

Guidance on the University's Quality Framework for Doctoral Training Entities



Summary			
The guidance aims to bridge the multiple strands of the University's Quality Framework in terms of how they relate to doctoral training entities.			
Scope - This document applies to:			
Staff who are involved in the management and operation of doctoral training entities.			
For applicants entering in:	n/a	Applies to academic year:	n/a
Document Control			
Owning team	Academic Quality and Policy Office (AQPO)		
Division	Education and Student Experience		
Lead contact	Chris Walker		
Type	Guidance	Status	Approved
Asset number		Version	2022/23, v1.0
Approved by	AQPO	Date current version approved	14/10/22
Date current version published	14/10/22	Date first published	October 2015
Revision schedule	Updated by AQPO annually	Next review date	September 2023
Superseded documents			
Related documents			
Keywords	Quality assurance, doctoral training entities, PGR, regulations, taught components, programme approval, collaborative arrangements.		

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1. *Introduction*

- 1.1. The University contains a range of externally funded entities that provide doctoral training for cohorts of postgraduate research (PGR) students.¹ These entities form a diverse and dynamic part of the PGR landscape. They often involve collaborations with other organisations, and many of them operate across school and faculty boundaries. In some cases, a credit-bearing taught component forms part of their PGR programmes.
- 1.2. There are multiple doctoral training models including those supported through the Research Councils, such as Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) and Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs). Charitable trusts, such as the Wellcome Trust, also fund doctoral programmes that incorporate specialised training. Doctoral training entities are formed through the requirements of their funders, as well as through interactions with their collaborators, and in the context of the research areas they cover. Each one has a unique character to meet its individual needs, and flexibility in structure is a prerequisite for their success.
- 1.3. Doctoral training entities form a strategically important cluster within the University. They create new internal and external relationships and are at a leading edge in terms of new approaches to doctoral training and in supporting cohorts of PGR students. Policies and procedures of the University have therefore been extended in some cases to accommodate these developments.
- 1.4. In terms of Quality Assurance (QA), it is important that doctoral training entities connect with the University's Quality Framework. The Framework provides the structure for the University to assure the quality and academic standards of its programmes and awards, as well as creating opportunities to review and to enhance provision. The University's regulations and policies meet the current national guidelines as defined by the Office for Students (OfS) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).²
- 1.5. Both the research and, where applicable, the taught components of doctoral programmes need to follow the relevant regulations and policies. The aim of this document is to provide guidance that bridges the multiple strands of the University's Quality Framework in terms of how they relate to doctoral training entities. It highlights relevant policies and regulations and should act as a guide to inform and facilitate; it does not however constitute policy itself. In all cases, the regulations and policies themselves take primacy over this guidance.

¹ A list of doctoral training entities is available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/doctoral-college/centres/>.

² The OfS sets out conditions of registration for the University (<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/registration-with-the-ofs-a-guide/conditions-of-registration/>) and the QAA advises on standards and quality in UK higher education (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/home>).

2. An overview of the University's Quality Framework

2.1. The Quality Framework encompasses both PGR and Taught programmes, and its different strands combine to meet the University's responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement. There are four broad interlinking areas of the Framework:

- a) The Regulations and Codes of Practice set the foundations.
- b) Approval processes ensure that new or revised programmes and educational partnerships are sound.
- c) External examiners offer informed, independent advice and appraisal.
- d) The review process provides a formal system for monitoring and reflection, which is captured in Education Action Plans.

Regulations and Codes of Practice

2.2. The University sets out the requirements for its programmes and for its educational partnerships through a series of Regulations and Codes of Practice:

- a) The *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/cop-research-degrees.html>) – the PGR Code – is a core document for the management of PGR programmes, including for supervision, progress and assessment. It also forms an important information source for PGR students.
- b) The *Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes* (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html>) – the Taught Code – covers the credit framework, assessment, progression and awards for undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes. The relevant sections apply to the assessment of any credit-bearing taught components of PGR programmes.
- c) The *Regulations and Code of Practice for Educational Collaborative Arrangements* (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/edpart/>) provides a formal structure for the development, approval and review of educational partnerships, including for cross-institutional doctoral training entities.

