ethnographic research as part of their project.

Using questionnaires for research

Facilitator(s): TBC

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 2.4

This is a session for anyone who wondering whether or not to use questionnaires in their research. It looks at the pros and cons of using questionnaires and explores the ways in which questionnaire data can be used to answer the sorts of research questions that interviews cannot. If you think questionnaires lead to oversimplification and 'thin' data, come along and be prepared to be surprised!

Who is this session for?

This session is open to PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area who are planning to use questionnaires as part of their project.

Setting up your thesis document: making the most of Microsoft Word

Facilitator(s): Digital Training team

RDF descriptor(s): 2.3, 2.4

Right from the start of writing, the Digital Training team recommend you use the features of Word to enhance your work and save you time. Let Word handle all the tables of contents and cross-references. If you ever manually type a page number then you are missing a trick. Set up your document now so that when you have finished writing all is already set up for submission.

By the end of this session, you will know:

- How to ensure your thesis complies with the University's formatting guidelines
- How to use a range of features in Microsoft Word to make structuring and navigating your thesis easier
- How to use your institutional OneDrive access to ensure your work is secure and up to date

Who is this session for?

This session is open to PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area. However, those in the early stages of writing are likely to benefit most from attending.

Quantitative research designs: a refresher

Facilitator(s): Dr David Mullineaux (Director, DataMull Ltd and former Professor in Sports Science, University of Lincoln)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.2

Using published papers, some of the pros and cons of various quantitative research designs will be covered. These will be considered in the practical context of choosing designs based on research objectives, selected population, and realism of time and budgetary constraints.

Who is this session for?

This session is intended for PGRs whose research will involve using quantitative methods. Those in the early stages of designing their methodology are encouraged to attend the session; however, if your project is at a more advanced stage, you are welcome to join the session to refresh your knowledge.

Introduction to SPSS

Facilitator(s): Dr David Mullineaux (Director, DataMull Ltd and former Professor in Sports Science, University of Lincoln)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 2.4

SPSS provides an extensive range of simple and advanced statistical analyses to process and plot your data. In this session, you will be introduced to some basics in how to input data, transform or recode data, create plots, and run some descriptive and inferential statistics. The session will be slow-paced, enabling participants to either follow along or log in using a computer with SPSS.

Who is this session for?

This session is intended for PGRs who need to conduct statistical analyses as part of their project. Please speak to your supervisors if you are unsure whether this applies to you before signing up for the session.

Introduction to comprehensive meta-analysis

Facilitator(s): Professor Daniel Madigan, Professor of Sport and Health Psychology

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5

This session will provide attendees with a summary of meta-analysis for those unfamiliar with this analytical approach. It will cover: (1) what meta-analysis is, (2) the types of questions that can be answered with meta-analysis, (3) how to conduct meta-analyses, and (4) what software is available to do so.

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Understand what meta-analysis is
- Understand the types of questions that can be answered with meta-analysis
- Understand the main steps in conducting a meta-analysis

Who is this session for?

This session is intended for PGRs whose research will involve conducting a meta-analysis. Please speak to your supervisors if you are uncertain whether you require training in this area, or whether it is an appropriate analytic method for your research.

Qualitative research beyond the interview: creative and visual methods

Facilitator(s): Dr Dai O'Brien (Associate Professor in British Sign Language; School Research and Knowledge Transfer Lead, School of Education, Language and Psychology)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6

There are many qualitative data collection tools which can be exciting and creative to use, either as stand-alone methods or in combination with interviews. In this session, Dai will reflect on some of the creative and visual data collection tools he has used in his own research and give demonstrations of these methods.

At the end of this session, attendees will be able to:

- Choose a creative and visual qualitative research tool suited to their needs
- Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of different visual/creative qualitative data collection approaches
- Perform qualitative research using a range of visual and creative approaches

Who is this session for?

PGRs at any stage and from any disciplinary area who are interested in broadening their knowledge of qualitative research techniques are welcome to attend this session

Interview techniques for research

Facilitator(s): Dr Sharon Jagger (Associate Professor of Religion, School of Humanities)

RDF descriptor(s): 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.5

Interviews are a commonly used qualitative method and can be unstructured, semi-structured and structured. This session discusses the approaches that can be taken by researchers, how to ensure interviews are ethical, and how to navigate power, rapport, and the storytelling that interviews entail. At this session we will cover:

- The interview schedule
- The ethics of rapport-building and researcher sharing
- Who is creating the knowledge - when to let interviewees tell their stories
- The differences between online and in-person interviews'

Who is this session for?

