The Essential Guide to Postgraduate Study

Annotated bibliography

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[p. 259 ↓] Throughout the research phase of this text, and as a result of teaching experience in the various areas related to its content, a considerable number of textbooks and associated resources – targeted at the postgraduate student market – have been consulted. Presented here, organised by chapter heading, is a carefully selected and annotated list of currently available textbooks that may support your own studies and professional development. This list is not meant to be exhaustive; rather it is indicative of resources that have been useful in developing this text.

Chapter 2: Developments in postgraduate study

Brause, R.S. (2000) *Writing your doctoral dissertation: Invisible rules for success.* RoutledgeFalmer, London. £15.99

Rita Brause's text draws upon a range of data sources to provide a book that discusses the entire doctoral process in a lively and engaging way. Focus groups and questionnaire data collected from doctoral students adds value throughout the work. Contents include: comparing a dissertation to a long term paper; jumping through hoops, going on a journey: personal metaphors for the process; the stages in writing a dissertation: an overview; pithy insights and suggestions for success; preparing for your study; creating your setting and identifying your dissertation topic and research questions; forming your dissertation committee; your dissertation committee: roles and responsibilities; creating a professional setting with student colleagues; developing a productive setting; writing your dissertation proposal.

Brown, T. (2003) *Providing for the postgraduate market*. Troon: The National Postgraduate Committee of the UK.

This report, conducted on behalf of the National Postgraduate Committee, explores what some universities are doing to support postgraduate learners within their

institutions. It also examines the impact upon university communities of developing exclusive facilities for postgraduates.

Delamont, S., Atkinson, P. and Parry, O. (2000) *The doctoral experience*. Falmer Press, London. £75 (hardback)

Drawing upon research work funded through the Economic and Social Research Council, this text analyses and discusses research data collected from a variety of **[p. 260 ↓]** academic and research students based at a range of British universities. Chapters unpack the doctoral experiences of academics and students, and in doing so they explore the exchange and application of educational and academic knowledge. References are made to the work of other professional groups in order to compare the culture of academia. Throughout the text, vignettes and case studies illustrate the reality of the key issues raised.

Chapter 3: Where to study and apply for funding

Darwen, J., Bell, E. and Goodlad, S. (2002) *National survey of postgraduate funding and priorities*. Troon: The National Postgraduate Committee of the UK.

Report on a national survey of students, exploring issues such as what factors do students consider in deciding to pursue postgraduate study? How are postgraduate students funded through their courses, and what are the implications of these funding mechanisms? How many postgraduate students undertake paid work, what sort of work do they do and why, and what impact does this have on their study (if any)? What are the future career plans of postgraduate students, and what factors do they take into account in making these plans? Does debt accrued as a student have any effect on these plans? Provides useful and informative context for those thinking about applying for postgraduate study in the UK.

Graves, N. and Varma, V. (1997) *Working for a doctorate: a guide for the humanities and social sciences*. Routledge, London. £14.99

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This guide offers practical advice on the doctoral process. It includes helpful case studies of student experiences as well as material focusing on the cultural and process aspects of studying for a PhD.

The Guardian university guide (2005) £14.99 and *The Times good university guide* (2005) £15.99

Both of these guides are primarily targeted at those considering undergraduate programmes of study. However, they contain extremely useful summary data relating to teaching, research and resourcing of UK universities.

Prospects (2004) *Prospects postgraduate funding guide 2004/05*. Prospects. (http://www.prospects.ac.uk) £4.99

This annual guide provides focused advice and guidance in relation to securing funding from employers and other sponsors, detailed information on available loans and their terms and conditions, and other sources of finance available to assist postgraduate study.

Chapter 4: Developing proposals

[p. 261 ↓] Blaikie, N. (2000) *Designing social research: the logic of anticipation*. Polity Press, Cambridge. £18.50

A general text detailing the mechanics of social science research. Of particular use for postgraduate students are the descriptions and analyses of research approaches and proposal designs in the first part of the text. All of the key social science research approaches and tools are thoroughly discussed by relating them to appropriate applications. Contents include: preparing research proposals and research designs; designing social research; research questions and objectives; strategies for answering research questions; concepts, theories, hypotheses and models; sources and selection of data; methods for answering research questions; sample research designs.