Programme and Partnership approval processes

2.3. Any new or revised units / programmes are approved through a formal process to ensure that they are academically sound and with sufficient resource available for their delivery. This process pertains to the setting up of all new PGR programmes, as well as for exit awards from credit-bearing taught components. Information on the Programme and Unit Approval Process is at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/approve/>.

2.4. Proposals to set up new educational collaborative arrangements are approved through a formal process. Approval in principle for the proposed partnership must be secured *before* any associated programme is approved through the process outlined

in paragraph 2.3 above. Information on policies and procedures relevant to educational partnerships is at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/edpart/>.

External examining

2.5. External examiners provide an informed, independent, and comparative view of academic standards. They make a crucial contribution to maintaining the quality of the University's programmes and awards, and they form an integral part of the Quality Framework:

- a) At least one external examiner must be appointed to participate in the oral examination for PGR degrees (see Section 9.3 of the PGR Code).
- b) At least one external examiner must be appointed for a taught programme or credit-bearing component that leads to, or forms part of, an award of the University (see the University's policy on external examining for taught programmes: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/exexs/>).

2.6. Input from external examiners is crucial when Examination Boards approve awards of the University:

- a) The examiners (including at least one external examiner) for a PGR degree make a joint recommendation to the University's Research Degrees Examination Board (see Section 9.6 of the PGR Code).
- b) An Examination Board, comprising both internal and external examiners, considers the progress of students and approves the award of taught programmes / components (see Section 20 of the Taught Code).

The review process

2.7. The review process provides a system for monitoring and reflection. It currently comprises two main parts:

- a) Annual programme review is an opportunity to monitor PGR programmes regularly at the school, programme or entity level. Annual programme review is an opportunity for schools, programmes and entities to reflect on all aspects of their provision. Review of PGR programmes feeds into the Education Action Plan (EAP) process.
- b) Education Action Planning (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/facultyadvice/eap/>) is the process of annual monitoring and action planning, providing a holistic review and record of school education activities which both supports and enables alignment with faculty and University planning.
- c) The University Quality Team (UQT) – <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/facultyadvice/uqt/> – provides assurance to the University by scrutinising the quality and standards of education provision and student academic

experience, contributing to and overseeing improvement via the Education Action Planning process. UQT also surface examples of educational excellence at all levels of study across the institution.

Governance structure

2.8. The University has a formal governance structure for QA and educational matters, and for the PGR environment this consists of:

- a) Senate has responsibility for governance and for regulations and codes of practice:
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/universitycommittees/senate/>
- b) The University Education Committee (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/edcmtt.html>) has an overarching quality assurance role for educational matters, included delegated responsibility from Senate for regulations and codes of practice.
- c) The University Academic Quality and Standards Committee, which reports to University Education Committee, is responsible for the quality and standards of learning, teaching and assessment in all provision, including management of the Regulations and Codes of Practice: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/uagsc/>.
- d) The University PGR Committee, which reports to University Research Committee, has oversight of postgraduate research and its provision.

Academic Quality and Policy Office

2.9. The Academic Quality and Policy Office (AQPO) – <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/> – plays a central role in maintaining the Quality Framework. It manages many of the policies and processes related to the Framework and provides advice and guidance. It contributes to policy development in this area and provides professional advice to committees and working groups. In addition, AQPO manages the central PGR exams process (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/directory/exams/research-degree/>).

Bristol Doctoral College

2.10. Bristol Doctoral College (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/doctoral-college/>) provides a central perspective on doctoral training entities, particularly in relation to the structural relationships with, and expectations of, external funders. It facilitates cross-University PGR learning and training activities and acts as a PGR information hub, both for PGR students and for the academics and administrators who lead and manage entities. The BDC also provides networking opportunities for doctoral training entities to discuss issues and to share good practice.

