



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY HANDBOOK

Ph.D. in BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Code: HUBA22

2015-2016

Department of Archaeology and Anthropology

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

N.B. Please note this handbook is for guidance only. In cases where there are differences between what is written in this handbook and official University regulations or announcements, the latter should be considered authoritative.

Prepared in September-December 2015.

**Pembroke Street
Cambridge, CB2 3QG Tel:
+44 (0) 1223 333520
www.bioanth.cam.ac.uk
graduate-secretary@bioanth.cam.ac.uk**

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Doctor of Philosophy in Biological Anthropology

Introduction

This handbook has been written to inform and assist PhD students in biological anthropology at Cambridge, especially those who are starting on their PhD this year.

Please let us know if you find any errors or omissions for us to rectify; your feedback would be appreciated.

Whether you read every word in this handbook immediately or not, please scan right through it now, to check all the headings before you file it, so that you will know what information is available in it, when you come to need it.

Biological Anthropology at Cambridge

Biological anthropology has a strong tradition at the University of Cambridge. Currently it is represented by five tenured academic staff (Professor Robert Foley, Dr Toomas Kivisild, Dr Marta Mirazón Lahr, Dr Jay Stock, Dr Peter Walsh), four temporary academic staff (Dr Robert Attenborough, Dr Jurgi Cristóbal Azkarate, Dr Jacob Dunn, Dr Rie Goto), and four affiliated and emeritus academic staff (Dr Charlotte Houldcroft, Professor William McGrew, Professor Nicholas Mascie-Taylor, Dr Piers Mitchell). In addition there is a large cohort of post-doctoral academics and PhD students, and an annual intake of MPhil students. Support staff include Fabio Lahr (IT support), Jo Osborn (laboratory technical staff), Erica Maria Pramauro (undergraduate administrator) and Katie Teague (graduate administrator).

This biological anthropology group is located principally in two buildings: one in Pembroke Street, which houses the biological anthropology administration area (CB2 3QG) as well as some of the laboratories and academic staff; the other in Fitzwilliam Street (Henry Wellcome Building, CB2 1QH). Katie Teague is located with archaeology (Downing Street, CB2 3DZ) since she is the archaeology graduate administrator also. All these buildings are a very short walk from each other, in south-central Cambridge.

Welcome!

If you have been admitted to the Cambridge PhD programme in Biological Anthropology, congratulations!! We are pleased to have you on board and look forward to getting to know you.

And if you have secured funding to support your PhD studies, congratulations again!!!

You may have some questions for us: hence this Handbook.

Things to know about straightaway

What should I do on Day One?

Assuming you have got the basics sorted out – accommodation, bank account, internet access, the whereabouts of the nearest supermarket etc. – you should make contact with us before or at the beginning of your first term. Your first port of call might be with the Graduate Administrator, the Graduate Tutor or your supervisor (see below for more on these roles). They may be trying to contact you also; only succeeding, if they have an operational email address for you and you are checking it.

There will be inductions to graduate student life in the Department, safety briefings, formal or informal social events etc. organized for your first few days here. These will give you a chance to meet fellow students of your own and preceding year cohorts, who can give invaluable advice and support, as well as staff.

If you have not already allocated desk space in the Department, it would not be too soon to enquire about this: see below.

One of the most important things you should do as early as possible is to make the acquaintance, if you haven't already, of your supervisor, and start discussions as to how to proceed. You will undoubtedly know beforehand who your supervisor is to be. They will have an office in one of the Department's buildings. You might try dropping in on spec; but a more reliable approach would be to make a time by email or phone. See contact details on the web, or seek advice from one of the administrators.

There may also be administrative matters to catch up with, including establishing your Cambridge IT identity (CRSID) and email address, confirming the whereabouts of the Haddon Library and University Library and your access to them, signing up with your funding source, and attending induction events at your college. You should visit or contact the Biological Anthropology Graduate Administrator to attend to any necessary formalities in joining the Department. This probably includes requesting a swipe card to permit 24-hour access to the building where you will work.

Fire, health and safety

The university takes its obligations under these headings very seriously. Biological Anthropology is represented in these matters by Jo Osborn. The Chair of the relevant committee is Dr Tamsin O'Connell (Archaeology).

Like many workplaces, our buildings have requirements that students and staff undertake brief training to minimize risk and deal with emergencies. This is for everyone, not only laboratory workers, although such workers require more training. Please comply promptly with the requests you will receive to undertake such training.

How long have I got for my PhD studies?

The Cambridge PhD is a 3-year degree, minimum, when taken full-time. A fee-free fourth year can usually be permitted without difficulty, but few funding sources will pay your living allowance longer than three years. Extensions past a fourth year require a stronger case to be made. Let us assume, then, that you should plan on three years.

Part-time enrolment can be arranged under certain circumstances. Please seek advice if you think this might apply to you.

Three years may seem like a long time. In prospect they may seem free, even empty and uncommitted. How you use your time and your freedom is very much up to you. Such liberation may even be disorienting. But the time passes fast. Time lost in the early stages is hard to make up later, especially once any funding you may have secured has run out. So: enjoy your time here with us – but also, make good, well organized, well focused use of it!

What will my studies towards a PhD consist of?

The Cambridge PhD is a research-only degree. That is, normally, no coursework is required. It is assumed that you are research-ready on arrival, as far as your biological anthropology background is concerned. Under certain circumstances there may be exceptions, most likely for specific research skills such as statistics or a language that you may need for documentary or field work. In essence, as far as the University is concerned, you as a research student are simply working towards your PhD thesis.

You may, however, attend any lectures in the University that you wish to, within reason. In small classes, politeness might suggest that you seek the lecturer's permission.

Overall, then, the principal ingredients of your academic life in the coming few years are simply: your research project; and – no PhD project comes without one – your supervisor.

What is different about working in this way?

