



# UNIGIS

MSc. in Geographical Information Systems

## Postgraduate Student Learning Agreement

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### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE USE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

Each student registered to proceed at MSc level must complete this document. It provides a contractual outline of what you can expect from your supervisory team and administration support and states what the course team may expect from you as a student.

When you have completed this form (which begins on PAGE 3) please check that all the details are correct, then sign and date the form before returning to the UNIGIS administrator

This cover page and the first TWO pages that follow are for your information only and do NOT need to be returned.

### **Return completed forms to:**

UNIGIS UK  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
Dept of Environmental and Geographical Sciences  
John Dalton Building  
Chester Street  
Manchester M1 5GD  
UNITED KINGDOM

## **GUIDANCE NOTES:**

### **Candidates will be expected to demonstrate:**

The creation or original interpretation of new or existing knowledge through original research, novel analysis, technological development or other advanced scholarship, of such a quality to satisfy peer review. The correct and original use of management procedures or application of technologies (dependent upon chosen degree pathway).

A systematic approach employing a range of appropriate data collection, analysis and synthesis strategies. Such methods and approaches must satisfy academic scrutiny and reflect a good measure of originality and understanding.

The general ability to work **independently** (under academic supervision) in such a way that problem solving and adaptation to unforeseen circumstances become challenges that are met with in a realistic and justifiable manner.

A clear understanding of how a scientific line of enquiry can be tackled using a variety of knowledge-based and methodological approaches.

### **Learning Agreement Questions**

*The questions below should be your starting point to consider when you formulate your Learning Agreement. The list is not exhaustive and it is likely that you will have to consider further questions when you consider your own circumstances. Ideally, this document should be formulated **in conjunction with discussions with your supervisor.***

#### **Approach to the work:**

What are the principle purposes of the student-supervisor partnership?

What is the nature of supervised postgraduate research?

What are the objectives of the research proposal as a whole?

How are creativity and conceptual understanding going to be stimulated?

How does enquiry and critical thinking relate to postgraduate study?

#### **General roles of postgraduate and supervisor:**

What are the responsibilities of the student and supervisor?

What regulations and university procedures relate to the degree?

Have you read all documentation supplied to you by the university?

How will a realistic programme of work be created and monitored?

How will liaison with a second supervisor (if applicable) operate?

What support and opportunities does the postgraduate community provide?

How can you achieve academic independence?

Does the student have any individual needs, which must be taken into account in providing her/him with the necessary means to complete her/his research?

**Topic specific roles:**

What are the key characteristics of the topic being studied?  
What are the key characteristics of the literature?  
Who are the most appropriate first contacts in the field?  
What are the relevant theories associated with the research field?  
Are there particular ethical considerations involved?  
How will a suitable end point be determined?

**Research Support:**

Are there identifiable research and/or operational training requirements associated with this research?  
Are there any health and safety concerns (beyond those which relate to use of computers) attached to this work and how will these be addressed?  
Will it be necessary to carry out fieldwork as part of this research?  
How will YOU (or your employer/organisation) meet the cost of carrying out any field research (e.g. mailing questionnaires and travel expenses)?

**Consultation and reviews:**

What are the expectations concerning preparation and attendance of meetings?  
How often will you proactively discuss your progress with your supervisor?  
Would a research diary or lab notebook be helpful?  
What records will be kept of the contact (emails, telephone calls etc)?  
Who will develop and review the programme of work?  
What are the expectations about provision and feedback on written work?  
What progress assessment requirements are there?  
Will you ensure that YOU contact YOUR supervisor regularly?

**Approach to collaborating organisation (if appropriate):**

What are the agreed areas of mutual benefit for all parties?  
How will the postgraduate arrange to work in conjunction with the company/employer?  
What should the postgraduate's objectives be in relation to the company?  
How will the interest of the collaborating company be protected?  
How will liaison with the company supervisor operate?  
What will be the protocol for contact with the collaborating company?

**END OF GUIDANCE NOTES**

LEARNING AGREEMENT FORM

**Student's Full Name**

**Approach to Research**

**General Roles of Student and Supervisor(s)**

**Topic Specific Roles**

### Research Support

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### Consultation and Reviews

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### Approach to Collaborating Organisation(s) – *if applicable*

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### Research Ethics

Any research involving human subjects, animals, vulnerable groups etc must conform to the University's policies and guidance procedures. All relevant documentation such as ethics framework, flowchart, notes for guidance and the ethics form itself are accessible from: [http://www.unigis.org/UNIGIS/RegisteredArea/intakemsc/msc\\_appl\\_proc.htm](http://www.unigis.org/UNIGIS/RegisteredArea/intakemsc/msc_appl_proc.htm)

**Learning Agreement Declaration**

This learning agreement is made on: \_\_\_\_\_ (enter date)

Between the above named postgraduate student and UNIGIS-UK

SIGNATURES:

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(for an on behalf of UNIGIS)

Postgraduate Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT:** Any request for extension of studies may be dependent upon having adhered to this Learning Agreement correctly. By signing this agreement you state your understanding that the Learning Agreement will be used appropriately.

**For UNIGIS Office Use Only**

Date of receipt: \_\_\_\_\_

Date checked: \_\_\_\_\_ By (initials): \_\_\_\_\_

Date returned for amendment (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_