3. QA roles in doctoral training entities

- 3.1. While there is diversity in the structure of doctoral training entities, there should be a clear responsibility for QA matters and for connections to the University's Quality Framework. Responsibility generally sits with the Director of the entity but with appropriate delegation in place. It is recognised that the Director will encompass multiple functions, including leadership within the research area, building cohorts of research students, maintaining a strong relationship with funders, and managing an externally facing entity often with multiple partners.
- 3.2. Responsibility for connecting with the Quality Framework should be considered in the setting up and running of doctoral training entities. Depending on its structure, an entity may have a range of roles that participate in QA activities. These considerations should take account of the particular composition of the entity, including if it incorporates a credit-bearing taught component and/or forms part of an educational partnership.

Taught components and the Programme Director role

- 3.3. Where a doctoral training entity has a credit-bearing taught component, it must ensure that it fulfils the Programme Director role for the component. The Taught Code states that the Programme Director must be familiar with all relevant regulations and is responsible for the quality assurance of the programme. The Programme Director guidelines set out the responsibilities as:
- a) The maintenance of academic standards;
 - b) The quality of education and educational support;
 - c) Programme review and development; and
 - d) The day-to-day running of programmes.

Educational partnerships and the Academic Lead role

- 3.4. Where a doctoral training entity involves an educational collaboration with other organisations, there will be a designated Academic Lead for the partnership. This would typically, but not necessarily, be the Director of the entity. The *Regulations and Code of Practice for Educational Collaborative Arrangements* (available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/edpart/>) sets out the responsibilities of the Academic Lead in terms of management of the partnership.

4. *PGR programmes*

4.1. This section provides an initial signpost to where relevant information can be found. In all cases, the PGR Code itself takes primacy over this guidance and staff in doctoral training entities should be familiar with the PGR Code directly.

4.2. The PGR Code (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/cop-research-degrees.html>) has a central role in terms of quality assurance and the management of PGR programmes. It contains significant information and regulations covering, for example:

- a) Admission and induction of students, including information on the period of study and on student entitlements and responsibilities ([Section 4](#));
- b) Supervision, including what is expected from a supervisor, who is able to perform the role and how to replace one ([Section 5](#));
- c) Progress and review arrangements, including the annual progress review (which is often called annual progress monitoring), enhanced academic support, interruptions to study and changes in mode of attendance ([Section 6](#));
- d) Development of research and other skills ([Section 7](#));
- e) Student representation ([Section 8](#));
- f) Assessment, including submission of the dissertation, the examination process, assessment outcomes and results ([Section 9](#));
- g) Student appeals and complaints ([Section 10](#));
- h) Regulations for specific PGR degrees ([Annex 1](#) & [Annex 2](#));
- i) Procedure for dealing with unsatisfactory academic progress ([Annex 3](#));
- j) Plagiarism procedure ([Annex 8](#));

4.3. The *Policy on Postgraduate Research Students who Teach* (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/pgrswhoteach.html>) may also be relevant.

4.4. In addition, it is recognised that external funders will have terms and conditions in relation to how PGR programmes are run.