Punch, K. (2000) *Developing effective research proposals*. Sage, London. £16.99

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An excellent, short text dealing with the proposal development and writing process. The book deals with both qualitative and quantitative proposals and includes detailed examples of each. Contents include: the proposal – readers, expectations and functions; a general framework for developing proposals; some issues; methods; writing the proposal; tactics.

Chapter 5: Finding your feet – the culture of academia

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (1998) *The academic career handbook*. Open University Press, Buckingham. £21.99

An excellent text for those thinking about pursuing an academic career. The text details the traditional and emerging career options for would-be and newly appointed academics. Written by a well-established writing team, the text covers such areas as starting an academic career, networking, teaching opportunities (including tutoring and supervision), researching, writing, and managing yourself and other academics. The authors draw upon a wealth of additional material to emphasise the points they make, as well as providing 'hints' and 'tips' for success. Contents include: academic careers, networking, teaching, researching, and managing and developing your career.

Burton, S. and Steane, P. (2004) *Surviving your thesis*. Routledge, London. £16.99

This edited volume comprehensively covers the research journey and will be of use and relevance to undergraduates and postgraduates alike. There is sufficient detail within the text for a broad readership to obtain some useful guidance and assistance from its content. Links to helpful websites and further reading **[p. 262 ↓]** suggestions are also provided within key sections of the text. The unique cultural and social elements of UK universities are not covered in detail within the text, however, as the writing team are academics from institutions outside the UK.

Cuthbert, R. (1996) *Working in higher education*. Open University Press/SRHE, Buckingham. £22.50

In three substantive parts, this book explores the workers, the work and the work context of higher education. In examining the work, the text provides an analysis of employment types and rights, and the nature of an academic career. The 'work' section examines disciplinary similarities and differences, and managing academics. The 'work context' section unpacks notions of autonomy, culture and professional status. For students within higher education, this text will provide useful context and background information to the operation and function of UK universities. Contents include: academic staff: information and data; managing the employment relationship in higher education: *quo vardis?;* does it pay to work in universities?; which of us has a brilliant career? Notes from a higher education survivor; new liberty, new discipline: academic work in the new higher education; professors and professionals: on changing boundaries; managing how academics manage; works committees; geographical transitions; just like the novels? Researching the occupational cultures of higher education; which academic profession are you in?; autonomy, bureaucracy and competition: the ABC of control in higher education; all work and no play?

Chapter 6: Reading and searching for information and seeking advice

Burns, T. and Sinfield, S. (2003) *Essential study skills: the complete guide to success at University*. Sage, London. £14.99

Of particular use and relevance to those returning to higher education following some time away. Contents include: how to learn and study; how to organise yourself for study; how to research and read academically; how to use the overview; how to pass exams; how to learn creatively; how to build your confidence; how to succeed in group work; how to prepare better assignments; how to be reflective.

Fairbairn, G.J. and Fairbairn, S.A. (2001) *Reading at University*. Open University Press, Buckingham. £14.99

An introductory text designed to help learners develop effective skills in information management and analysis. Of particular use to those learners returning to university

who wish to refresh their skills in this general area. Contents include: **[p. 263 ↓]** reading as communication; developing reading skills and disciplines; reading as research; organising and planning your reading.

Rumsey, S. (2004) *How to find information: a guide for researchers*. Open University Press, Maidenhead. £16.99

A thorough and accessible text written by a senior librarian with substantial experience of conducting information searches. A wide range of tools and techniques are discussed, including common search conventions, accessing online databases and using the internet. Contents include: formats of information sources; identifying the information need; the online searching process; citation searching; using the world wide web for research; evaluation of resources; citing references; intellectual property and plagiarism.

Chapter 7: Managing your time, academic writing and presenting your work

Becker, L. (2004) *How to manage your postgraduate course*. Palgrave, London. £12.99

Becker provides general tips and guidance concerned with the overall management of a postgraduate course. This is particularly suited to traditional Masters students, rather than those undertaking PhD study, who may require more specialised and focused guidance. Coverage includes: assessing your skills base; managing your course; teamworking and networking; presenting ideas; writing up research work.