Many things, especially if this will be your first research-only degree. Four, in particular:-

- You are not just answering a question, as in an undergraduate essay; you are setting it too – with input to a variable extent from your supervisor.
- The sheer scale is much greater – in time, and in many other ways too, presenting challenges of time management, self-management etc.
- You are working from the outset with a supervisor, and maybe other advisers, maybe a whole research team – not just presenting them with finished work.
- You will – depending on the nature of your project, but most probably – be collecting original raw data yourself, and analysing them yourself.

See below for more on each of these points.

How to define a research question and a research project?

There is no simple answer to this. You will already have written a proposal before you were accepted as a research student, and you will probably have discussed it extensively with your supervisor before that too. However, that is most likely just the start of a process. In the early months after you join us, your question and project will be developed, extended, critiqued, refined, probably whittled down from earlier soaring ambitions, on fairly rare occasions radically changed, whether for intellectual or practical reasons. This is your task, with guidance and stimulation from your supervisor.

Your eventual thesis is to be an original contribution to knowledge. You will therefore need to have a very good familiarity with existing knowledge in the particular sub-field in which your project is to lie, and a very good capacity to evaluate that existing research critically. Therefore a major written literature review is likely to occupy a significant portion of your time in your early months, enlarging what you will already have written before. The definition of your own project should flow logically from this. The review identifies, confirms, and details the gap in the literature which your own project is to fill.

Characterizing this gap is likely to be an active process over time, rather than a single 'aha' moment. It is about defining what is currently unknown, that you are keen to find out or work out. But setting your research question involves more than that alone. It also involves devising a plan, a method, a research design, by which worthwhile progress can be made with answering it, and probably a context, e.g. a specific population, in which it can be productively tackled – within the time and other resource limitations that apply.

Thus settling your question and your design is likely to be an iterative process, in which intellectual considerations – the gap in the research literature – and pragmatic ones – including funding and permission to work with the population you wish to – are gradually aligned with each other.

You may like to hang a sign over your desk, to remind yourself: "My research question is ..." Adjust the sign as often as necessary to reflect its latest version.

Further, this is a project you will be living with for three years or more, and may build on further after that; so it needs to be a project about which you are personally passionate.

Of course, all this will be worked out in conjunction with your supervisor. There is a wide variety of practices regarding the degree of freedom and responsibility you have to shape your own project. Sometimes it essentially your own project; sometimes it is part of a team project to which your supervisor or research group is already committed.

Why does sheer scale make a thesis so different from an essay?

It makes project management, time management and self-management more of a challenge. You are investing more time, energy, effort, motivation, self-esteem, possibly money of your own as well as other people's, in this one, possibly career-

defining project. Few people get to have a second go at a PhD, or even seek to.

Perhaps the biggest single additional challenge is time management. With an undergraduate essay planned over 1-2 weeks you can possibly – ill-advised as it may be – leave a lot of the work till the night before submission day. This does not work with a 3-year project. Therefore, the one giant deadline at the end needs to be broken down into multiple, more modest, nearer deadlines, structured so as ensure readiness for the final deadline when it comes. The University will do a bit of this for you, and your supervisor may do more; but you also need to take substantial responsibility for this yourself. See under ***Time lines*** below.

Living with the same themes, ideas and work routines over an extended period can also bring its challenges, depending on your project, how well suited you are to it, and how novelty-seeking a personality you are. With luck, skill, wise planning, a judicious work/life balance (rather than working 24/7 which is not sustainable indefinitely), and good progress through the work, you may hope to avoid running out of motivation. If you do run out, however, that is an issue that should be tackled rather than ignored: see below.

Some dull but useful practical matters...

Photocopiers are available in the Haddon Library, as well as in the biological anthropology buildings.

There is a **Coffee Room** on the third floor of the Pembroke Street building and a kitchen on most floors of the Fitzwilliam Street building. Tokens for the Pembroke Street coffee machine are available from Angela North, the Part I administrator. Dr Kivisild currently runs the coffee club system in Fitzwilliam Street.

Mail for staff can be left in with the Biological Anthropology Administrator, Pembroke Street. There are mailboxes for staff and graduates in both Pembroke Street (near the Administrators' offices) and Fitzwilliam Street (2nd floor).

Supervisors and supervision

How should I work with my primary PhD supervisor?

The \$64,000 question. This relationship, which may be unlike any you have had with academic advisers previously, is crucial to your PhD experience.

Every supervisor is different, every student is different, every student-supervisor relationship is different. At the beginning, it may not be clear to you how you are expected to interact with a supervisor you may hardly know yet. Because it works differently in each case, it is difficult to lay down set practices. So it is best to discuss explicitly with your supervisor how you are going to work together. For more on this, see under 'How often...?' below.

Sometimes people hold shyly back from bothering their supervisors, thinking that they

can only share their thinking with them, or show their work, once it has been polished to perfection. No. Perfection is very slowly attained if attainable at all, and this approach can waste a lot of time. It also fails to make proper use of your supervisor's ability and availability to help you work from a preliminary to a mature draft of a research proposal, a thesis chapter, or whatever it might be. The supervisor is there to help you shape your work towards its final form, and not simply to sit in judgement on a finished product. Of course, there is a balance to be found; you should not waste your supervisor's time with work so preliminary or unstructured that they will not find it comprehensible or concrete enough to respond to.

You will need to accept that there will be times when your supervisor is not around or not able to drop other commitments to attend immediately to your needs. These periods may be long-term (e.g. fieldwork or sabbatical) or short-term. In the long-term cases, special arrangements may be necessary. In general, supervisors are mindful that they have an obligation to you and will do their best to attend to your needs in a reasonably timely and flexible way.

Supervision relationships work in many different ways, but usually pretty well. It is not necessary for them to become so close as to blossom into lifelong friendships, though quite often they do, which is great. From time to time, though, they encounter difficulties, or actually break down. Even within a generally functional relationship, graduate students sometimes experience difficulty seeing their supervisor as often as they feel they need to. There are a number of options in this eventuality: see under 'What if ...?' below.

How often can I expect to meet with my primary supervisor?

Another vital question.

