



REGULATIONS AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR
RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMMES

2016/17

Summary of regulatory changes and/or additions for 2016/17

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4.4.3 & 4.4.4	Pre-entry advice for disabled students <i>New subsections provide more guidance for prospective students who have a disability.</i>	12
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REGULATIONS AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMMES
2016-17

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These Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes (hereafter “the Regulations and Code”) apply to the degrees listed below.

They do **not** apply to Higher Doctorates (DEng, DLitt, DMus, DSc, LLD) which have separate regulations and can be found at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/>

Doctorates **in the Faculty/Faculties of**

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	All faculties
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Musical Composition	Arts
Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)	Health Sciences
Doctor of Education (EdD)	Social Sciences and Law
Doctor of Educational Psychology (DEdPsy)	Social Sciences and Law
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	Biomedical Sciences Health Sciences
Doctor of Social Science (DSocSci)	Social Sciences and Law
Engineering Doctorate (EngD)	Engineering

Masters degrees (by research) **in the Faculty/Faculties of**

Master of Music (MMus)	Arts
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	Arts Social Sciences and Law
Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Musical Composition	Arts
Master of Science (MSc)	Biomedical Sciences Engineering Health Sciences Science

The Regulations are for use by:

- supervisors of research students
- research students
- examiners of research degrees
- all University staff responsible for postgraduate research programmes and students

Heads of School, faculty Graduate Education Directors, faculty Research Directors and faculty administrators receive a copy of the Regulations and Code. All other staff, including supervisors, and students are encouraged to access the Regulations and Code at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/cop-research-degrees.html>.

The Regulations and Code are updated annually so it is essential that students and staff refer to the current edition. Only the current edition has regulatory status and supersedes all previous editions.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Regulations and Code

The Regulations set out the University's requirements for:

- the management of research degree programmes;
- the mechanisms for assuring the academic standards of research degrees;
- the support (academic and pastoral) that should be provided for research degree students and the ways in which such support is offered.

The role of the Regulations is to maintain the quality and academic standards of the University's research degree programmes and to provide clear guidance for research postgraduates and staff in schools.

As well as setting out the University's minimum requirements for postgraduate research degree programmes, the Regulations and Code aim to provide helpful background information for staff and postgraduate students, including details of internal policies and practice. The Regulations and Code are consistent with the University's Education and Research Strategies and with Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) current requirements, in particular with *Chapter B11: Research Degrees* of the QAA Quality Code (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Pages/Quality-Code-Chapter-B11.aspx#>).

The sections of the Regulations and Code outlined in boxes throughout the text are University Regulations; they set out the University's minimum requirements/responsibilities for postgraduate research programmes and must be followed.

The detailed regulations for the individual research degree programmes (listed on page 1) to which the Regulations and Code apply are held at **Annex 1** (doctoral degrees) and **Annex 2** (Masters Degrees by Research) for ease of reference.

2 Institutional arrangements

2.1 Governance Framework

2.1.1 The Governance structure

Senate

Senate has responsibility for governance and for the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes. Information on Senate is held at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/universitycommittees/senate/>.

University Education Committee

The University Education Committee, which is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students), has an overarching quality assurance role for educational matters. Details about Education Committee's Terms of Reference and membership can be found at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/edcmtt.html>.

University Academic Quality and Standards Committee

The University Academic Quality and Standards Committee, which is chaired by the Academic Registrar, is responsible for overseeing the quality and standards of learning, teaching and assessment at the University. It oversees the development and maintenance of regulations, policies and codes of practice as they relate to the quality framework. The terms of reference are at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/uaqsc/>.

PGR Code Review Group

The PGR Code Review Group is responsible for undertaking the annual review of the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes. The terms of reference are at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/pgrcodereview/>.

University Graduate Studies Committee

The University Graduate Studies Committee (UGSC) is chaired by the Academic Director for Graduate Studies and is responsible for developing and maintaining the strategic framework for postgraduate education across the University. The terms of reference are at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/groups/graddeans/>.

Research Degrees Examination Board (RDEB)

The University's Research Degrees Examination Board (RDEB) makes the decisions about the award of all research degrees. RDEB is chaired by the Academic Director of Graduate Studies.

Faculty Graduate Studies Committees

Graduate Education Directors chair their respective faculty Graduate Studies Committee, where all matters relating to postgraduate research students are discussed.

2.1.2 Governance roles

Academic Director of Graduate Studies

The Academic Director of Graduate Studies has oversight of postgraduate education across the University and reports to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students).

Graduate Education Director

Each faculty has a Graduate Education Director whose primary responsibility is to support the Dean of their faculty in managing postgraduate education and research degree programmes.

