RESEACH SUPPORT PROVISION WITHIN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION:

The School of Education (SoE) provides a range of opportunities for staff and postgraduate research students to develop their skills, undertake training, and contribute to the research community within the School of Education. All support provision links to the national Framework for Researcher Development which provides the basis for all professional research development across the University of Aberdeen. This framework is explained on the university website: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/develop and is also discussed on p4 in relation to the wider support provision available across the university.

SoE research support provision is set out in the diagram on p3. Each element is elaborated below:

1) All staff and students have access to the School of Education '**Research Exchange**' which is accessible via myaberdeen. This site provides a wide range of on-line resources, courses, information and guidance. There are also opportunities to discuss research matters with others on the discussion board and to contribute to wikis. All staff and students are invited to add useful resources to the repository so that it continues to grow to the benefit of all. Please contact the research office if you have anything to upload (elizabeth.robertson@abdn.ac.uk).

Of particular interest on the Research Exchange are the Self-Study Research Workshops suitable for those in the early stages of research development. The issues addressed in the workshops are as follows:

- Course 1: Getting started: What is a PhD?
- Course 2: Getting started: What is a thesis?
- Course 3: Review of the Literature: The purpose and characteristics of the Literature Review
- Course 4: Review of the Literature: Doctoral level writing (critical thinking reading and writing)
- Course 5: Review of the Literature: Academic writing (evidence, tone, presentation, audience)
- Course 6: Research Question: What is it and where does it come from?
- Course 7: Research Paradigms and Methodologies
- Course 8: Research Design and Ethics
- Course 9: Data Gathering Methods
- Course 10: The Progress Review

These self-study workshops include powerpoints, key readings and reflective questions in each topic area. Participants are also directed to books and resources for further study. PhD/EdD students are expected to discuss all workshop activities with their supervisors at supervision meetings.

2) **Myaberdeen** is a repository of information just for research students. The self-study workshops mentioned above are available here, plus a range of other relevant resources.

3) **Masters in Research (MRes) research methods classes** take place regularly throughout the academic year. Though these classes are designed primarily for MRes students, they may also be of interest to staff and students with little prior knowledge and experience of research. Examples of the courses available include:

- Quantitative Research Design & Applications
- Theory and Applications of Descriptive and Inferential Statistical Approaches
- Ethnography

- Grounded theory
- Critical Discourse Analysis
- Narrative inquiry
- Interviews/focus groups
- Qualitative validity

Students who wish to attend these classes should first discuss this with their supervisor and then negotiate attendance with the Director of the MRes programme (a.graham@abdn.ac.uk). Staff wishing to attend classes are also required to contact the Programme Director in the first instance.

Please note that there is no requirement to undertake assessments in these courses or to attend them all. Class lists are emailed to students and staff at the beginning of each semester, but can also be found on myaberdeen and on the Research Exchange.

4) The **Research Reading Group** is an open forum available to all staff and students who wish to participate in regular discussions of research papers. There is a different focus for each meeting and a research paper is sent out in advance. Participants are asked to read the paper and come to the meeting prepared to explore issues arising from it and to make links to their own research. Ideas for papers can be emailed to the research office (elizabeth.robertson@abdn.ac.uk). Dates for the reading group are distributed by email.

5) The **Music department and Elphinstone Institute** run regular events such as music research seminars, the music reading group and the Elphinstone public lecture series which are open to all staff and research students across the School of Education. These events are advertised via email and also on the Music and Elphinstone websites.

6) The **Student/Supervisor Workshops** are occasional events, initiated by students, which seek to address specific student research needs that are not catered for in the general support provision. They are therefore bespoke sessions that are jointly planned and organised for small groups of students experiencing the same need.

7) In order to foster peer support and collaboration, postgraduate research students have their own **Education Student Research Seminar Series** (ESRSS) that convenes regularly to explore topics of interest, to present papers and to discuss research issues. Staff do not attend these meeting so that students have the space and opportunity to decide upon, and develop, their own learning experiences in their own way. The seminars enable students to practice their presentation skills, and explore their research with others, in a safe place amongst supportive peers. Details of seminars are emailed to students and are also available on myaberdeen. The ESRSS plans and organises a yearly Student Research Conference which provides further opportunity for research presentation and discussion.

8) The **Open Space Seminars and Workshops** are planned and led by external researchers invited by staff within the School of Education. They provide an additional opportunity for in-depth discussion of research issues of interest to our research community. Speakers can be requested by emailing the research office (elizabeth.robertson@abdn.ac.uk).