This session is designed for PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area who will be conducting interviews as part of their research

Risk management in postgraduate research

Facilitator(s): Dr Pauline Couper (Associate Head of School: Geography and Liberal Arts); Matt Bellew (YSJU Health and Safety Adviser)

RDF descriptors: 1.9, 2.2, 3.3

Field research is a messy business. From planning logistics and negotiating access to places and people; through looking after your own safety to coping with the complexities of constructing knowledge from the world in process; dealing with the unexpected is an inevitable part of fieldwork.

This session will introduce the key policy frameworks and processes governing risk management and health and safety for all YSJU researchers, as well as exploring the principles and concepts that underpin them. Pauline and Matt will draw on real-life examples from their extensive experience to illustrate the importance of identifying and managing risks in field research.

By attending this session, you will gain:

- An appreciation of the range of challenges associated with field research
- An understanding of the risk assessment process and health and safety policies researchers at YSJU must follow
- An awareness of the difference between risk assessment and ongoing risk management.

Who is this session for?

PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area who are conducting (or planning to conduct) fieldwork as part of their research are strongly encouraged to attend this session.

You and your research



Dealing with difficulty in postgraduate research

RDF descriptors: 1.1, 1.7, 1.8, 3.3

When everything is going smoothly, postgraduate research can be incredibly exciting, stimulating, and rewarding. However, even the most organised and diligent researchers experience unexpected setbacks along the way. In this mini-symposium, we'll take an honest look at what to do when things aren't going to plan. The day will include:

- strategies for balancing research commitments with other important areas of your life
- tips on dealing with imposter syndrome
- techniques and practices for maintaining a good state of mental wellbeing throughout the highs and lows of your research degree.

Throughout the day, you'll be surrounded by supportive colleagues and fellow researchers. For those who wish to, there will be opportunities to confidentially share any current difficulties affecting you and your research, and to receive feedback and advice on how you might approach them.

Surviving and thriving as a part-time PGR

Facilitator(s): Richard Bracknellin (PGR Officer: Training and Development); YSJU researchers

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 3.2

Studying for a postgraduate research degree demands a lot of your time, energy and attention. Those of us who balance a part-time research degree with other commitments may feel we have less of all those resources available to us. Consequently, we may struggle to accommodate research alongside other commitments, or devote all our available resources to research at the expense of our other responsibilities (including taking care of our health and wellbeing). Sound familiar?

Part-time study doesn't have to look like this. In this session, we'll explore some of the opportunities and benefits afforded to us by studying part-time, as well as how to prepare for and overcome some of the challenges it can present. Drawing on current scholarship on part-time PGR study, as well as the facilitators' own experiences, the session is designed to help you enjoy and make the most of your time as a part-time PGR. As well as sharing some tips and strategies for success, we will open the floor for an open and honest discussion of the ups and downs of part-time PGR life.

Who is this session for?

This session is designed for part-time PGRs from all disciplines and subjects. Although much of the secondary research discussed in the session concerns doctoral-level research, those studying part-time for a Masters-level research degree are also welcome to attend.

Staying motivated

Facilitator(s): Study Development team

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.8

Extended periods of research and writing can be exhausting, lonely, or demoralising. This session will encourage you to get back on track when you feel stuck. We will discuss ways to break down your work into manageable tasks, to set realistic goals, and to enjoy the process again.

In the session, you will have the chance to:

- Reflect on your experiences as a researcher and what motivates you
- Develop personalised strategies for effective working and time management
- Work towards building a community of supportive colleagues

Who is this session for?

PGRs at any stage of their studies and from any disciplinary area are welcome to attend this session.

Managing perfectionism as a postgraduate researcher

Facilitator(s): Professor Andrew Hill (Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Research)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.6, 1.7

Perfectionism is increasingly common and can have a destructive impact on the health and success of postgraduate researchers. This session will introduce perfectionism along with its costs and its benefits. Key research will be highlighted and evidence-based strategies identified to help manage perfectionism. The emphasis will be on safeguarding wellbeing and maintaining motivation and success.