2.1.3 Other University-level groups

Bristol Doctoral College (BDC)

The Bristol Doctoral College (BDC) – <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/doctoral-college/> – facilitates cross-University learning and training activities for all Postgraduate research (PGR) students. It delivers the University-wide Personal and Professional Development programme for PGRs, supported by Skills Training and Reviews (STaR), which is an online tool that maintains a track record of communications between students and supervisors, of skills training plans and of regular Progress Monitoring.

The BDC serves as a PGR hub for information, guidance and communications, including with external collaborators, potential sponsors, funders and future employers. It also works on PGR marketing and recruitment, promoting and showcasing PGR success stories and opportunities in Bristol.

The BDC is led by a Director and is governed by the BDC Board.

2.2 Academic standards

The Regulations and Code align with the current QAA Quality Code for Higher Education for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, notably *Chapter B11: Research Degrees* (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Pages/Quality-Code-Chapter-B11.aspx#>). The University's research degrees accord with the current QAA Qualification Characteristics for Doctoral and Masters Degrees and are mapped against national benchmarking standards.

UK research degrees are in alignment with the European-wide guidance, in particular with the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* (see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications>). University of Bristol research degrees are therefore recognised as having Europe-wide equivalence.

The University has several mechanisms for assuring itself that the academic standards of the research degrees it awards are at an appropriate level. The following paragraphs describe the measures that contribute to setting and maintaining these standards.

Quality of students and academic staff

The University takes care to recruit students who meet the entrance criteria for its research programmes (see Section 4).

The University recruits academic staff who can fulfil its requirements for conducting research and contributing to education. Specifications for appointments and promotion/progression can be found on the University website: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/hr/grading/academic/>

Criteria against which candidates for staff appointments and promotion are measured include research success or potential, and the ability to teach and inspire students at all levels.

Quality of supervision

The University provides guidance on supervision of research students as part of its *CREATE CPD scheme* for new academic staff, and mentoring arranged at school level. Development sessions will also be offered for experienced staff wanting to refresh their practice as part of the broader Academic Staff Development programme.

Annual progress review

All research students and supervisors are required to engage in the annual progress review process (see Section 6). One of the main purposes of the annual progress review is to assure the student, the supervisors and the relevant school and faculty that academic progress is satisfactory.

Each Graduate Education Director is responsible for monitoring all annual progress review reports in their faculty.

External examining

When approving the appointment of examiners for research degrees, Heads of School (or their nominees) and Graduate Education Directors are required to confirm that the potential examiners have the appropriate knowledge and experience to carry out the assessment effectively. The criteria for selection of research degree examiners are described in Section 9.3.

External benchmarks of research quality

These are covered in Section 3: the research environment.

2.3 Maintaining and improving the quality of research degree programmes

The University ensures that it continues to meet UK quality standards for research degrees and accords with national guidelines.

In addition, RDEB fulfils the role of assuring consistency of academic standards across all faculties, scrutinising all research degree examiners' reports and taking account of their comments concerning the process and operation of research degree assessment.

Research students' views

The University regularly gathers feedback from postgraduate research students about their experience at Bristol, and uses the results to inform the development of its provision.

Liaison with the University of Bristol Students' Union

The postgraduate sabbatical officer provides a student voice as a member of the University Graduate Studies Committee and other relevant committees and groups. Other sabbatical officers, student representatives and staff employed by the University of Bristol Students' Union are also engaged in dialogue on postgraduate matters as appropriate.

2.4 Regulations for research degrees

The University's regulations for research degrees (**Annexes 1 and 2**) cover:

- the duration of the period of study (full time and part-time equivalent)
- the modes of study permitted
- how a candidate can achieve the award
- what the nature and size of the dissertation or equivalent should be
- the nature of the assessment and any generic assessment criteria that are applicable.

All research degree students and their supervisors must be aware of the requirements of these Regulations and Code and of the regulations that govern the award for which the student is registered.

2.5 Monitoring of research degree programmes against indicators and targets

The University uses the following indicators for monitoring research degree programmes:

Submission and qualification¹ rates for postgraduate research degrees

Higher Education Funding Council for England and RCUK qualification rates data are considered by the University at various levels. Graduate Education Directors work with individual schools if a need for improvement is identified.

Annual monitoring statistics

Annual monitoring statistics are scrutinised by schools as part of the Annual Programme Review (APR) process and during School Reviews.

¹ The term 'qualification rate' (also known as 'completion rate') refers to the length of time it takes from the date of registration on a research degree programme for a student to be awarded his/her qualification by the University Research Degrees Examination Board.

3 The research environment

The University provides a very high quality research environment, as shown by its consistent excellent performance in successive external research audits. The University's Research and Enterprise Strategy (see <http://www.bris.ac.uk/research/vision.html>) aims to maintain and improve on this long standing success through a variety of actions.