5. ***Taught components***

- 5.1. This section provides an initial signpost to where relevant information can be found. In all cases, the Taught Code itself takes primacy over this guidance. Staff in doctoral training entities, where there is a credit-bearing taught component, should be familiar with the Taught Code directly.
- 5.2. Many doctoral training entities are funded to provide PGR programmes with taught components that are credit bearing and contribute to the award of a degree. These taught components, consisting of both taught units and short research projects, provide structured training to prepare students for their doctoral project. Taught exit awards are often a possible outcome of the component when students wish to leave before completing their doctoral study, or if they fail to satisfy the examiners in the research component. There are also some entities that support specialised training that is not credit bearing (and this section is not relevant in those cases).
- 5.3. It is recognised that there is a diversity in how doctoral training entities operate taught components. There may, for example, be some blending between different elements due to the nature of the research training included in the taught component. Multiple models on when the taught component is completed have been adopted: for some it is at the end of the first year, while for others it runs in parallel to the main research project over several years. For the 1+3 model, where students are registered for a taught masters in their first year, the standard procedures for postgraduate taught programmes would be in operation.
- 5.4. The general rule is that if the taught component of a PGR programme is credit bearing, the Taught Code applies to its assessment. Annex 1 of the PGR Code includes this requirement and sets out the regulations for specific PGR degrees. doctoral training entities that operate credit-bearing taught components must therefore have a working knowledge of both the PGR Code and the Taught Code. It should be noted that the students undertaking taught components as part of an integrated doctoral programme are still registered as PGR students (and therefore fall primarily under the PGR Code), and it is only in terms of the assessment of the taught component that the Taught Code applies.
- 5.5. The information in the following paragraphs sets out the relevant parts of the Taught Code in the assessment of taught components of PGR programmes. If a section of the Taught Code is not set out here, it is because it is generally not appropriate for these taught components. The section on supplementary years, for example, is not normally considered relevant due to the nature of taught components and their funding arrangements.

Unit sizes

- 5.6. The section on '[Programme Structure and Design](#)' in the Taught Code provides information on standard unit sizes and sets out the permission for larger unit sizes to accommodate projects and dissertations in postgraduate taught programmes, which includes the taught component of integrated doctoral degrees.

The conduct and marking of assessments in the Taught Code

5.7. Sections of the Taught Code on the conduct and marking of assessments are relevant to the taught component of PGR programmes. These sections are:

- a) [Forms of assessment](#)
Provides information on assessment forms, methods and criteria.
- b) [Conduct of assessment](#)
Sets out details on how particular assessment types should operate.
- c) [Reasonable adjustment to assessment](#)
Contains considerations on when reasonable adjustments may be required when conducting assessment activities.
- d) [Feedback to students](#)
Sets out the responsibility for feedback on formative and summative work (see also the framework for the return of feedback to students - <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/documents/institutional-framework-for-feedback.pdf>).
- e) [Marking criteria and scales](#)
Includes the University generic marking criteria, which provides descriptors that give board comparability of standards across all programmes and that reflect the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. Level 7/M (Masters, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate) qualifications are incorporated into these criteria.
- f) [Treatment of marks](#)
Covers marking, moderation, and verification procedures.
- g) [Anonymity](#)
Contains a consideration of when assessment should be marked anonymously.
- h) [Penalties](#)
Sets out potential penalties for academic misconduct, plus for the late submission or for exceeding the size limit of summative coursework.
- i) [Processing and recording marks](#)
Includes information on how unit marks are calculated and recorded for taught postgraduate programmes.

Institutional Principles for Assessment and Feedback in Taught Programmes

5.8. The Institutional Principles (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/assessment-and-feedback-principles/>) provide a statement of the University's approach to assessment and the provision of feedback. Both staff and students can therefore share common expectations and are aware of their

responsibilities. These principles focus on taught programmes but would, where appropriate, relate to the assessment of any credit-bearing taught component.

Determining progress in the Taught Code

5.9. The relevant sections in the Taught Code on determining progress are:

- a) [Pass marks](#)
Contains details on pass marks, including for Level 7/M units.
- b) [Extenuating circumstances](#)
Contains information on extenuating circumstances procedures, including the role of exam boards.
- c) [Boards of examiners](#)
Sets out the parameters by which initial boards of examiners and faculty boards should operate, including membership, purpose, the information they should receive and consider, and the output from their meetings.
- d) [Appeals against decisions of the boards of examiners](#)
Provide details on the process for student appeals against a decision of an exam board.
- e) [Roles responsible for determining progression and awards](#)
Sets out the range of roles required to determine progression, including internal and external examiners. Also see *External examiners and taught components* below.
- f) [Treatment and publication of results](#)
Sets out how the disclosure of marks and results should be conducted. It also includes the requirement for transcripts, but this is only relevant for the taught component of PGR programmes if a taught exit award is made.
- g) [Student progression and completion](#)
Includes the regulations on the use of resits and compensation. In this section, there is an acknowledgment that taught components of doctoral programmes may have bespoke structures and progression may operate differently from standard postgraduate taught programmes.
- h) [Awards and classification](#)
Contains information on the final programme mark and is only relevant if a taught exit award is made.

