

Introduction 0:00-2:22

[Stephanie Barker] Hi Matt!

[Matt Hutchinson] Hi Steph! How are you?

[Stephanie Barker] I'm not too bad, thank you. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me today, I really appreciate it.

[Matt Hutchinson] Anytime, I'm glad to help.

[Stephanie Barker] Just tell me a little bit about yourself. So, what are you studying? Where are you up to in terms of your research degree? That kind of stuff.

[Matt Hutchinson] Yes, I'm looking at how people become football fans. This is going to be into my second year at Manchester Met. I did two years full-time and now I'm going part-time as I've got a part-time lecturing job at MMU as well. So, it'll be nice to see how I can balance the time in the next year, two years.

[Stephanie Barker] So, thinking about that time then, so, you're two years into your journey now, what were you like when you first started, versus sort of how you feel now as a researcher? Have you changed at all in how you approach things?

[Matt Hutchinson] Generally, in terms of me as a like an academic, I'm a lot better at writing, I think. I could look back at some of my work even from the first few weeks and it's just awful really. I feel like some of the words I would use now I would never use, or I used then, I would never use now. So, in terms of what I've learned, I've learned just to write better, really, and I've just become a lot better academic.

[Stephanie Barker] Just out of curiosity with that, what sorts of things did you do to actually help with your writing?

[Matt Hutchinson] Yes, so there were a few early courses that I just got stuck into it, a) to meet new people and b) just to, again, learn, but also, just by actually writing as well. Some of the stuff that I would encourage that people do when they first start is, a) read some of the work really, any literature really early. Second, is to then start writing and eventually when you've started writing, keep looking over it and edit it, and that kind of then helps you to just to see where you're at and make sure that you're always and constantly looking at where your work's going as well.

Tips for new PGR students 2:22-3:00

[Stephanie Barker] I think you've probably touched on what I'm going to ask next a little bit in that answer, because you talked a lot about getting some experiences writing and that kind of thing, but what are some of the tips that you have for a new research student, like what really helped you when you started?

[Matt Hutchinson] Just I think, generally getting stuck in and my supervisors were really great as well, but also, just like I say engaging in some of the courses. When I was in the [Business School](#), I'm still in the [Business School](#), but the Doctoral Training Programme was really useful in terms of that writing experience that we got early doors, because you were doing assignments and it was linked to your work, it also helps you think about your topic as well.

Your first supervisory meeting 3:00-4:14

[Stephanie Barker] That's really cool. So you've talked a little about your supervisor being really helpful. What was that first meeting like? Can you remember that? What was it like getting in the room with them that first time? Were you nervous?

[Matt Hutchinson] So, I'd met both supervisors actually in the interview and one of my, my actual Director of Studies, she really helped me with some of my Masters work towards the end of my Masters. So, it was almost easy to get straight into it, but you know, it was nerve-racking, because it's a different experience compared to even doing a Masters supervision, because you've got a team of people rather than necessarily just one person. You've got a bit more time to think, you don't have to almost hit that panic button, where you've only got maybe six months; here you've got a significant period of time to actually kind of do something that you want to do and enjoy. So, it's not so much really about kind of nailing down something in that early meeting. It was almost just about testing the waters a little bit, what your supervisors are into, what you're into, the research that they're doing and kind of laying out a bit of a plan, I guess, and a map of what you kind of see happening in the next few months.

Preparation 4:14-5:18

[Stephanie Barker] So, what were a few of the things that you did to prepare for that and what do you think would work really well for someone approaching it, for them to help with their preparation?

[Matt Hutchinson] Yes, so like which is probably what I did anyway, before looking at my supervisory team, I looked at some of the articles that they were writing and some of the work that they were engaged in and prepared some questions around that as well. So, a) I looked like I knew what I was talking about and that I was kind of keen and interested in what they were doing, but also then, just generally prepared some questions not so much necessarily about what my projects is going to be on, but just generally about the process, about how many words would I be writing for each section, when they would expect sections to be done. Kind of agreeing a bit of a plan but then being open to suggestions in terms of a) yourself, in terms of what you think you want to do, but then what they want to do as well because they've got the experience, they've been there and done it and they've

probably also often supervised other people as well. So that was really kind of something to be aware of in terms of just being open to those suggestions.

Tips for nervousness

[Stephanie Barker] And I mean, were you nervous in that first meeting? And have you've got any advice for anybody else who might be nervous about going into that?

[Matt Hutchinson] I think I probably was nervous but, I also, I guess I found it quite exciting because it's the first time I've moved away from home. So, it was coming to a new university as well. I'd come from Teeside to then Manchester. So, seeing the different campus was just exciting and nerve-racking, but I think because you're a PhD student, you kind of feel like you can, but you don't feel like a first year as such. I felt a bit different in terms of the nerves, it was more nerves around what's the three years going to be like, rather than nerves around what's this first meeting going to be like. So, I think everyone will go through that stage of thinking that whether it's right for them, and not even just in that first meeting, it'll be right up 'till when you'll submit. So, I think the nerves broadly don't go away. It's more so much just being, I guess excited throughout in terms of, I still get excited about my research and other people's research. It was kind of a mix of nerves and excitement, for sure.

[Stephanie Barker] And then my last question for you is a shameless plug, I'm very sorry. What's the best thing about researching at Manchester Met?

[Matt Hutchinson] Oh, there's probably two. One's away from Manchester Met and one's about Manchester Met. So, away from Manchester Met, is just the range of coffee shops that you can work in around the campus, there's like literally anywhere you could go and kind of either do work in there or just switch off, but the second one is generally just the staff. The staff are brilliant, whether that's supervisors to the [Graduate School](#) in your

Faculty, the [Graduate School](#) across the whole University, and then kind of just the opportunities that are there, to meet other PGR students as well. So, we obviously did the [PGR conference](#) in March and so that was really good to not just meet PGR students in Manchester Met, but also from different universities around the north-west or even nationally. So, it's really good in terms of the opportunities to meet new people and not just from in your circle in terms of research as well, just across the whole University.

[Stephanie Barker] Thank you so much for your time. Thank you so much and I will let you get on with your day because I know you've got a lot of meetings lined up for the rest of today. So have a good Friday.

[Matt Hutchinson] And yourself. Thanks Steph!

[Stephanie Barker] No worries, bye.