The research environments in the faculties are designed to support the needs of the cognate disciplines within each faculty. The way in which research in different subjects in a faculty is conducted therefore influences the organisation of research activities, the support for research degree students and the management of research degree programmes.

The University is part of many cross-institutional research collaborations and research degree students are encouraged, where appropriate, to contribute to collaborative research in order to develop the skills required for involvement in research of international excellence.

There is a variety of externally-funded initiatives that provide doctoral training in the postgraduate research environment. These initiatives are often cross-institutional in nature and may contain research degree programmes that combine a structured taught component with the research project. There are a number of different models, including:

- A Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) provides training for cohorts of research students within focused research areas, often defined strategically by the Research Council funder(s), and concentrated on academic- and/or industrially-relevant research topics.
- A Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) provides training for cohorts of research students across a broad range of subjects as determined by the research institution(s).
- A Doctoral Training Centre (DTC) provides training for cohorts of research students.
- An Industrial Doctoral Centre (IDC) provides training for cohorts of research students and incorporates a strong industrial focus.
- Innovative Training Network (ITN) is an umbrella term for a group of European Council funded collaborative programmes, based on a multi-organisational and international model of training that facilitates mobility of PhD researchers who are classified as Early Stage Researchers (ESRs). ESRs are registered as both PhD students and employees of their home university. These programmes often offer dual/joint awards.

The University's expectations of the ways in which schools provide an appropriate research environment for research degree students to learn about and carry out research are:

- 3.1 Schools and faculties must ensure that the student can interact with sufficient research-active staff in the student's area of research within the school, the faculty, the University, or elsewhere.
- 3.2 Students working remotely from their school, including those 'writing up', must have access to appropriate facilities to support their work, including those available electronically.
- 3.3 All students are entitled to opportunities to experience and contribute to research activities, at school and faculty level, as appropriate. Schools and faculties must have strategies in place to enable students to make the most of these opportunities, for example, by presenting their research at school seminars.
- 3.4 Where the student's project requires research facilities or expertise beyond those which are available within the school, faculty or University, the school must ensure that the student has adequate access to these elsewhere.

4 Selection, admission and induction of students

4.1 Admissions requirements

General admission requirements for entry to research degree programmes are contained in the University Postgraduate Prospectus, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/postgraduate/>. Details relating to specific research degree programmes are described on school web pages.

In some faculties, students aiming for a doctoral degree are in the first instance registered for a Masters degree by research and are eligible for transfer to registration for the PhD degree, subject to satisfying the requirements set by the faculty and /or school. The transfer process normally occurs after one year. Transfer to doctoral registration, and continuation of registration for a doctorate, is in all cases subject to satisfactory progress.

The following are the University's minimum requirements for entry to postgraduate research degree programmes:

a first degree, normally at a level equivalent to at least UK Honours 2.1 level

or

a relevant postgraduate Masters qualification

or

evidence of prior learning or achievement that enables the University to assess the candidate's potential to succeed in the programme applied for.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to satisfy the University's Language Entry Requirements, available at

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions/language-requirements.html>

Faculties and schools should facilitate and encourage students to attend language courses, as appropriate, either before their programme begins or during the programme if required by the school/faculty.

4.2 Registration

The required period of study is laid down in the regulations for each degree. Students must register with the University when they begin their studies and at the start of each academic year.

No student, registered for a programme of full-time study leading to a qualification of the University of Bristol, may concurrently be registered on a programme of full-time or part-time study leading to an award of a qualification at this or another institution, unless this is a requirement of their programme of study (normally only applies to students on professional programmes and joint or dual awards).

Normally students will be expected to carry out their research at Bristol. Exceptions to this must be approved by the relevant Graduate Education Director.

Students studying for joint and dual PhDs² are normally required to be in attendance at the University for at least 30% of their programme. Doctoral students who are studying as part of a

² A **joint doctoral award** is one which leads to a single award for a research degree programme which is jointly offered by the partner institutions. The single award certificate will be endorsed by all partners. A **dual doctoral award** is one which leads to separate awards from two partner institutions involved in a joint research degree programme. Each award certificate will refer to the joint programme.

collaborative partnership or centre may spend more time away from Bristol if this is specified in the agreement.

Unless otherwise specified as part of an agreement, the provisions of these Regulations and Code apply to all University of Bristol-registered students during periods of study at another organisation.

For collaborative PhD programmes, students registered at the University of Bristol may be subject to the regulations of a partner organisation for some or all of any taught component. This will be clearly stated in the agreement.

Doctoral students transferring to the University must complete a minimum of one year study full-time (or part-time equivalent) in order to be eligible for a doctoral award. This does not include the writing-up period.