Phelan, P.J. and Reynolds, P.J. (1995) *Argument and evidence: critical thinking for the social sciences*. Routledge, London. £70 (hardback)

The development of clear and reasoned approaches to the evaluation of arguments/ evidence are put forward in this text. This reference guide might be useful for those postgraduates eager to develop and articulate arguments and supporting rationales within their work. Contents include: argument and evidence; context, convention and

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communication; an informal analysis of arguments; patterns of reasoning; establishing validity; critical analysis in practice and assumptions; evidence and what counts as evidence; presenting and summarising evidence; furthering knowledge; probability and uncertainty; probability theory applied; estimation and reliability; testing hypotheses.

Potter, S. (2002) *Doing postgraduate research*. Sage, London. £16.99

A practical edited collection of materials that embraces the postgraduate research process. Particularly useful elements include sections on planning research investigations. Contents also include: getting going; the writing process; undertaking a **[p. 264 ↓]** topic review; using computers in research; responsibilities, rights and ethics; the examination process and the *viva*.

Van Emden, J. and Becker, L. (2004) *Presentation skills for students*. London: Palgrave. £11.99

A short and accessible guide to preparing and making presentations to a variety of audiences, including preparing materials for seminars, tutorials and more formal conference presentations and papers to academics. Specific contents include: personal development: speaking to an audience; delivery and non-verbal communication; using visual aids; speaking as part of your course; speaking as part of a group.

Wisker, G. (2001) *The postgraduate research handbook: succeed with your MA, MPhil, EdD and PhD*. Palgrave, London. £14.99

A useful and, in places, detailed text providing guidance for those embarking on a postgraduate journey. It is perhaps more relevant for Masters level learners, rather than those embarking on the research element of PhD study. Useful, generic sections include: choosing your supervisor; developing proposals; managing your studies and planning your work; writing up and preparing for the *viva*.

Chapter 8: Working with your supervisor

Delamont, S., Atkinson, P. and Parry, O. (2004) *Supervising the doctorate: a guide to success* (2nd edn). Open University Press/SRHE, Buckingham. £19.99

Based upon their considerable combined knowledge of supervising doctoral students, the three authors of this text offer insights into the process from the supervisor's point of view. They discuss a range of issues and topics associated with the supervision process, including: negotiating and agreeing the parameters of the supervisor-supervisee relationship; what a supervisor should expect from the role; how to manage students and their work; giving appropriate and helpful feedback. These and other areas are discussed in some detail and emphasised through the use of colourful vignettes and case studies. Although targeted at those undertaking the role of supervisor, much of the coverage will be of interest to the postgraduate student who is keen to develop and nurture this important relationship.

Grix, J. (2001) *Demystifying postgraduate research: from MA to PhD*. University of Birmingham Press, Birmingham. £9.99

A very accessible text that discusses a variety of topics and issues of relevance to postgraduate learners. Much of the coverage relates to PhD students but there is enough generic material to be of use and relevance to other postgraduate learners. Particularly useful, and crisply written, are sections on the supervision and *viva* processes, and the mechanics of conducting postgraduate research. Coverage also **[p. 265 ↓]** includes: the nature of doctoral research; dealing with the literature and critically reviewing it; methods of research and investigation.

Phillips, E.M. and Pugh, D.S. (2003) *How to get a PhD: a handbook for students and their supervisors* (3rd edn). Open University Press, Buckingham. £17.99

One of the most popular texts for postgraduate students, offering seasoned advice based upon the authors' substantive experience of working with postgraduate students. A particularly accessible chapter covers the supervision process, offering guidance and support to the student who seeks to get the most out of this relationship. Contents include: becoming a postgraduate; getting into the system; the nature of the PhD qualification; how not to get a PhD; how to do research; the form of a PhD thesis; the PhD process; how to manage your supervisor; how to supervise; the formal procedures; how to survive in a predominantly British, white, male, full-time academic environment; the limitations of the present system.