9) The **School of Education Research Seminar Series** runs every week, usually on a Wednesday at 1.00 pm, and is advertised by email. SoE staff and research students, as well as staff from across the wider university, are regular presenters at the seminars. Everyone is encouraged to attend and contribute to discussions. If you would like to present your research please contact the research office (elizabeth.robertson@abdn.ac.uk).
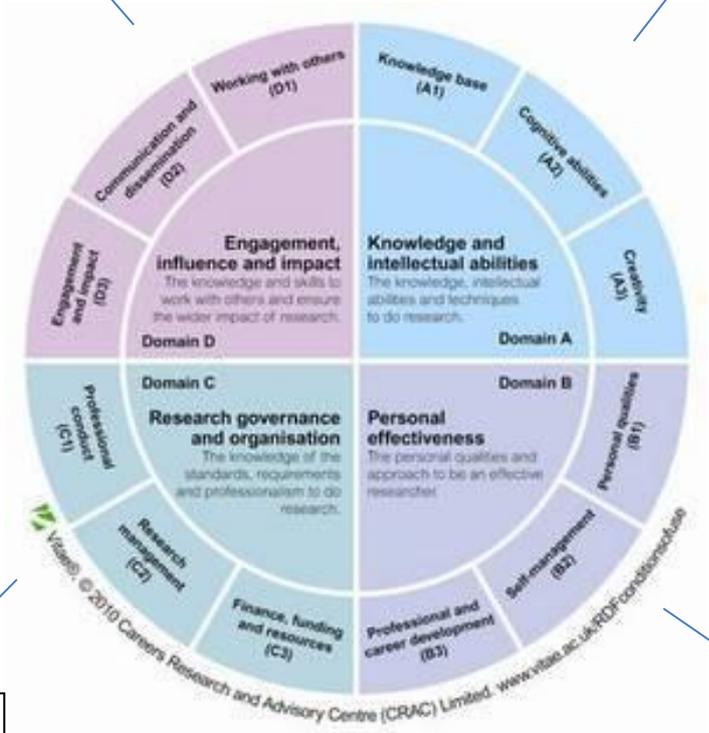
School of Education Seminar Series (R)

Open Space Seminars/Workshops:

Led by visiting researchers (R)

School of Education Research Exchange (R)

Student Seminar Series (R) and end of year conference

Myaberdeen on-line information and resources (PhD/EdD students only) (R)

Supervisor/Student Workshops (R)

MRes research methods classes

SoE Research Support Provision linked to the

The Researcher Development Framework (RDF)

(NB: R = recorded/available to overseas students on myaberdeen)

Music/Elphinstone: Music Research Seminars/Reading Group and Elphinstone Public Lectures

Research Reading Group

RESEARCH SUPPORT PROVISION ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN:

In addition to the research support offered within the School of Education, there are numerous opportunities available across the wider university. Here is a list of current provision:

1) Every October, the College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) runs information sessions for new research students, covering information about the University and the research degree process and allowing students studying within the College to get to know each other. The College also supports an annual postgraduate conference bringing together a range of different disciplines, including education. For more information go to:

http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cass/graduate/current/new

2) The University's Skills for Research Excellence (SfRE) programme offers courses in a variety of generic skills. SfRE has been specially designed to offer staff and research students training opportunities with the aim of helping them complete their research project successfully and on-time, and of enhancing employability. For more information go to:

www.abdn.ac.uk/develop/

3) The library also provides courses for staff and postgraduate research students. Go to:

www.abdn.ac.uk/coursebooking/system/book.php

4) The University's student learning service provides a comprehensive range of services to support academic development such as study advice, skills workshops, on-line resources and access to skills advisors who can provide one-to-one support. For details go to:

www.abdn.ac.uk/sls

5) The University of Aberdeen Language Centre offers language classes at a variety of levels and courses on *Academic Writing* and *Communication Skills* for students whose first language is not English. For details go to:

www.abdn.ac.uk/languagecentre/

6) The University of Aberdeen's Directorate of Information Systems and Services offers courses in software packages including Word, Excel, Access, Powerpoint and RefWorks. For details go to:

www.abdn.ac.uk/diss/training/courses/

7) 'Prepare for Success' is an interactive pre-arrival learning tool for **international students** who are getting ready to come to the UK to study. The learning resources about different aspects of academic life in the UK help you find out what British academic life is like and what kind of academic skills you will need for effective study. As well as preparing you for what to expect during your studies, the activities provide scope for language improvement. Go to:

http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cass/graduate/current/new/

or directly to:

www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk

USEFUL RESEARCH WEBSITES

The following websites may be useful to staff and research students seeking on-line skills training, external training courses and research events, and information on funding advice, grants, etc.

- http://www.researchprofessional.com
- http://vitae.ac.uk
- http://www.britac.ac.uk/funding/guide/pdfells.cfm .
- http://methodspace.com
- http://www.ahrc.ac.uk
- http://www.esrc.ac.uk/my-esrc/grants/RES-035-25-0002/read
- http://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/researchmethods/index.htm
- http://www.restore.ac.uk/
- http://www.v-resort.ac.uk/
- http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/
- http://www.the-sra.org.uk/training.htm
- http://ncrm.ac.uk/training
- http://guardian.co.uk/higher-education-network
- http://www.socialsciencespace.com
- http://www.bera.ac.uk/research-methodology-in-education/
- http://www.missendencentre.co.uk/
- http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/news/ebulletin/Bulletins/2011/08.php
- http://www.crfr.ac.uk/cpd/cpdindex.html
- http://www.tlrp.org/index.html
- http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/
- http://datalib.edina.ac.uk/mantra
- http://www.srhe.ac.uk/events/
- http://score1.muon.co.uk/
- http://www.readytoresearch.ac.uk