Schools wishing to accept a doctoral student from elsewhere who is part way through his or her studies must be satisfied that the student has worked at an equivalent level to a Bristol doctoral student at a comparable stage.

4.3 Period of study

4.3.1 The minimum and maximum periods of study permitted for the University's research degree programmes are summarised in table 4.3.1.

The period of study begins when the student first registers for the degree programme. Where a student initially registers for a Masters degree by research and later transfers to a doctoral degree, the period of study begins on the date of registration for the Masters degree.

Table 4.3.1 **Normal minimum and maximum periods of study**

Doctorates	F/T Minimum	F/T Maximum	P/T Maximum
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	3 yrs	4 yrs	7 yrs
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Musical Composition	3 yrs	4 yrs	7 yrs
Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)	3 yrs	3 yrs	6 yrs
Doctor of Education (EdD)	3 yrs	4 yrs	7 yrs
Doctor of Educational Psychology (DEdPsy)	3 yrs	4 yrs	7 yrs
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	2 yrs	5 yrs	7 yrs
Doctor of Social Science (DSocSci)	3 yrs	4 yrs	7 yrs
Engineering Doctorate (EngD)	4 yrs	5 yrs	7 yrs
Masters degrees (by research)	F/T Minimum	F/T Maximum	P/T Maximum
Master of Music (MMus)	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs
Master of Philosophy (MPhil) (Arts)	1 yr	1 yr	2 yrs
Master of Philosophy (MPhil) (Social Sciences and Law)	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs
Master of Science (MSc)	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs

The normal minimum and maximum periods of study for students registered part time **assume students are studying on a half time basis**. If this is not the case then the period of study should be adjusted accordingly.

Periods of study may be varied for named programmes as specified in the individual programme regulations in **Annex 1** and **Annex 2**.

Sponsored students may also be subject to their sponsors' requirements in respect of submission.

The period allowed for writing up for a research degree is one year for both full-time and part-time students.

4.3.2 The University imposes an **overall maximum completion period** to ensure that students do not take an excessive amount of time to complete their degrees. The maximum completion period, set out below, refers to the total time limits for doctoral awards and masters by research awards and *includes* any suspensions or extensions that might have been granted (see Section 6.3).

The maximum completion period runs from initial registration to final approval of the award by the Research Degrees Examination Board.

The maximum completion period for any research degree programme is the maximum *period of study* plus five years.

4.4 Selection and admission procedures

4.4.1 Responsibilities for admissions procedures

The University Student Recruitment Committee has overall responsibility for postgraduate admissions. It is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Student Recruitment) and is responsible for:

- the annual review of the admissions principles and procedures that apply to research degree programmes, and ensuring that they are implemented;
- assuring itself that faculty/school admissions practices are aligned with University policy.

Graduate Education Directors oversee postgraduate admissions within their faculties, approving any offers made outside normal entry requirements.

Heads of School are normally responsible for the integrity of the admissions processes in their school. It is, therefore, the Head of School's responsibility to appoint school admissions selectors, and to ensure that these selectors are given time to undergo training in admissions and have sufficient resources for them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Interviews: If interviews take place, they should be carried out taking into account the advice provided in the University's Resourcing guidance, available from the HR website:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/hr/resourcing/>.

4.4.2 The University's core requirements in respect of decisions made about formal applications for admission to research degree programmes are:

Decisions on admissions to research programmes must be taken by two or more members of academic staff. Selectors must ensure that all admissions decisions take account of the University's statutory responsibilities in respect of equal opportunities and any related University policies, and must be based on fair and justifiable criteria. Selectors should encourage applicants to disclose disabilities in order that appropriate support can be put in place.

In the case of entrants seeking to use accreditation of prior learning or achievement to meet the entry requirement for admission to a research degree programme, criteria must be in place to enable a prospective student's preparedness and potential to complete the programme to be evaluated. Evidence that the criteria have been applied will be provided to the relevant faculty office by those involved in decision-making.

Interview panels should normally include the applicant's expected supervisor(s).

The reasons for the decision made must be recorded in a brief file note.

4.4.3 Pre-entry advice for disabled students

All applicants are considered using equitable academic criteria. Prospective students who have a disability are encouraged to make early contact with Disability Services (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/>) to discuss what support may be offered by the University, and how it may be funded, so that they can make an informed choice about any offer of a place.

4.4.4 Pre-entry advice for faculties/schools where an applicant has a disability

Advice is available from Disability Services (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/staff-professionals/>) to staff on how the faculty/school can support disabled students. Applicants should be encouraged to declare any disability at the earliest opportunity and staff should support this and signpost such students to Disability Services. To promote early contact, offer letters to successful applicants also provide appropriate signposting to Disability Services.