Through attending this session, you will:

- Learn about what perfectionism is (and is not) and its effects
- Consider research evidence that points to its many costs and few benefits
- Identify and discuss evidence-based approaches to managing perfectionism

Who is this session for?

PGRs from all disciplines and stages of study are welcome to attend this session.

Working effectively with your supervisor

Facilitator(s): Dr Alice Brumby (Senior Lecturer in History, School of Humanities); Richard Bracknellin (PGR Officer: Training and Development, PGR School)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 3.2, 5.2

The relationship between research student and supervisor is at the heart of postgraduate research, and both parties are responsible for ensuring it is a healthy, happy and productive one. In this session, we'll take a closer look at some of the interpersonal dynamics involved in research supervision and consider how both PGRs' and supervisors' expectations of how the relationship should work can affect how it develops. We'll then introduce some tools and practical tips for:

- Clarifying and aligning expectations within the supervisory relationship
- Getting the most out of your supervisory meetings
- Approaching difficult conversations with your supervisors.

Who is this session for?

PGRs from any disciplinary area and at any stage of their research degree are welcome to attend this session.



Career development

PGR and ECR Careers Symposium

RDF descriptors: 1.1, 1.7, 4.5, 5.6

At our annual Careers Symposium for postgraduate and early career researchers (ECRs) you will have the chance to spend the day exploring how the skills, attributes and experiences you accrue during your research degree can help you pursue a wide range of possible career trajectories. Through discussions, interactive workshops and presentations, you will be encouraged to reflect on your priorities and expectations of working life after you complete your research degree and use this to inform your subsequent career planning.

The day will feature contributions from YSJU staff and guest speakers drawn from diverse academic and professional backgrounds, who will share their experiences, offer advice and support, and answer questions about post-PGR life. Whether you're considering a career in academia, as a researcher in another sector, or something entirely different (or you just don't know), the Careers Symposium is a great opportunity to start thinking about where your research degree can take you.

Who is this event for?

PGRs from all disciplines and at all stages of study are welcome to attend this event.



Teaching in Higher Education: where to begin?

Facilitator(s): Dr Chris Whiting (Senior Lecturer in Academic Practice, Teaching and Learning Enhancement Team), PGR School team

RDF descriptors: 1.1, 1.7, 4.5

Are you considering a career that involves teaching in Higher Education? In this information session, you'll learn about the support available from the PGR School and Teaching and Learning Enhancement (TLE) teams for PGRs looking for teaching experience, guidance and mentorship. The session will introduce two key routes to gaining experience and recognition: the PGR School's 'Intro to Teaching' programme, new for 2025-26; and the TLE team's developmental pathway to applying for Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. We will cover the similarities and differences between the two and explain how you can apply to take part.

Who is this session for?

This session is designed for PGRs from any disciplinary area who are looking to get involved in teaching or supporting learning in a Higher Education context alongside their studies.

Applying for (and getting) academic jobs

Facilitator(s): Prof. Andrew Hill (Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research), Dr Graeme Law (Associate Head of School: Sport, School of Science, Technology and Health)

RDF descriptor(s): 1.1, 1.6, 2.1, 5.6

Securing academic jobs is competitive and difficult, particularly if you are a postgraduate researcher and it is your first academic job. This session will provide an overview of the stages of the recruitment process and the sifting and sorting that takes place as universities shortlist and interview for academic jobs. The intention is to demystify this process and so forearm postgraduate students in a way to maximise their chances of success. Handy tips and hints will be provided.

Through attending this session, you will:

- Gain an understanding of the appointment process from a university/academic school perspective
- Learn the difference between successful and unsuccessful applications
- Identify and discuss approaches to maximise success at each phase of the process

Who is this session for?

PGRs from all disciplines and stages of study are welcome to attend this session, but it is aimed primarily at those nearing the end of their studies and considering applying for academic jobs.