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Chapter 9: Working with other researchers

Rugg, G. and Petre, M. (2004) *The unwritten rules of PhD research.* Open University Press, Buckingham. £17.99

This text attempts to investigate areas of the PhD process that other books do not. It does this admirably in places by, for example, offering reasoned interpretations of the university system within which PhD students must operate and work. Procedural notes, tips and guidance are offered throughout. Particularly useful sections, missing from most other texts, include elements on networking, developing academic papers and their different types, the *viva* process, making presentations, and getting the most out of conferences.

West, M.A. (2003) *Effective teamwork: practical lessons from organisational research.* Blackwells, London. £15.99

Although focused upon industrial organisational research, this text will be useful for postgraduate researchers seeking to develop their teamwork and collaborative working skills. Coverage includes: creating teams; building and leading teams; participating in teams; supporting team members; creative problem-solving; dealing with team conflicts.

Chapter 10: Career planning

Brown, S. and Race, P. (2002) *Lecturing: a practical guide.* RoutledgeFalmer, London. £19.99

An accessible and user-friendly text for those undertaking teaching duties for the first time. Coverage includes: the place and types of lecture; effective use of voice **[p. 266 ↓]** and body language; facilitating effective learning; using lecturing tools; working with groups; ensuring quality in lectures.

Ramsden, P. (2003) *Learning to teach in Higher Education.* RoutledgeFalmer, London. £22.99

This user-friendly text presents the reader with a range of tools and techniques that are important considerations for those wishing to be successful in university teaching. The book is split into three substantive sections which deal with learning and teaching, designing learning, and evaluating the quality of provision offered. Specific chapter coverage includes: ways of understanding teaching; approaches to learning; learning from the student perspective; theories of teaching in higher education; teaching strategies for effective learning; evaluating the quality of higher education; what it takes to improve university teaching.

Reece, I. and Walker, S. (2003) *Teaching, training and learning: a practical guide* (5th edn). Business Education Publishers, Sunderland. £26.50

An excellent and thoroughly practical guide to teaching and training in post-compulsory education. Contents include: an introduction to teaching; student learning; teaching strategies and learning styles; learning aids; planning for teaching and learning; communication, assessment and evaluation of the learning experience.

Chapter 11: Publishing opportunities

Black, D., Brown, S., Day, A. and Race, P. (1998) *500 tips for getting published: a guide for educators, researchers and professionals*. Kogan Page, London. £15.99

A very useful and accessible pocket guide to approaching publishers and getting your work in print. Contents include: targeting the right journal; making your research publishable; using the literature search effectively; finding the right voice; style points; improving your 'hit rate'; responding to referees' feedback; dealing with rejections.

Rubens, P. (2000) *Science and technical writing: a manual of style*. Routledge, London. £17.99

An innovative text dealing with the complexities of technical writing and presentation. This guide helpfully takes readers through the stages of translating technical information, and the transfer from paper-based to electronic presentation of work. Contents include: audience analysis and document planning; writing for non-native

audiences; grammar, usage and revising for publication; punctuating scientific and technical prose; using acceptable spelling; incorporating specialised **[p. 267 ↓]** terminology; using numbers and symbols; using quotations, citations and references; creating indexes; creating non-textual information; creating useable data displays; designing useful documents.

Thomson, A. (2001) *Critical reasoning: a practical introduction* (2nd edn). Routledge, London. £12.99

An aid to developing arguments and critical thinking and reasoning skills. Contents include: analysing reasoning: recognising reasoning and identifying conclusions; argument indicator words; recognising argument without argument indicator words; identifying conclusions; judging whether a passage contains an argument; summary: is it an argument?; evaluating reasoning; evaluating the truth of reasons and assumptions.

Woods, P. (1999) *Successful writing for qualitative researchers.* RoutledgeFalmer, London. £14.99

For students engaged in qualitative research, this innovative text provides useful structures and approaches to explore and examine your data. In addition, guidance is provided on getting your work into print. Specifically, contents include: getting started and keeping going; a standard approach to organisation; alternative forms of writing; style; editing; collaborative writing; writing for publication.