4.5 Induction

Prospective research students will receive information about the induction procedures for their research degree programme when they are notified that their application has been successful, prior to their expected start date, so that they are aware of what to expect when they start their degree programme. Information for new students is also available in a specific area of the University's website: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/newstudents/postgraduate/>

The induction programme for new research degree students at the beginning of the academic year may be comprised of University wide and/or faculty events, both of which are complemented by induction at school or programme level. The timing and content of induction programmes should take account of the needs of different groups of research students, including part-time students and international students arriving in the UK for the first time.

Faculties and schools normally ensure induction for those students who begin their research programme part way through the year is tailored to enable them to understand their faculty, school and programme of study.

4.5.1. The University's minimum requirements for induction of new research students are:

All students, including part-time students and those working remotely, must receive appropriate information about the environment in which they will be studying and pursuing research, including the names and contact details of all those involved in guiding and supporting them within their school or faculty and in the wider University.

All research students must receive appropriate induction that provides them with the information they will need to begin their programmes. Faculties and schools should determine what is covered at their respective levels.

Research students must receive detailed information about University regulations and policies that apply to their programme, including:

- supervision;
- progress monitoring and review;
- regulations that apply to the degree for which the student is registered;
- assessment criteria and regulations that apply to the degree for which the student is registered;
- any institutional or faculty codes of practice that apply to the research degree programme.

Full information about supervisory arrangements is critical as these affect many aspects of the research degree programme. Students should be made aware of the importance of their relationship with their supervisor(s) and should understand their own role and that of their supervisors.

Induction programmes should also provide information about:

- the learning infrastructure and how to access it, including arrangements for remote access, available equipment, library and computing facilities and any social space specially designated for research postgraduates;
- the University's expectations of the student's responsibilities;
- the day-to-day support and communication that students can access, including the school's arrangements for pastoral care,
- the opportunities available for the student to develop subject-specific and transferable skills;
- school and faculty arrangements for evaluating student satisfaction and dealing with problems encountered by students;
- arrangements for meeting students' personal, social, welfare and recreational needs, including information about facilities, opportunities and support available within the University.

4.6 Student entitlements and responsibilities

Students must be made aware of their entitlements and responsibilities, initially by the offer letter they receive from the University and subsequently at their initial meeting with their supervisor(s) and/or at meetings with the school postgraduate support team (for example the PGR Director/Tutor, or equivalent, and relevant professional service staff).

4.6.1 Research students studying at Bristol can expect the following entitlements and will be asked to accept the following responsibilities:

A student's entitlements

- Adequate opportunities to meet their supervisor(s) / supervisory team. As a guideline, it is normal for research students and their supervisors to review progress at least once a month (see Section 5.1.2).
- Before they start, details of the fees the University will charge for the programme and of any other expenditure necessitated by conducting research, e.g. bench fees.
- Information about special requirements in connection with their research project, e.g. the need to travel elsewhere to perform experimental work or use specialist libraries.
- Details of the length of time within which they must complete their programme of study/research.
- Information about arrangements for monitoring academic progress.
- Responses to queries they raise with their supervisor within a time scale agreed in advance.
- The return of written work, with appropriate and detailed feedback, within an agreed time scale.
- Access to a learning infrastructure that supports the progress of their studies and their ability to complete the degree successfully within the required time period.
- Access to an appropriate research environment, within the University or collaborating institutions, where relevant and sufficient expertise and appropriate facilities exist to support the student's research programme.
- Access to appropriate opportunities for developing research and transferable skills, including opportunities to practise for the oral examination.
- Where feasible, opportunities to participate in teaching, provided that it is not to the detriment of their research work, plus access to appropriate training and mentoring arrangements. Details of the University's *Policy for Postgraduate Research Students who Teach* are at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/pgrswhoteach.html>.
- Information about support available at school, faculty and University level.
- Details of any relevant practical information, for example, accommodation and financial or travel information.
- Twenty-five days holiday a year, in addition to days when the University is closed.
- Where relevant, details of appropriate language courses.

A student's responsibilities

- To register with the University before beginning their studies and at the start of each academic session, and pay any relevant fees.
- To inform supervisor(s) if he/she is away due to illness or other personal events.