External examiners and taught components

5.9 An external examiner is required for credit-bearing taught components of PGR programmes, including where its completion is a formal requirement for progression and/or where it may lead to a taught exit award. An external examiner can make a significant contribution to the taught component by providing informed feedback and

in assuring that it meets the appropriate standards. The *Policy for External Examining of Taught Programmes* (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/exexs/>) provides full details on the role of external examiners and the University's external examining processes.

Progression from the taught component

5.10 The taught component aims to prepare the student for research, and it is often closely integrated with the doctoral project the student will go on to do. The smaller research project/s conducted as part of the taught component might, for example, be linked to the proposed doctoral project. There is therefore an intrinsic relationship between the taught component and the research.

5.11 Students are normally required to obtain the necessary credit points as set out in the programme specification to progress from the taught component. Formal approval for progression from a credit-bearing taught component is considered by an initial exam board and a recommendation is made to a faculty board for ratification (see the [relevant section](#) of the Taught Code). It is recognised that in some cases there may be a lag between when a student is ready to move forward with the doctoral project and when the results of the taught component are ratified. To ensure that impetus and important research time are not lost, a student may make a start on the doctoral project during this lag period on the understanding that it is provisional until the progression has been officially ratified. There should be clear communications with the student explaining the progression process and the provisional nature of the start of the doctoral project in these cases. The relevant exam board may permit a student to start the doctoral project, pending and subject to formal approval.

5.12 The Taught Code also acknowledges that some programmes are designed such that the taught component runs in parallel with the dissertation (i.e. a student is allocated and commences a research project early in their study). Where this is formally designated in a programme, a progression point is not required; however, a formal consideration as to whether the student is likely to succeed should instead take place at a point designated by the programme.

5.13 Interim considerations of students' progress during the taught component are important. Providing structured, formative feedback to the student at significant points can assist in uncovering and addressing any concerns. There is also a requirement for PGR-registered students to participate in an annual progress review, which is often called annual progress monitoring (APM) – see Section 6 of the PGR Code. Formative feedback on the taught component and the APM requirement both provide a more assured grounding for allowing the provisional start of doctoral projects in the lag before the results of the taught component are officially ratified.

Exit awards

5.14 Many PGR programmes that contain a credit-bearing taught component allow for a taught exit award if students choose to leave before completing their doctoral study

(an initial exam board would make a recommendation to the faculty examination board for ratification), or if they fail to satisfy the examiners in the research component (see Annex 1 of the PGR Code). In cases where the student has undertaken a considerable amount of research but then wishes to leave early, a Masters by research may be more appropriate if the necessary criteria are met (see Annexes 2 and 7 of the PGR Code). A Masters by research is also a potential outcome after the oral examination of a doctoral dissertation.