Research-informed teaching? Navigating the 'research/teaching' nexus

Facilitator(s): Dr Pauline Couper, Associate Head & Associate Professor: Geography and Liberal Arts

RDF descriptors(s): 1.1, 1.3, 1.6, 4.5

It's common knowledge that universities combine research and teaching, but there is long-standing debate about both the existence and nature of a relationship between those two functions. This session briefly explains something of those debates. The aim of the session, then, is to support you in beginning to articulate what the 'research/teaching nexus' might mean for you in your own disciplinary context and role. Understanding this relationship will help you reconcile your current research and teaching responsibilities as a PGR, but will also come in handy during the process of applying and interviewing for academic jobs.

Who is this session for?

PGRs from any disciplinary area and at any stage of their research degree are welcome to attend this session. However, it is primarily intended for those who are currently undertaking, or planning to undertake, some teaching work alongside their studies.

Session Checklist

Early Stage: Induction and essential Researcher Development sessions

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
Getting started with researcher development	1.1, 1.7	
Preparing for your progress reviews and transfer assessment	1.1, 1.7, 3.2	
GDPR and data management for PGRs	1.9, 2.3, 3.3, 3.5	
Research ethics and integrity at York St John University	1.9, 3.3, 3.5	

Middle Stage: essential Researcher Development sessions

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
Getting ready for the middle stage of your research degree	1.1, 1.7, 1.8, 3.2	
Open Research practices for PGRs	3.4, 4.1, 4.2	
Funding your research at YSJU	1.3, 3.1, 3.2	
Careers advice and support at YSJU	1.1, 1.7	

Final Stage: essential Researcher Development sessions

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
Getting ready for the final stage of your research degree	1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 1.8, 3.2	
Preparing for your viva	1.3, 1.7, 4.1	
Editing and proofreading your thesis	1.3, 2.2, 3.2	
Copyright and intellectual property	1.9, 3.5, 4.2	

Communicating your research

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
Publishing your research as a PGR	2.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4	
Presenting at academic conferences	2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 5.6	
Q&A with journal editors	1.9, 3.5	
Publishing in arts and humanities journals	3.4, 4.2	
Creating academic posters	2.4, 4.1, 4.2	
Writing not reporting: thinking differently about thesis writing	2.1, 2.2, 4.1	

Professional practice and conduct

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
Research ethics Q&A	1.9, 3.5	
Research with children	1.9, 2.1, 2.2, 3.3, 3.5	
Research with vulnerable adults	1.9, 3.3, 3.5	
Informed consent: what is it and why does it matter?	1.9, 3.3, 3.5	
Participatory research: challenges and strategies	1.2, 1.5, 1.9, 3.3, 3.5	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI): issues and challenges for PGRs	1.7, 1.9, 3.5, 5.1	
Striving for rigour in qualitative research	2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.5	

Methods, tools and techniques

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
Writing in practice-based research	2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.6	
Systematic review masterclass	2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5	
Lost in the literature: finding your way through types of literature review	2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5	
Autoethnographic research	1.7, 2.2, 2.5	
Ethnographic fieldwork	2.2, 2.3, 3.3, 3.5	
Using questionnaires for research	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	
Setting up your thesis document: making the most of Microsoft Word	2.3, 2.4	
Quantitative research designs: a refresher	1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.2	
Introduction to SPSS	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	
Introduction to comprehensive meta-analysis	2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5	
Qualitative research beyond the interview: creative and visual methods	2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6	
Interview techniques for research	2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.5	
Risk management in postgraduate research	1.9, 2.2, 3.3	

Session Checklist

You and your research

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
Dealing with difficulty in postgraduate research	1.1, 1.7, 1.8, 3.3	
Surviving and thriving as a part-time PGR	1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 3.2	
Staying motivated	1.1, 1.8	
Managing perfectionism as a postgraduate researcher	1.1, 1.6, 1.7	
Working effectively with your supervisor	1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 3.2, 5.2	

Career development

Session/activity	RDF descriptor(s)	Attended (tick)
PGR and ECR Careers Symposium	1.1, 1.7, 4.5, 5.6	
Teaching in Higher Education: where to begin?	1.1, 1.7, 4.5	
Applying for (and getting) academic jobs	1.1, 1.6, 2.1, 5.6	
Research-informed teaching? Navigating the 'research/teaching' nexus	1.1, 1.3, 1.6, 4.5	



Further training and development opportunities

Guest speakers and special events

In addition to the workshops led by members of our own academic community, we offer an exciting series of special, one-off events where researchers, practitioners and specialists from academia and beyond share their insights and expertise with you. Details of these events will be published on the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#) and publicised in our regular email communications.