As a general, minimal guideline, you can expect to meet with your supervisor – for a serious, in-depth discussion of your work – at least twice per term. Probably this would be at least three times termly through your first year, and at other times when your need for feedback is more intensive. Terms may mean little or nothing to you as a research student; but they will be meaningful to your supervisor who is more likely to be out of Cambridge outside the terms, whether on fieldwork, at conferences etc. While you are both in Cambridge, supervisory meetings would be expected to continue at a similar frequency outside term as in it.

The above is a minimum. In some cases you may of course see your supervisor very often, e.g. if you have offices close by, use the same tea-room and/or have weekly research group meetings. That way, you may even be able to transact much of what you need to with your supervisor without pre-arranged meetings. A social coffee with your supervisor is nice; but be aware that it is not necessarily sufficient for an in-depth periodic review of how your work is going and what to do next.

Of course these arrangements have to take intelligent, flexible account of circumstances. In particular, of your need for your supervisor's input, which is variable through the course of your research work and thesis-writing; and also of your supervisor's availability, which will vary with their workload and presence on

Cambridge. You may, to some reasonable extent, need to be adaptable, as supervisors are invariably busy people. However, the bottom line is that you and your PhD project do need and deserve your supervisor's attention on a regular basis, for which 2-3 substantive meetings termly as above are a baseline. Your supervisor will know this.

You should, therefore feel free to request meetings and discuss how to interact. You can ask: how should I contact you when I feel I need to seek your advice? Can I just drop in, or catch you at coffee time, or ...? Should we have regular meetings (e.g. fortnightly or what?) whenever we are both in Cambridge? Should such meetings be more frequent during more crucial phases of the work (the early proposal development phase, the late writing up phase etc.)? Or will it work just to meet as the need arises? Any guidance about how you wish me to submit written work, or how long you will need to read it? And so forth. It is good to have this discussion early, before any frustrations can arise.

Some supervisors prefer a regular schedule, at least for certain phases of your work; others may prefer to arrange it as the need arises – but in that case it is important not to let too long a time pass unnoticed between meetings. Some supervisors may operate an open-door policy and be happy to work on a drop-in basis; but most probably find it more reliable and efficient to have scheduled times, pre-arranged by email or phone.

And how quickly can I expect feedback on my written work?

This question follows from the previous one, as meetings with supervisors often centre on the discussion of written work, such as research proposals, literature reviews, registration reports, draft thesis chapters. It needs explicit attention because it has the potential to be a major source of friction between PhD student and supervisor.

As a rule of thumb, it would be reasonable to expect a draft chapter or similar piece to be returned to you with comments within a fortnight or so, during terms anyway. Often it might be much less. However, like all these things, it has to be interpreted flexibly in light of travel and other activities and commitments. Please note that the fortnight pre-supposes that the submission of the work was pre-arranged, so that the supervisor has had a chance to schedule it into their diary. Unexpected work may take longer, say a month. Likewise, and obviously, a whole batch of chapters may take longer than one.

What if ...

- ... I am having trouble making a time to see my supervisor?**
- ... or getting enough discussion and advice time with him/her?**
- ... our relationship becomes strained or breaks down entirely?**

We hope this doesn't happen of course. However, it is only realistic to recognize that, every now and again, working relationships can go through difficult phases or even break down. Recognition of this possibility can play a part in preventing it from happening. The difficulties may be minor or major, simple or complicated, repairable or irreparable, and the causes may be of many different kinds. A single prescription to

prevent or fix them is unlikely to apply across the board.

Especially when you are first getting to know each other, it is important to work out ways of interaction that suit each of you. This applies to both parties, though your supervisor's ways may be more set already than yours. Even such a simple thing as arranging meetings may matter to each of you, and the basis is best discussed before it causes trouble. If you get frustrated at not finding your supervisor in his/her office when you call round, try email, or phone/voicemail, and give your supervisor a reasonable chance to reply. You will probably get to know his/her communication habits soon enough, and work out how to communicate optimally.

If such simple measures do not solve problems, or if significant troubles arise for which there is no simple remedy or adaptation, the main advice is: don't just suffer in silence – do something about it. What you should do depends on the circumstances. In general, try to address any issue as locally as possible before you go wider or up the hierarchy. In other words: if you feel able to, discuss it directly with your supervisor. They will probably appreciate the directness.

If you cannot address or cannot solve address difficulties in your relationship with your supervisor in that direct way, there are always other people whose advice you can seek, again starting locally. The first port of call is normally the Graduate Tutor for Biological Anthropology; discussing these issues is one of this person's expected roles. Your secondary supervisor or adviser, though primarily there for academic advice, may also be able to help. Other senior members of the Biological Anthropology group might also be an appropriate choice. You can go to your College Tutor or up the University hierarchy to the Head of Department. If it is causing you severe stress, you can go to the Counselling Service (see below).

The Graduate Union also has support options available:
<http://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/welfare/academic/supervisors/>

Ultimately, if all else fails, changing supervisors may be an option. However, PhD supervision is a specialized business. You probably selected this university in order to work with a particular supervisor. It is likely that few if any other staff members would be able to supervise you with a level of expertise similar to theirs. Therefore, changing supervisors is usually a last resort. Much better, if feasible, is to address and fix whatever issues may have been interfering with an effective and harmonious supervision relationship.

What about my second supervisor or adviser?

The primary supervisor generally carries the main supervisory load and academic responsibility for you. However, the University has a system in place for every PhD student to have at least one further academic allocated to them as further support: as either second supervisor (more responsibility) or adviser (less responsibility).

This is someone who may be able to offer a different angle on the topic of your work, e.g. is expert on a different aspect of your multi-disciplinary project for your primary supervisor. Unlike your primary supervisor, this person might not necessarily be a

tenured academic in the group. During periods of longer-term availability of your primary supervisor (e.g. on fieldwork or sabbatical, if that applies), your secondary supervisor or adviser may also be able to offer overall academic advice and support, and may possibly be able to sign documents in place of the primary supervisor, represent your interests to the Department etc. They may not interpret any aspect of this role proactively; you may need to seek them out when you want their input.