6 Setting up and changing taught exit awards

- 6.1 PGR programmes that contain a credit-bearing taught component may include taught exit awards (a taught Masters, a Postgraduate Diploma, and a Postgraduate Certificate). Any taught exit awards are required to follow the programme approval process as for any taught award granted by the University. [Section 4](#) of the Taught Code sets out the regulations for programme structure and design for all taught programmes. More detailed information on programme and unit approval are held at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/approve/approvalguidance/>.
- 6.2 The first step in the approval process for a new programme is the completion of a Business Case. For doctoral training entities, the agreed bid to the funder is normally accepted in lieu of a Business Case. An Academic Case that outlines the programme aims, structure, intended learning outcomes and the units that form the programme is then required. The Academic Case is approved, in turn, by the Faculty Board, the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the University Education Committee before being reported to Senate. Information on approved taught programmes is held in the University's unit and programme catalogues: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/unitprogcat/Welcome.jsa>.
- 6.3 Changes to existing taught programmes and units are also considered through the programme approval process. Most programme and unit changes are approved at faculty level, but the Faculty Education Director may decide that significant programme changes, such as changes with a financial risk or a risk to the student experience, are considered through a fuller process including consideration by University Academic Quality and Standards Committee. Changes to units and programmes are managed through the Unit and Programme Management System (UPMS). Early consultation with the Faculty Education Director is advised. Please contact approval-help@bristol.ac.uk for further guidance about the approval process.

7 Connections to the University's QA review processes

Education Action Plan process

7.1 The Education Action Plan (EAP) process requires all PGR programmes at the University of Bristol to conduct an annual review (research stage review). The value of the annual review lies in the opportunity for those responsible for delivering postgraduate research to reflect collectively on how it operated in the previous year and to consider where improvements could be made. The research stage annual review should include a review of the taught component (where applicable) if this has not already been reviewed in a separate meeting. The school should identify actions to address any issues and agree three priority areas. The priority areas, and other actions arising from the annual review are captured in the school (or faculty) EAP document. Please see the [guidance](#) on conducting the annual review, which includes a list of recommended discussion items.

7.2 Each school or, in some cases, faculty has a PGR EAP document. The EAP document is the mechanism to record and monitor progress on three priority areas, and other actions relating to education provision at PGR level arising from research stage review; feedback from students; PRES results; supervisor feedback; Periodic Programme Review; PSRB requirements; etc. Annual review of programmes delivered through doctoral training entities are typically captured on the relevant EAP, which normally relates to the Lead PI's school or faculty. Doctoral training entities may however have a separate, individual EAP if this is considered appropriate.

7.3 The EAP document is a live, iterative document which is intended to be a useful tool to help the school manage its action planning and priorities in relation to its education provision. The EAP document is reported at least annually to the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee (or equivalent) to inform discussion about wider faculty issues, and the Faculty Board to inform the Integrated Planning Process (IPP).

7.4 The Education Action Plan documents are held on the QA Framework Documents SharePoint site: <https://uob.sharepoint.com/teams/grp-qaframeworkdocuments>.

7.5 The full policy which includes guidance on conducting the annual review can be found on the AQPO website here: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/facultyadvice/eap/>

University Quality Team process

7.6 The University Quality Team (UQT) reviews the quality and standards of the University's education provision and student academic experience on an annual basis, actively monitoring and supporting the delivery of actions to improve practice. Please see the [UQT webpages](#) for more information.

7.7 A panel of the UQT will be dedicated to reviewing each faculty's PGR provision, including within associated DTEs, primarily through a desk-based review of the EAP against a variety of evidence sources and engagement with relevant members of

staff (such as the DTE Director) and students. The UQT Panel will produce a short report outlining its findings with recommendations.

- 7.8 The schedule for UQT review will be set out and communicated at the start of the academic year. The UQT may also be directed by University Research Committee and/or the University PGR Committee to investigate a specific quality and standards matter in relation to PGR study or evaluate whether satisfactory progress has been made in response to a specific action.

8. Approval, management and review of educational collaborative arrangements

8.1 Educational collaborative arrangements are required when the University of Bristol is dependent on its collaboration with external partner(s) to ensure that programme or unit learning outcomes can be achieved. The contribution of the partner(s) may be in terms of teaching, assessment, supervision, placement provision and/or the provision of specialist facilities or equipment. These types of arrangement include collaborative doctoral training entities, as well as: joint or dual awards; joint delivery of programmes under a Collaboration Agreement leading to a University of Bristol only award; co-supervision of research degrees with external partners; and clinical, industrial and professional placements. Funding only arrangements (e.g. Wellcome Trust funded doctoral training) are not classified as educational partnerships.

