Ideally, a postgraduate computer science student is well organised, has good library skills, can cope with stress, knows how to balance work and relaxation, is competent in scientific writing and public speaking, has experience in conducting research, and has no problems in gaining excellent grades.

However, not all students have all of these skills. To help, the department runs a ‘survival course’, where some of those skills can be acquired. This course is open to all postgraduate CSSE students.

The goals of the survival course are to

* introduce and survey research work, particularly as carried out in our department,
* develop and improve students’ professional skills, and
* accelerate progress of students through their research work.

The course consists of two sets of lectures, held in the first and second semester. Participants are expected to attend all lectures. The preliminary schedule is shown below.

All lectures take place at 1pm on Mondays in Erksine 242.

**First semester talks**

1. **23/02/2015 – Welcome. Departmental computing facilities – Peter Glassenbury et al., CSSE**
   Systems staff explaining our computing resources. They will support your technical needs throughout the year, so you should know who is responsible for what. Phil Holland will also discuss health and safety issues.

2. **02/03/2015 – Obtaining Information – Dave Lane, UC Library**
   A general overview of obtaining information in the digital age. UC Library resources and services for post-graduate students. The initial evaluation of information. Plagiarism & citations. How to perform a literature search and where to look. Basic techniques and some general examples, using online and print resources. In preparation for this session, please think of a research topic that you can search for during the session. Also, please bring a device you can use for searching.

3. **09/03/2015 – Time management – Andy Cockburn, CSSE**
   A discussion of techniques for defining and achieving your professional and personal goals, and identifying ways that time is dissipated.
   As a related issue, we strongly encourage you to keep a diary that records how you spend your time. Such a record will prove very helpful in alerting yourself, and subsequently us, to workload issues such as excessive time demands of particular courses.

4. **23/03/2015 – Academic Writing – Judith Coullie, Academic Skills**
   A brief look at the most common mistakes graduate students make in their writing. Practical exercises will be provided.

5. **30/03/2015 – Obtaining Information – Dave Lane, UC Library**
   More on obtaining information with a specific focus on some particular tools. Open

   A discussion of the structure and style expected for the presentation of research work, primarily for Honours reports or theses, but also papers and other publications. This leads to an assignment involving critical assessment of published material.

   **Second semester talks**

7. 20/07/2015 – The visual display of quantitative information – Dr Neville Churcher, CSSE
   Many computer science projects generate large quantities of data, and some care is required if they are to be presented in a meaningful way to readers of a report. This lecture looks at techniques for presenting quantitative experimental results.

8. 27/07/2015 (TBC) – Authorship – Prof. Lucy Johnston, PG Dean
   Discusses issues need to be considered around authorship of research papers and theses.

9. 10/08/2015 – Giving an oral presentation – Professor Tim Bell, CSSE
   Techniques for giving an oral presentation (all research students are required to present their work at the post-graduate conference and course participants will have their seminars assessed).

10. 03–04/09/2015 – Annual Postgraduate Conference – You!
    A two-day event of presentations by post-graduate students.