Appointment of your second supervisor or adviser is not automatic, and may not happen immediately on your arrival. As a guideline, it is suggested that this be attended to during the course of your first year. The Graduate Education Committee will probably initiate the process if your supervisor does not.

Other academic and administrative support

What does the Graduate Tutor do?

The role of Graduate Tutor (aka Senior Graduate Tutor, or Graduate Officer) for Biological Anthropology is held by a member of the academic staff who takes special overall responsibility for our graduate students, especially the PhD students, including oversight of application and admission processes, induction, supervision arrangements, changes of status such as first-year registration, intermission, leave to work away and 'going off the register', sometimes organization of collective activities, sometimes application for fieldwork funding arrangements, and nomination of examiners. Most of these are further elaborated below. Depending on circumstances, the Graduate Tutor may also be the most appropriate person to turn to if you are experiencing problems.

In 2015-16 the Graduate Tutor is Robert Attenborough (Fitzwilliam St Building, Room 2.3, phone (01223) (7)64711, email ra478@ca.ac.uk).

What about the Graduate Education Committee?

The Graduate Tutor also chairs the Biological Anthropology Graduate Education Committee (GEC), a small group of academics which discusses graduate matters, has some powers delegated to it by the Degree Committee (DC) of the Faculty, and on other matters makes recommendations to the DC. On occasion the Graduate Tutor may take chair's action on behalf of the GEC. The DC is the Faculty-wide body which makes formal decisions about graduate matters, which decides who should examine your thesis and recommends to the central University whether your PhD should be awarded or not.

And the Graduate Administrator?

Administrative support for biological anthropology graduate students, their supervisors, the GEC and the Graduate Tutor is provided by the Graduate Administrator. A new arrangement in 2015-16 is that this position is shared with Archaeology, but specialized in dealing only with graduate matters.

This post is held by Katie Teague. She can be contacted on graduate-secretary@bioanth.cam.ac.uk (or on (01223 3)33520) and she is located in the Archaeology administrative office on the Downing Site. For more administrative issues that you may encounter she will probably be your first port of call. She will also be the person who implements your status changes on the mysterious administrative system CAMSIS.

For a few biological anthropology matters (room booking within the Pembroke St and Fitzwilliam St Buildings, for example), the relevant administrator will remain the biological anthropology administrator, located in the biological anthropology administration area in the Pembroke Street building. Currently this post is held by Erica Pramauro, who can be contacted on undergraduate-secretary@bioanth.cam.ac.uk or on (01223 7)61097.

Time lines

Three years seem like ages – are there time lines within them?

Three years only seem like ages in prospect. Once you are under way, they go fast.

There are time lines. The most significant, bar your actual thesis submission, is your first-year registration report (see under separate heading below).

Other externally imposed deadlines along the way include those for any relevant funding applications, ethical approval applications, and any visas or permissions you may need to seek for access to your field site, study populations, specimens etc. These will vary according to your project.

In addition to externally imposed deadlines, you will want, in consultation with your supervisor, to impose some further deadlines on yourself, to give yourself a larger number of smaller, nearer, more manageable set of tasks spread out over time. This will enable you to pace yourself better. Even such a simple thing as deciding how many chapters your thesis will have will roughly suggest how long you will have to draft each, and then to re-draft it following comment, once you start writing.

People sometimes hold back from setting themselves deadlines on the grounds that they can't calculate how long each part of the overall task will take. This worry can turn into a form of procrastination, and it can lead to much worse loss of control over the timing. Better to have a timetable and risk it not quite working out as predicted, than have no timetable at all. Every now and again, just re-check your timelines, and if they need revising, simply revise them.

What does the first-year registration report involve?

This is one of the most important of the questions you might ask.

Until your first-year report is approved, you are not formally on the register of PhD

students. Before the start of your fourth term (i.e. before the start of your second year, if you have not intermitted; see Intermission below), you should prepare and submit this report, via the Graduate Administrator. The report is actually both a report on your first year AND a plan for the coming years. Two assessors will be appointed to read and assess your report, and – where discussion is required – to discuss it with you and your supervisor. If they approve, you can then be formally added to the register as a PhD student. If they consider that certain issues need resolving first, they or the Graduate Tutor will draw this to your attention.

Considerations such as fieldwork may make it advisable to submit your report earlier. Discuss this with your supervisor if it applies in your case.

The report and plan should be substantial, and should show that the research to be carried out is intellectually coherent and worthwhile, and can generate sufficient results to be the basis for an original and significant contribution to knowledge. It should also demonstrate that the research activities planned are logistically viable and affordable, have gained any necessary permissions, and have a timeline which is practicable within the duration of the PhD degree. It should include a literature review, indicating the gap in the literature which the research is planned to fill, and should be written in a lucid and scholarly manner.

Please submit two paper copies and an electronic copy your report and plan to the Graduate Administrator by the due date.

The assessors will be a) the Graduate Tutor (or nominee from amongst the biological anthropology staff) and b) another Cambridge University academic, not necessarily from the biological anthropology group but with appropriate expertise to assess your report. They will not include your supervisor; but where they consider that there are significant matters to discuss, they will involve you and your supervisor in informal discussion. They will endeavour to complete the assessment within four weeks of receiving your report. The process does not involve your defending your report in a formal way, but the assessors may seek an informal discussion with you if they feel there are matters deserving discussion.

The Graduate Tutor / GEC Chair will convey the outcome of the assessment to you and your supervisor. It may contain useful suggestions for ways in which your plans can be adjusted to good effect. The outcome will also be conveyed to the GEC which can approve it, following which your name can be added to the register and this will be noted on CAMSIS. Any move *not* to proceed with registration would not come from the GEC alone, but would follow discussion at the full Degree Committee.

In the months following the assessment of your registration support, you may expect an enquiry from the Graduate Tutor as to ways in which suggestions from the assessors' review have been implemented.

If you have queries about this process, please direct them to your supervisor, or the Graduate Tutor, or the Graduate Administrator, as appropriate.