- To take prime responsibility for the progress of their research, for the preparation and submission of their dissertation, and for their personal and professional development.
- To complete their research within the standard period of study. There is an expectation that full-time postgraduate research students will work on their research project, including any work related to their studentship, for an average of at least 35 hours per week. Part-time students are expected to work on their projects for a length of time that is pro rata with the full-time expectation. Students' workloads will vary throughout the year as well as at different stages of their projects and this should be discussed with their supervisors. Students who for specific reasons, such as caring responsibilities, wish to work flexibly should discuss this with their supervisors in the first instance.
- The University recognises that many research students may rely on paid employment to help fund their studies and/or gain valuable work experience. Achieving a sensible balance between work and study is essential. It is critical that research students take responsibility for ensuring that other activities do not adversely affect the progress of their studies.
- All research students must ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, any restrictions on paid work that may be imposed by external sources, such as visa requirements or the funding source for their studies. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of these limitations and ensure they comply.
- To be aware that poor progress due to external working may result in the initiation of the University's process for unsatisfactory academic progress (Annex 3).
- To ensure that they understand the roles and responsibilities of their supervisory team and the support structures operating in their school and faculty.
- To treat all members of University staff and students with due respect and consideration.
- To develop and maintain effective working relationships with their supervisor(s) and other University staff and students. Any concerns over this should be raised with the school's postgraduate team as soon as they occur.
- To keep in regular contact with their supervisor(s), particularly when away from the University.
- To comply with
 - the University Regulations governing their degree programme
 - the University Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes
 - the University's Rules and Regulations for Students
 - the University's Regulations and guidelines on research misconduct and plagiarism (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/researchmisc.html>)
 - relevant legal and ethical requirements, and University rules, including those covering health and safety, data protection, and confidentiality (<http://www.bris.ac.uk/red/research-governance/practice-training/researchethicspolicy.pdf>)
 - the University's *Intellectual Property Policy for Students* (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/intelprop.html>)
 - the norms of good research practice applicable to their area of research and of the University's *Research Governance and Integrity Policy* (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/research-governance/practice-training/rji.pdf>)

- To meet the University's requirements for good academic conduct, including:
 - making timely submissions of written work
 - ensuring that he/she meets his/her supervisor(s) at regular intervals, as agreed between them and that his/her contribution to these meetings is appropriate. The frequency of contact will vary between disciplines and research progress. Any concern about the frequency of meetings should normally be raised with the supervisory team in the first instance and then the school postgraduate team if the concern is not resolved.
 - complying with the University's rules and with the requirements of sponsoring or funding bodies concerning intellectual property
 - keeping appropriate records of his/her research, of his/her personal development and of formal meetings with supervisor(s), for example through the use of available online facilities such as Skills Training and Review (STaR): <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/doctoral-college/star/>.
 - making appropriate acknowledgement of the contribution made by the supervisor and any other person in any publication arising from his/her research work.
- To ensure that they have the necessary financial support to enable completion of the programme.
- To keep their personal information up to date via the Studentinfo online link at <https://www.bris.ac.uk/studentinfo/>

International students with student visa or immigration questions must only discuss these with staff in the **International Student Visa Advice** team. These staff are specially trained to advise international students with any queries and are also responsible for providing general support and guidance to international students.

4.6.2 Support available for students

Information for students on the range of support at the University is available via the Current Students webpage (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/>). This acts as a first point of reference and provides a signpost to relevant services and resources. Further information for staff is available on the Student Services webpages (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/studentsservices/>). Faculties and schools may provide additional support and this should be clearly signposted to students.

5 Supervision

5.1 The supervisory process

Supervisors have a fundamental role in supporting their research students throughout the period of their studies. The way in which the supervisory process works depends on the academic discipline and the related research environment, subject to the general requirements set out below, but the University strongly encourages schools to make arrangements for team supervision wherever appropriate because of the associated benefits for students and staff.

Each research student will have one or more supervisors, depending on the policy of their School and the nature of the research project. Co-supervisors should be appointed if a student is conducting their research across schools, in two institutions, or in part in industry.

A range of individuals, in addition to the student's supervisor(s), provide support to students within their school and faculty; students must have access to at least two named individuals from whom they may seek support. Students need to understand in detail the support structure operating in their school and faculty.

5.1.1 *The University's minimum requirements for the supervisory process for all research students are:*

Each research student must have a main supervisor, who has primary responsibility for academic guidance and in whose school the student should normally be registered. In addition, the student must have a second point of academic contact and may have other supervisors as appropriate. All members of the supervisory team must have defined roles and responsibilities; students must be made aware of specific roles and responsibilities within the team.

If a student's research requires working elsewhere (e.g. as part of a collaborative project), the School should ensure that appropriate supervisory arrangements, understood by the student, are in place to cover periods spent away from the University.

Information provided to research students which is of relevance to their supervisors' academic and pastoral responsibilities must be copied to the main supervisor.

5.1.2 *Research students can expect the following minimum input from, and interaction with, their supervisors:*

The normal expectation is that the student will be given the name and contact details of his or her main supervisor before arriving at the University.

The supervisor shares responsibility with the student to develop and maintain an effective working relationship.