University of East Anglia online training programme

YSJU subscribes to an online training series provided by the University of East Anglia (UEA) that offers research and professional skills training to all PGRs via a virtual classroom. The training is delivered by Dr Simon Watts, PGR Training Coordinator, and will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings between 7pm – 9pm. The programme comprises five modules, each focused on a specific theme or topic. You are free to sign up for individual sessions rather than entire modules if you prefer. Below is a full list of the modules and individual sessions for 2025-26.

Module 1: Academic Writing

- 1. What Should a Literature Review Do?
- 2. Writing Effectively
- 3. Academic Publishing
- 4. Writing and Structuring an Effective Thesis

Module 2: Qualitative Research Skills

- 1. A Comparison of Qualitative Methods
- 2. Qualitative Interviewing
- 3. Analysing Qualitative Data
- 4. Using NVivo for Qualitative Research

Module 3: Finishing your PhD

- 1. Preparing for your Viva
- 2. Securing a First Academic Post
- 3. Preparing Impactful Research Proposals & Grant Applications

Module 4: Teaching Skills

- 1. Preparing and Delivering Seminars
- 2. Preparing and Delivering Lectures
- 3. Assessment, Feedback, and Module Design

Module 5: Quantitative Research Skills

- 1. A Beginner’s Guide to Quantitative Research
- 2. An Introduction to Scale Development
- 3. An Introduction to Structural Equation Modelling

Sessions can be booked via the [UEA Online Training Series webpage](#) three weeks before they are due to run. If you have any queries or would like further information, please contact Simon at simon.d.watts@uea.ac.uk.

Northern Advanced Research Training Initiative (NARTI)

Northern Advanced Research Training Initiative (NARTI) is a network of research-led universities in the north of England, providing specialist advanced training through the facilitation of events, retreats and conferences to establish networks to share cross-regional expertise. York St John University’s membership of NARTI means you have access to a wide range of workshops, research symposia hosted variously online and in person. While many of these events focus on Business and Management research, they are open to PGRs from other disciplines and many are more general or interdisciplinary in scope.

Details of upcoming NARTI events are shared via our regular email communications to PGRs and published on the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#).

Teaching Enhancement and HEA Fellowship

For PGRs looking to gain teaching experience and recognition, the Teaching Enhancement Team at YSJU offers a range of training and support, including access to the Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship scheme. YSJU’s training programme for prospective HEA applicants gives PGRs a structured route to obtaining this nationally-recognised accreditation. Please see [here](#) for more information about working towards HEA Fellowship at YSJU. To learn more about how the Teaching Enhancement Team can support you, please click [here](#).

PGR School Intro to Teaching

In addition to the support available from the Teaching Enhancement Team, the PGR School runs a scheme for PhD students who would like to gain teaching experience and work towards Associate Fellowship of the HEA. A limited number of PGRs from each school will have the opportunity to join the scheme, where they will gain up to 30 hours of paid teaching work, supported by an experienced mentor.

A typical semester on the scheme would entail observation of seminars, supported teaching, solo teaching and assessment, alongside regular mentor meetings, peer support meetings and an observation of your teaching. The scheme will be open to all post-transfer PhD students who are not already employed by the University as an Academic Associate.

Please email PGR.School@yorks.ac.uk for more information.





Research events, conferences, and seminars

As a PGR at York St John University, you can take advantage of a wide range of events for researchers. This includes our institution-wide annual PGR School Conference (formerly known as Eat. Sleep. Research. Repeat), as well as research seminars, symposia and conferences within our academic Schools and departments.

Below are some of the highlights of each year's calendar of research events. This isn't an exhaustive list; for up-to-date information on what's going on, please keep an eye on the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#), which is updated continuously throughout the year, and the PGR School's regular email newsletters.

Annual PGR School Conference

Our annual PGR School Conference brings together researchers from across the University for two days of presentations, panel discussions, and networking opportunities in an interdisciplinary, collegiate and supportive environment. Whether you're just starting out or coming to the end of your research degree, come along and discuss all things research with your fellow PGRs and academic colleagues.