How to keep on schedule?

The aim, as indicated above under 'How long have I got?', is that your research and thesis-writing will take three years. Various factors can cause it to take longer. Taking longer can mean running out of funding, and this can become a problem, especially if four years are exceeded. Therefore the time management required to complete your thesis on schedule needs to be borne in mind throughout and discussed at intervals with your supervisor.

Once I am close to thesis submission, how do I prepare?

When submission within a few months can be foreseen with confidence, your supervisor will be thinking about possible examiners and may discuss this with you. There is normally one internal and one external examiner. Your primary and secondary supervisors are debarred from being your examiners. The choice of examiners is NOT yours, and the nature of any discussion with your supervisor about potential examiners is up to your supervisor. It would, however, be common that your supervisor would consult you and take note of your views, and especially of any compelling reasons you may offer AGAINST particular potential examiners.

Having approached potential examiners informally, your supervisor will need to fill in a Nomination of Examiners form, which then has to be approved by the Bio Anth GEC and the Degree Committee before an invitation to examiners can be made official. These committees meet approximately monthly during terms; so you can see that the process can take time.

Resources

Provided by your scholarship or your supervisor's grant?

This varies case by case but may be a crucial source: consult your supervisor.

Desk space? A computer?

Yes and no. Biological anthropology administrative, technical and academic staff between them will try to ensure that you have a desk space allocated to you as early as you need it. Normally, this will be in the same building as your supervisor. Unfortunately we can make no promises regarding use of a computer. Sometimes this can be provided, e.g. through a grant to your supervisor; or there may be one available from the Department's own limited holdings; but no general undertaking can be made. Many students buy laptops.

Library resources

Cambridge has one of the best sets of library resources of any university. The online system apart, the Haddon Library for Archaeology and Anthropology, on the Downing

Site, is probably your point of first reference for normal bio anth library needs. They run inductions every year and are happy to run supplementary ones on request, so you can understand how best to use it. At the cost of a slightly longer walk, there is the magnificent collection of one of Britain's few deposit libraries, the Cambridge University Library (west Cambridge, just beyond Clare College's Memorial Court). And then there are other departmental and college libraries.

Catalogue information covering all of these is available on line. Of course much of what you will need by way of research literature is available on line too. But please do not think that whatever is not on line can be neglected; books, older journal articles, grey literature etc. may matter too in many cases, so the trip to the library may be very worthwhile.

Fieldwork funding

The Department supports research mainly through its fieldwork funding scheme. The aim of this scheme is to address those cases where fieldworkers incur expenses while on fieldwork that are greater than those incurred in their daily lives in Cambridge. This scheme is on a new basis in 2015/16, with application deadlines in October and June. Full details have yet to be released, and will be available through the Department offices and officers when known.

It cannot be assumed that all fieldwork costs, however great, will be met from this source.

How am I to get my other research expenses funded?

Many colleges have research and travel funding schemes to which their student members can apply: for these, seek information from your college.

Many students find that their research projects are more money-hungry than can be satisfied from the above sources alone. If this applies to you, you need to assess and address the problem as early as possible, before you are committed to that project, or to all aspects of it. Discuss it with your supervisor and plan your approach strategically.

There are many external funding sources to which you can apply, alone or with e.g. your supervisor. Here are the beginnings of a list of such sources relevant to biological anthropology (some to specific subfields only):-

The Wenner-Gren Foundation: <http://www.wennergren.org/programs>

The Leakey Foundation: <https://leakeyfoundation.org/grants/research-grants/>

Royal Anthropological Institute: <http://www.therai.org.uk/awards/research-grants>

International Society for Human Ethology: <http://ishe.org/>

Nacey Maggioncalda Foundation: <http://naceymagg.org/grantsforstudents.html>

American Society of Primatologists: <https://www.asp.org/grants/>

Primate Conservation Inc: http://primate.org/grant_in.htm

Primate Society of Great Britain: http://www.psqb.org/conservation_grants.php

International Primatological Society http://primate.org/grant_in.htm

Be aware that not all external funding bodies make grant awards to PhD students; and some have infrequent deadlines and/or long periods between deadline and decision, which can be awkward for a PhD timetable. So good advance planning is all the more necessary. Some have eligibility criteria in terms of nationality etc. as well as status, discipline and topic.

We hope to update this list, including with information supplied by PhD students, in future editions of this handbook.

Issues to think about in day to day work

What work routines and patterns will be most productive?

The kinds of work routines and patterns that you will adopt will vary with the nature of the research work you are doing – whether field, laboratory or computer work for example. Nonetheless, within those constraints you have, at least for much of your time as a PhD student, great freedom as to how, when, where, you will work. The freedom can be daunting; procrastination and other forms of time-wasting are a risk.

No single answer to the question how to work productively will apply in all cases. One guideline that probably applies to most people is that a regular work routine tends to be more successful than an impulsive or chaotic or inspirational approach – even in the creative arts, where one might think otherwise. The author of this booklet recalls an undergraduate contemporary who queued up on the steps of the University Library every morning at opening time, waiting to be let in. To his peer group at the time, this was unusual; but it worked for him – he is now a research professor at top universities on both sides of the Atlantic, a Fellow of the British Academy, and a knight of the realm, amongst other things. An outstanding work routine was no doubt part of his success.

Beyond the value of routine, the main guideline, probably, is to find the pattern that is most productive for you personally, and stick to it. People are different. If you are an early morning person, or require complete silence to work, or need to get away from domesticity to concentrate, or work best if you can build physical exercise into your daily routine, you should probably work with the grain of those particular characteristics. Whatever your strengths may be, in terms of work routine, make the most of them.

Work-life balance

Simple unremitting hard work brings a risk of staleness and loss of motivation as well

as ruining your relationships. You should maintain a work-life balance with time off and a chance to refresh your spirits.

Is it ok to publish while working on my PhD?

Discuss it with your supervisor, but broadly speaking, yes. Provided that it does not distract unduly from the completion of your thesis, it is a good thing.