The frequency, duration and format of formal meetings between the student and his or her supervisor(s), and the topics such meetings will cover, are agreed between them for the first term at their first meeting, and kept under review thereafter. As a guideline, it is normal for research students and their supervisors to meet to review progress at least once a month.

The student and supervisor should have a shared mutual understanding about the different purposes of informal and formal meetings, especially those that are about formal review of the student's progress. Records of formal meetings between the student and his/her supervisor(s) should be kept, normally by the student.

Supervisors should take the initiative in making the first contact with their research students. The first meeting should normally take place within a week of a student's registration. After the first meeting it becomes a shared responsibility, between student and supervisor(s), to maintain regular and adequate contact, irrespective of the student's location. Where a student has more than one supervisor, the supervisors should meet the student together to decide how they will divide responsibility for advice and to agree arrangements for future meetings.

At the first meeting it is usual to discuss the student's outline research plan, and any sponsorship or other financial arrangements, if these have not been agreed beforehand. It is also an opportunity to discuss any specific support or training needs the student may have and to direct them to appropriate sources of support.

Early in the programme, at their first meeting if possible, the student and the supervisor should agree the nature and timing of any taught components of the student's programme, and discuss the implications of failure to complete them.

Supervisors should ensure that students are made aware of the academic standards expected for the degree for which they are studying and of their responsibilities as set out in Section 4.6 of these Regulations and Code.

Supervisors should comment on their research student's written work, with feedback being given promptly so as not to hold up the student's progress.

Supervisors are responsible for offering guidance to their students on the preparation of their dissertations, up to and including the final stages of drafting, and on corrections required by the examiners. However, the ultimate responsibility for the content of the dissertation and the decision to submit the work rests with the student. Supervisors should make it clear that their comments are advisory.

Supervisors and students should agree a timetable for discussing the draft submission; students are then responsible for ensuring that drafts are submitted within sufficient time to enable the supervisor to comment. Supervisors in turn should provide written comments in good time so as not to jeopardise the timing of the formal submission of the dissertation.

Supervisors should ensure that students have understood the nature and substance of their comments so that, if appropriate, they can be incorporated into the final version of the dissertation.

Responsibility for ensuring that proof-reading is done to the required standard lies with students. If a student is experiencing serious difficulty with the use of English, this should be discussed as early as possible with the student and they should be encouraged to consult staff in the Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies for advice.

Supervisors play an important part in helping a student to make contact with alternative sources of support within the school and in the wider University, for example student advisers, school staff with designated responsibilities for pastoral care of research students, careers advisers and other sources of pastoral advice and support for current students (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/>). Supervisors should also help students to network with others working in their field of research, for example by attending relevant conferences and seeking sources of funding for such events, and submitting papers to conferences and journals.

5.2 Supervisors' knowledge, skills and responsibilities

Given their wide-ranging and important responsibilities, supervisors must have the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide effective support for their research students. This includes an awareness of the needs of different types of students and the academic standards and requirements of different research programmes.

Heads of School must ensure that the supervisors of research students have sufficient time to provide adequate support for each student. In determining overall workloads, Heads of School must take account of the range of responsibilities assigned to individual members of staff.

Experience of supervising taught Masters students during the dissertation stage of their degree can be a helpful background for a new supervisor of research students. Team supervision can also help new supervisors to acquire the necessary skills and expertise for their role.

5.2.1 Responsibilities of Heads of School

It is the responsibility of the Head of School or his or her nominee to ensure that suitable supervisors are appointed, that they have the appropriate knowledge and skills, and that they have time to carry out their supervisory duties. Each supervisory team must satisfy the relevant Quality Assurance Agency requirements.

With regards to the suitability of supervisors, the Head of School (or nominee) shall consider whether there is an actual or potential conflict of interest before appointing main or co-supervisors. A 'conflict of interest' comprises a relationship between a supervisor and a student that would prevent or adversely affect the impartiality of the supervision, such as through personal, family or financial connections. Industrial or other professional supervisors (if involved) shall be included in these considerations.

5.2.2 Individuals being nominated for appointment as the student's main supervisor should:

1. Be a member of academic staff holding an open contract of employment of the University of at least 0.5 FTE³;
2. Expect to remain in a research-active position within the University for the expected duration of the student's studies and be able to provide the necessary guidance and support to their research students;
3. Be reasonably accessible;
4. Have an understanding of University, faculty and school policies and procedures concerning research students and supervisory responsibilities;
5. Have a minimum of three years' experience of research degree supervision and have experience of supervising at least one doctoral student through to successful completion.

Exceptionally a school may appoint an individual who does not satisfy 4 and 5, provided an experienced co-supervisor is also appointed. The Graduate Education Director must approve the arrangement and the main supervisor must comply with any faculty-specific training requirements. In such cases, the experienced co-supervisor will act as mentor to the main supervisor and will also act as the first point of contact for the student for non-academic matters.

