

PGR Tips on accessing help and support

The Vitae website contains pages on how to manage your [research](#) and [yourself](#). The [specific](#) web pages on help and support have now been expanded. Doing a doctorate can be a challenging experience so you should ask for help when you need it. Try to ask for help sooner rather than storing up problems for later. It is important to keep the people around you (including your supervisor) informed of any major problems that you are experiencing. You are likely to get a lot of support from your immediate network of friends and family. The Vitae website has advice on [managing yourself](#) and on who else you can turn to:

Institutional support mechanisms

Your institution is likely to have a wide range of support services for you to access. Some of these services will be designed specifically for doctoral students but most will be wider. You may find that you are able to access support services that are designed for both staff and students. [The section on institutional support mechanisms](#) gives you some ideas.

National organisations

[National organisations](#) like Vitae, the National Postgraduate Committee ([NPC](#)), Universities and Colleges Unions ([UCU](#)) and professional bodies also have a range of support to offer.

Funding sources

Money is an important issue. [The page on funding sources](#) provides links to many potential funders (research councils, charities etc) as well as tips on how to apply for funding.

Disability

The term disability describes a wide range of conditions that may have implications for your research. The [disability support page](#) has some links and tips. The [Premia](#) website contains resources addressing issues raised by disabled PGRs.

Part time doctorates

Typically [part-time doctorates](#) are spread over six or more years, which is a long time to balance all the demands on your life. Here are some ideas for support.

International researchers

Overseas PGRs are likely to have left a lot of their natural support network behind. There is a large community of [overseas PGRs](#) in this country, with their own support needs.

Women

In theory your [gender](#) should make little difference to a career in research. Especially women in male dominated disciplines may feel in need of extra support. We point you to some in this section.

Parents and carers

As a [parent or carer](#) you are likely to have more demands on your time than other PGRs

Mature PGRs and returners

A large proportion of [PGRs](#) start their doctorate after a period in the “real world”.

Undertaking doctorate at a distance

Undertaking a [doctorate at a distance](#) has its own challenges and rewards.