Can my thesis draw on papers which I have published?

Again, discuss it with your supervisor; but broadly speaking, yes. You may be advised to adapt the papers to the thesis context and to make the connexions clear. Co-authored papers presented in this way may need special attention to ensure that your contribution is substantial and specified.

Seminars

You are warmly encouraged to take full advantage of the richness in seminar offerings available around you. Look out for notices.

The Biological Anthropology group runs a (usually) Wednesday afternoon seminar series in term time, followed by a social session at a nearby pub, to which all are welcome. Also open to all is the Tuesday lunchtime Human Evolutionary Studies Discussion Group, again during term time. In addition, your supervisor may run a seminar series within his/her research group.

Social Anthropology, Archaeology, Zoology, Genetics and other cognate disciplines run seminar series of potential interest, depending on your research specialization.

The Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) runs a number of events of interest to graduate students throughout the year. A list of events can be found on the CRASSH website (www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/events)

The colleges

If you already have a degree from Cambridge or one of the very few universities which are like it, you don't need to read this section. If you don't, however, the largely symbiotic interaction of the university and the colleges is likely to be in need of a little explanation.

Colleges here are not simply halls of residence. They have a strong academic role. Undergraduates, depending on their disciplines, may receive their small-group teaching entirely within their colleges. Most PhD students will not have that experience, as only in a minority of cases will their supervisor be in the same college. Nonetheless, your college will generally take some interest in your studies as well as your welfare. And colleges play significant administrative roles here too, particularly with regards to paying fees etc.

Fellow students whom you may meet in your colleges may play as large a part, or larger, in your Cambridge social life as fellow biological anthropology students, allowing for an active communication between disciplines which is probably the system's strongest asset – not to mention the social life itself. Depending to some extent on the character and resources of the college, it may be able to help you in a variety of ways, from accommodation, food and a social setting to access to funding assistance and a college tutor off whom you would be able to bounce thoughts and issues. So, especially if the system is new to you, please explore what it has to offer.

Opportunities to supervise

Undergraduate small group teaching sessions (2-4 students each), sometimes called tutorials in other universities, are called supervisions in Cambridge. Colleges are responsible for their provision, but in small subjects like ours, the lecturers normally organize them for 2nd-3rd year undergraduates. The colleges are then billed. Lecturers may conduct the supervisions themselves; or they may recruit others – often PhD students – to conduct the supervisions; or some of both.

So if you wish to gain experience in conducting supervisions, which can also be a useful supplement to your income as well as your experience, and can be very enjoyable, you should ask your supervisor, or any lecturer whose subject you feel able to offer supervisions in, whether they can offer or suggest any opportunities. Opportunities are not guaranteed but may be available.

Supervisors are required to attend training before they can start supervising. This training is offered periodically: keep an eye out on the web for dates and sign-up opportunities. In addition, a formalized manual on supervisions, in which the HSPS (Human, Social & Political Sciences) Student Forum is playing a part, is under development and may soon be available.

Fieldwork and other research activities

For fieldwork funding, see under 'Resources' above.

Permission to work away

Fieldworkers will need to seek 'permission to work away' which includes a 'risk assessment' for the place that you will be spending time in and the activities you will be engaged in there. It is important that you take this process seriously and attend to it in timely fashion, so that lack of permission to work away does not hold up your plans. This needs to be processed on CAMSIS and several approvals are required.

Health in the field

The health of fieldworkers, especially in remote and/or tropical locations, deserves a handbook all of its own. You should obviously seek travel medicine advice, which

would include immunizations as recommended and quite likely a travelling medical kit. But you should also be aware that long-term fieldwork is a different proposition from a short holiday in, say, Bali; and more intensive contingency planning is required. Risks may include: accidents, violence, psychological illness, poor nutrition, and sexually transmitted infection, as well as snakebite and conditions such as tropical ulcer, dysentery and malaria. Depending on how things stand at your field site, you may have to consider how you would respond to requests to treat local people as well as yourself. For both purposes you probably need a field health guide.

Research ethics

It goes without saying that it is important that your research be ethical. It is also important that you, the Department and the University be able to show, in the event of some problem arising in the conduct of your research, that you have taken proper steps to avoid contraventions of accepted research ethical standards.

These standards are mainly well known and commonsensical. They often draw on the medical model in which key points include the avoidance of harm, informed consent freely given, confidentiality provisions to avoid breach of individual privacy, avoidance of any pressure on others to breach confidentiality, and special protection of the interests of research participants in dependent roles (e.g. children).

The University now has a top-level ethics committee whose role is to review the most problematic cases, which are referred to it by ethical review processes at lower levels.

For research in human biology, there is a Cambridge Human Biology Research Ethics Committee: <http://www.bio.cam.ac.uk/hbrec>

For work which is deemed beyond the remit of that committee, the best approach is to seek approval at Departmental level. The first point of contact is the Chair of the Departmental Research Committee (currently Professor Broodbank), or possibly directly to the Head of Department (currently Professor Jones). They will be able to decide whether the matter can be handled internally or should be referred elsewhere. There is currently no ethics approval form specifically for work with human remains.

You should begin by discussing the matter with your supervisor.

Useful services provided by the University

Careers Service

Offers career advice and support to students, including advice about CVs, covering letters and application forms. Also organises careers events and skills and briefing sessions.

Email: enquiries@careers.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.careers.cam.ac.uk/index.asp

Counselling Service

The first port of call for any student requiring pastoral support will usually be his or her college tutor. However, there is also a University Counselling Service, which is free and available to all graduate students. The Service is staffed by a team of trained and accredited counsellors and therapists. The counsellors are all experienced in helping people from many different backgrounds and cultures, and with a wide range of personal and work issues.

Email: reception@counselling.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.counselling.cam.ac.uk

Disability Resource Centre

The Disability Resource Centre offers information and advice on disability issues (including Specific Learning Difficulties), and can offer individual advice and support to disabled students and those staff supporting them.