School PGR Events and research seminars

Each of our five academic Schools and the London Campus organises an annual postgraduate research event to celebrate and promote PGRs' contribution to their School's research culture. These events are a great opportunity to discuss your research with like-minded peers and colleagues in an informal, friendly setting; however, they also offer you the chance to gain valuable experience of organising a research seminar, symposium or small conference. Please contact your School PGR Lead (see details on page 8 of this booklet) if you'd like to be involved in organising one of these events.

School PGR events can take a variety of forms; previous academic years have seen 'open studio' evenings (School of the Arts), research poster showcases (York Business School), and even a careers-themed Q&A event in York's Winning Post pub (School of Science, Technology and Health). Details of the 2025-26 series of School PGR events will be published on the [Virtual Graduate Centre](#) and included in our regular email updates once confirmed.

School and subject research seminars

In addition to these annual events, there are a range of School and subject-level research seminar series that run throughout the year. These events, which often include contributions from visiting speakers alongside presentations by YSJU researchers, are the perfect way to get involved in your School's research community. Talk to your School PGR Lead or check out the [YSJU Academic Development blog](#) to find out more about what's happening in your School.

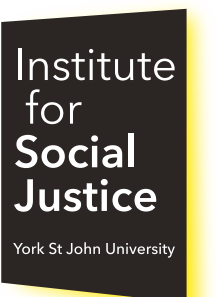


Institute for Social Justice and Institute for Health and Care Improvement events

YSJU is very proud to host the Institute for Social Justice (ISJ) and Institute for Health and Care Improvement (IHCI), both of which organise a wide range of events for PGRs and academic colleagues, including the Making Waves PGR symposium hosted by ISJ. To find out more about what's happening in the Institutes and how to get involved, please follow the links below to view their respective webpages. Updates on IHCI and ISJ events will also be provided in the PGR School's regular email updates.

[Institute for Social Justice](#)

[Institute for Health and Care Improvement](#)



YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY
**Institute for
Health and Care
Improvement**

PGR Representatives

PGR Representatives are postgraduate researchers who act as a liaison between the PGR community, the PGR School, and the wider University. As well as sitting on the University Research Committee (URC) and Research Degrees Committee (RDC), PGR Representatives help to organise a range of social events, activities and initiatives to help you feel at home as part of the YSJU research community.

To get in touch with your reps, you can email them at pgrrep@yorks.ac.uk. The [Virtual Graduate Centre](#) will be kept up to date with details about your reps for 2025-26 and the work they are doing to support and advocate for the PGR Community.



Support services at YSJ and beyond

YSJU Student Hub

Launched in July 2025, the Student Hub is a simplified way for students (including PGRs) to access help and information. The Student Hub provides a single point of contact and source of information for student support services across York St John University. Students are able to access the Hub via a new digital portal, by phone, and in person at both our York and London campuses.

The online [Student Hub portal](#) includes a searchable library of help pages. These cover support topics from all of our student services and are a great place to start when you are looking for information.

You can make an enquiry in person by visiting the Student Hub enquiry desk in the Holgate building (York campus) or Floor 3 (London campus). You can also speak to a member of the HELP team by calling 01904 876500.

Alternatively, you can submit an online enquiry through the Student Hub portal at any time. To submit an enquiry, you need to log in using your York St John University username and password. Any queries about postgraduate research will be passed to us in the PGR School.

Study Development

The [Study Development team](#) are available to support you with your academic development through one-to-one tutorials or small group bookings. The team can support you with your thesis and help you to improve your study skills, develop your academic writing, and reflect on your progress. You can contact them at studydevelopment@yorks.ac.uk.

Academic Liaison Librarians

To assist you in accessing the resources necessary for your research, our [Academic Liaison Librarians](#) offer one-to-one appointments. The team can advise you on referencing (including reference management systems and software); help you to locate and access specialist resources; and provide support with accessibility software. You can use the webpage linked above to find out who the librarian is for your subject area; if you're still not sure of the right member of the team to contact, please email academicliaisonteam@yorks.ac.uk.

Notes

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PGR School

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