8.2 The *Regulations and Code of Practice for Educational Collaborative Arrangements* cover the full lifecycle of these collaborations:

- a) the initial development;
- b) risk assessment, due diligence and approval;
- c) putting in place the written agreement;
- d) delivery and management;
- e) monitoring and review; and
- f) renewing or ending an agreement.

8.3 Doctoral training entities that involve other organisations in the delivery, support or assessment of their programmes are required to follow these regulations. There is also a Policy Framework, an Approval Process and a Periodic Review Process. Full details on educational collaborative arrangements are available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/edpart/>.

Approval process

8.4 Any proposals to set up a new educational collaborative arrangement must be approved through a formal process that ensures there is a suitable rationale for entering into the partnership, that the University wishes to collaborate with the prospective partner(s), that any associated risks have been assessed, and that educational quality and the student experience are safeguarded in the context of collaborative delivery. This internal process applies whether or not the University of Bristol is the lead partner in the proposed collaboration.

8.5 Approval in principle must also be secured in the context of any bidding process involving partner organisations for external funding to undertake educational activity. The relevant approval must be confirmed before the bid is submitted. Approval may need to take place through a 'fast track' process due to the timescales and deadlines for bid submission.

Management and review of collaborative arrangements

8.6 Large-scale educational collaborations, such as those involving doctoral training entities, must have a signed Collaboration Agreement in place before the relevant activity commences. This Agreement sets out details on the responsibilities of each

partner, management structures for the collaboration, and applicable regulations and quality assurance processes, amongst other things. An annually updated plan ensures that the day-to-day procedures related to the collaboration are clearly articulated. See Sections 9 (The written agreement) and 10 (Implementation and delivery) of the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Educational Collaborative Arrangements*.

- 8.7 Student admissions, registration and support arrangements are fundamental aspects of an educational collaboration. For arrangements where students undertake periods of study at one or more partner organisations – for example where the taught component is delivered at another location – the registration and applicable regulations must be clear at all times (see Section 4.2 of the PGR Code.) It must also be clear which institution will make any applicable exit awards.
- 8.8 There must be provision for ensuring that students receive clear and timely information about the collaborative programme – including the location(s) of delivery, which regulations and procedures will apply (e.g. for assessment), staff contact details and support arrangements. These matters will be set out in the Collaboration Agreement. The original signed copy of the Agreement is stored with the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office
- 8.9 The Academic Lead has responsibility for overseeing the delivery of an educational collaborative arrangement in accordance with the written Agreement. All programmes delivered through educational collaborative arrangements are subject to the University's quality assurance procedures. In the case of collaborative doctoral training entities, this will include producing an individual APR report (see paragraph 7.6 above). In addition, when the Collaboration Agreement is reaching the end of its term, the collaborative arrangement will be subject to a Periodic Review process. This is designed to provide an opportunity to reassess risks and benefits associated with the partnership and to ensure strategic and informed decision-making on whether to renew or to end the collaboration.

9 Working across schools and faculties

- 9.1 Many doctoral training entities operate across schools and/or faculties, and this requires a consideration of Quality Assurance responsibilities and how connections to the Quality Framework are managed. Where entities are cross-school or cross-faculty, they would generally be 'owned' by a particular school and/or faculty. This is normally the school and faculty of the Director for QA purposes.
- 9.2 The transfer of students from one faculty to another is a significant consideration. This could be, for example, where students complete a taught component in one faculty and then transfer to join with their main supervisor in another faculty for their doctoral project. There may be subtle differences in how research students are managed between faculties. These differences should not however disadvantage the student and the transfer should be as seamless as possible. There is a formal process for PGR students who transfer between schools or faculties, and there is a transfer form that should be completed and approved by the relevant role holders. The form should be returned to the owning Faculty Office, where the transfer is carried out using eVision, which results in the SITS record being updated and with email notifications sent to key people.