Email: disability@admin.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/disability

Graduate Union

The Graduate Union (GU) is the University-wide representative body for graduate students in the University of Cambridge. It is a source of advice, support and representation for graduates. They can also provide rooms for meeting, thesis binding and computing services etc.

Email: enquiries@gradunion.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk

International Student Office

The International Student Team provide specialist support both to students who come from outside the United Kingdom to study at Cambridge, and to Cambridge students who study overseas as part of their course.

Email: internationalstudents@admin.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk

Language Centre

The Language Centre offers assistance in modern language learning. The services include taught courses in 12 languages from beginner to advanced level, self-study tools in over 150 languages, and multi-media resources, video booths and computer workstations. They also run courses and support programmes in English for international students.

Email: enquiries@langcen.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.langcen.cam.ac.uk

Student Registry

The Student Registry is the administrative centre for the maintenance of the University's student records. The Registry comprises two main sections: Fees & Graduate Funding, and Records & Examinations.

Email: student.registry@admin.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/studentregistry

Personal and professional development

There are a range of Personal and Professions Development and Research Development courses on offer to PhD students (www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/ppd/information/research).

In the event that problems arise ...

Intermission

If you have significant medical or non-medical reasons to suspend your studies for a certain period, you should seek to 'intermit'. You may like to begin by discussing this with your supervisor or your college tutor. This status needs to be supported with appropriate documentation and formally recorded by the university. If there is a major and compelling reason why you cannot study, you should not delay in drawing it to the system's attention.

Support in the event of problems

There are many possible sources of support in the Cambridge system for those who may be experiencing problems. Depending on the nature of the problems, it may be appropriate to seek support and assistance either within the department – e.g. your supervisor, your second supervisor or advisor, the Graduate Tutor, the Graduate Administrator, the Head of Department – or beyond it – e.g. your college tutor or other staff at your college, or the Counselling Centre. Please do not delay or hold back if you need help.

Bullying and sexual harassment

These are unacceptable. If you encounter such behaviour from university staff or fellow students, you should not accept it but should take your concern, and if you decide to make one, your formal complaint, to an appropriate person in the University or College. Who that is might depend on the nature and source of the problem. No general solution can be offered here.

Assistance for non-native English speakers

Even if English is not your first language, you nonetheless require a high level of English language ability to function as a PhD student here, and there is an entry test which is designed to make sure that you have this ability. Thus we hope that any English language difficulties that you make experience will not be too great. Nonetheless there a Language Centre at the University (for website and email address see under 'Useful services' above) which offers some assistance in this area. However, it is not free assistance unless your Department or College has decided to pay for it: they are not funded to provide free assistance across the board.

Is there a Code of Practice for research students?

Yes. You should have received one in paper form at induction. It is at:
http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/files/gradcoprevised_for_15_16_final.pdf
There is a fresh edition every year.

The thesis itself

Purpose, format and length

A thesis is driven by a research question that is independently investigated by the student. The following information is guidance only. Every thesis will vary somewhat depending on the research topic. Hence, you should consider the following information as general advice and not as a precise blueprint for conducting and writing up your thesis. Consult your supervisor as to guidelines which they might suggest you follow.

It is a good idea to think early about minor matters such as formatting. That way you can set up the desired format from the start and not have to worry about them later.

Likewise it is a good idea to have a look early on at some examples of past theses – several, not just one – to get a sense of what is possible and how diverse they can be. Past ones are available in the Haddon Library where past dissertations are archived; otherwise, your Supervisor may be able to provide you with example theses which they consider to be of good organisation and quality. It is helpful to find models what are both good and relevant.

You need to take notice of University requirements as to length (80,000 words maximum, excluding front matter, tables, figures, appendices and references), formatting, binding, number of copies, place and time of submission.

Electronic submission (e.g. of a PDF) is not a requirement, but is a courtesy that examiners may find helpful, in addition to paper submission; they may request one.

General Content

The thesis reports on a piece of research. The starting point is to identify a problem or question which is of general scholarly interest. It is important to consider practical issues and the resources available, especially the overall schedule for conducting research. It is extremely important to think ahead about your thesis topic, and to establish whether a topic is feasible or not. Hence, you need to identify the problem, determine data sources, make necessary contacts, etc., so that you have planned your research in advance. It is necessary to think of the thesis as an interactive process in which the problem you wish to investigate is tested using data that exist or can be generated; this may cause the research problem to be modified. The following framework should be kept in mind: a) the general area of investigation, b) the specific problem or issue that you wish to investigate, c) the data or information that will be needed, and d) the appropriate methods to employ (e.g., graphics; statistical tests or

relationships between variables; comparison of data). It is important to consider the overall logistics, such as travel and subsistence, if necessary, laboratory requirements (equipment, space, time) and data processing.

Presentation

The thesis will be judged by the examiners primarily on its content. However, it is also important to have a professional looking presentation as well. The student should make the thesis scholarly, interesting and easy to read. Short words and simple sentences often help to convey ideas with clarity.

Structure

Typically, a thesis starts as follows:-

- Title page (title, candidate's name, department, date)
- An abstract (usually one to two pages)
- Acknowledgements
- Contents pages (list of chapters and chapter sections, figures and tables, with page numbers)

The body of the thesis varies according to the topic and the methods to be employed, thus there is no prescriptive outline. Often, however, theses are divided into the following main parts or chapters, as per scientific paper format:

- Introduction (states the object and purpose of the investigation, the area examined and the nature of the material studied)
- Literature review
- Substantive content, divided into chapters and sections such as Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion.

Scientific paper format is a common model but other formats may be as good or better in a particular case. Attention should be paid to argument, and a clear distinction should be made between the evidence and deductions made from it.

Finally:-

- Summary & Conclusions (a concise interpretation of the results and a brief presentation of their special and general significance, intellectual and maybe practical)
- References
- Appendices (if needed)

Illustrations

Tables and figures should be clearly titled to give their content and source, and should be numbered consecutively (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2, or chapter by chapter, e.g. 1.1, 1.2 etc.) for reference in the written text. Pay particular attention to ensuring that tables, figures, axes etc. are fully and accurately labelled.

Footnotes

Footnotes are normally limited. If a footnote is necessary, consider carefully whether the information could be inserted in the text with some recasting of the sentence. If necessary at all, footnotes should normally be placed at the bottom of the page.

References

The objective of providing references is to inform the reader of the sources used. The references also show familiarity with the relevant literature. No one style reference has been adopted by the Department, but the formal style guidelines employed by leading journals, such as the American Journal of Physical Anthropology or Annals of Human Biology are typical. It should be an author-date (Harvard) referencing style, not a footnoting or numbering style. It is important to be accurate in presenting references, and to use the same consistent format throughout. It is also important to cross-check your text with your references to ensure that all citations are in the reference list and vice versa. All authors of multi-author publications should be listed in the reference list, even if you have used 'et al.' when citing them in your text – unless the number is truly extreme.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting as your own work words and thoughts that are not your own. Re-cycling your own work for credit in more than one context may also count as a form of plagiarism: self-plagiarism. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and treated as such by the University's ordinances. You may be asked to sign a form saying that you have read the Faculty's guidance document on plagiarism and understand what it is. If you are in any doubt about this, you can ask your supervisor to talk you through the issue.

The Faculty's guidance document is available at: <http://www.hsps.cam.ac.uk/current-students/course-materials/c-m-files/plagiarism/view>

You should also ensure that you are familiar with the University's formal Statement on Plagiarism, www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism

Submission, examination and graduation

Once my thesis is submitted – what then?

You wait. Probably you arrange other things to occupy your attention and earn your income for some time to come. Tiresome as it may seem, things do not happen quickly at this point. Your thesis will take a little time to work its way through several offices till it reaches those of your examiners. Your examiners are invariably busy people and need to set time aside to read your thesis with proper attention, usually over a few months. Overall, 3-4 months would not be an unusual time from submission to viva: within practicality, examiners may be open to special requests on this timing. In

addition, a time needs to be worked out when you and your examiners can all gather in Cambridge for a *viva voce* examination. The external examiner is not usually Cambridge-based, so logistics can be extra difficult for them. The internal examiner will normally contact you to make the arrangements.

What happens at the viva voce examination (viva)?

A *viva* is simply an oral examination. Every PhD student at Cambridge has to have one, to graduate. You will be advised of the time and place. You turn up (no special clothing required) with a copy of your thesis, ready to present and defend your arguments, methods, findings etc., to discuss and answer questions about your thesis, to clarify any points which your examiners have found unclear, and also, if asked, to show your grasp of the literature on the field of research into which your thesis falls. It is a prolonged three-way discussion at which your examiners aim to satisfy themselves as to the quality of your work. Once they have done so, the *viva* may become simply a discussion amongst three people all interested in the same things.

Your examiners will let you know when the *viva* is over and you can leave the room. This takes a variable amount of time, seldom less than 60-90 minutes. 3-4 hours would be a long one. Legend tells of *vivas* which have been adjourned at the end of the day and continued the next; but this is highly unlikely to happen to you.

Your examiners are NOT empowered to tell you following the *viva* what the outcome is. This is because they are not empowered to decide it. They will have written separate reports before the *viva*, then they write a joint one afterwards and RECOMMEND an outcome which requires higher approval. They may ask you to wait outside the *viva* room while they talk further, and then let you know informally what they will recommend; that is the most they can do and they are not obliged to do even that.

What are the possible examination outcomes?

- 1) Approved for the Ph.D. Degree without correction
- 2) Approved for the Ph.D. Degree subject to minor or straightforward corrections (for completion within 3 months)
- 3) Approved for the Ph.D. Degree subject to major or more substantive corrections (for completion within 6 months)
- 4) Allowed to Revise and resubmit the thesis for examination for the Ph.D. Degree
- 5) Allowed to Revise and resubmit the thesis for examination for the Ph.D. Degree or accept the M.Sc./M.Litt. Degree without further revision
- 6) Not allowed to revise the thesis for the Ph.D. Degree but offered the M.Litt. or M.Sc. without further revision or examination of the thesis
- 7) Not allowed to revise the thesis for the Ph.D. Degree but allowed to revise the thesis for the M.Litt. or M.Sc. only
- 8) Not approved nor allowed to revise the thesis for any degree

The later possibilities in this list are rare. Note that, while options 1-3 are for approval for the degree without further examination, options 4-5 imply a requirement for the kind of major revision that requires re-examination. Options 2-3 would require corrections to

the satisfaction of one or both examiners, but not re-examination.

Your examiners will make one of these recommendations; they may indicate to you informally which it is to be. Any action you may take on the basis of that indication is at your own risk. The outcome is not official until the recommendation of the examiners is endorsed (or, possibly, varied) at the next Degree Committee following your *viva* and the receipt of the *viva* report, and other bodies that may scrutinize the outcome. This takes time. In the case of Options 2 and 3, the clock starts ticking on your 3 or 6 months only when you receive the outcome in official form from the University itself.

Once you have been approved for the PhD degree by the Degree Committee and the Student Registry, and once any corrections that may be required have been received and approved, you are eligible to graduate.

When can I graduate?

The central university administration (Student Registry) will advise you once you are eligible to graduate. After that, it is just a matter of finding out the date of the next graduation ceremony that you are eligible to participate in, and making the appropriate arrangements not only with the university but with your college, which has primary charge of your graduation process. Graduation may be in person or *in absentia*.

After the PhD thesis

Submission and examination of your thesis are very big hurdles and it can seem difficult to conceive or prepare for life beyond them. However, it is there! And you should probably be preparing for it before you get there.

Many of you will wish to proceed to postdocs or other academic jobs. Your supervisor may have advice about identifying and applying for such positions.

It is hoped that future editions of this handbook will include more detailed suggestions where to seek advertisements of postdoc and other early-career academic positions.



The Haddon Library

With thanks to all those who have assisted on the production of this Handbook.