³ An open contract of employment carries full employment rights and has no fixed end date. Some staff with proleptic appointments will have open contracts depending on the nature of their individual contracts of employment. For further information see: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/hr/policies/contracts.html>

The Graduate Education Director must be satisfied that the supervisory team can provide an appropriate level of support and guidance to a candidate before confirming the appointment of the supervisor. Where co-supervisors are appointed, one is to be identified as the main supervisor.

Supervision of joint or dual doctoral awards⁴ with staff from elsewhere

Such arrangements are only permitted in cases where the University has a formal agreement in place with the other institution/organisation, in line with the University's *Policy on Joint & Dual Doctoral Awards* at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/edpart/>. In such cases, the main supervisor will be designated in accordance with the contractual obligations agreed with the partner institution/organisation in advance.

If a student is studying for a doctoral award at an affiliated institution, as defined in Ordinance 23, the main supervisor may be a member of staff of that institution with Honorary Academic Status at the University. In such cases an academic member of staff from the University of Bristol will normally be appointed as co-supervisor. However, in exceptional circumstances, a suitably qualified member of staff from the affiliated institution may be appointed as co-supervisor with the permission of the Graduate Education Director.

5.2.3 The following categories of staff may not be the main supervisor of a research degree candidate, but may act as a co-supervisor with the permission of the Graduate Education Director.

- Visiting Professors and Research Fellows, provided that they will be in post for the duration of the student's degree and are able to maintain regular contact with the student.
- Emeritus and retired members of staff, provided that they continue to be research-active and are able to maintain regular contact with the student. Such staff are permitted to act as co-supervisor for continuing students but should not be appointed to supervise new students.
- members of staff who are themselves currently registered as candidates for research degrees.
- members of academic staff who have yet to complete their initial service review.
- members of staff on Academic Pathway 2, levels A or B (for example, Research Associates);
- Honorary and technical staff with relevant expertise and experience.

Schools and faculties should enable new supervisors to have a 'mentor' during their first few years in the role. Mentors must be established supervisors who have experience of supervising one or more research students to successful completion of their degree and who have a good understanding of the relevant University, faculty and school policies and procedures.

Where a student also has an industrial or other professional supervisor, the role of this extra supervisor within the team must be clearly defined. Supervisors working in industry or professional practice must be able to fulfil the University's expectations for the role and should have opportunities to engage in developmental and training activities.

5.2.4 Training of supervisors

All new staff (Senior Lecturer/Lecturer or equivalent) will be required to complete a development session to support and prepare them for doctoral research supervision at Bristol. Existing staff are encouraged to undertake continued professional development.

⁴ See definition on page 8.

5.3 Change of supervisor

5.3.1 *Responsibility of the Head of School*

The Head of School or his or her nominee is responsible for ensuring that students have continuous supervision during their period of registered study. If a supervisor is absent for an extended period, leaves the University, or if there is an irreconcilable breakdown in the supervisory relationship, the Head of School (or nominee) must ensure that adequate supervisory support is maintained, including putting alternative arrangements in place where appropriate.

Where a change of supervisor is required, the Head of School (or nominee) must keep the student informed throughout the process. Replacement supervisors must meet the criteria for appointment in 5.2.2 for main supervisors and in Section 5.2.3 for co-supervisors.

The Head of School (or nominee) must take into account the requirements of any sponsors. Where a student is funded on a studentship attached to a particular supervisor or is on a specific research grant, it may not be possible to change supervisor. There may also be other circumstances where it is not feasible to change a supervisor.

In some circumstances it may not be possible to identify a new supervisor for a student from within the University. If this is the case, the Head of School (or nominee) will explore options with the student.

5.3.2 *Temporary unexpected absence of a supervisor*

Where a supervisor is temporarily absent for an unexpected reason (for example, through illness), the Head of School (or nominee) must ensure that the student continues to receive adequate supervision, which could include a new temporary arrangement for the duration of the absence. Students must be informed of their new first point of contact if it is their main supervisor who is unavailable.

Where the period of unexpected absence of a main supervisor is anticipated to exceed six months, the Head of School (or nominee) will normally appoint a permanent replacement or explore other options with the student.

5.3.3 *Temporary planned absence of a supervisor*

Where a supervisor has a planned temporary absence that prevents him or her from being reasonably accessible, the Head of School (or nominee) must ensure that the student continues to receive adequate supervision. This could include a new temporary arrangement. Students must be informed of their new first point of contact if it is their main supervisor who is unavailable.

5.3.4 *Breakdown in the supervisory relationship*

If the relationship between a student and his or her supervisor(s) starts to break down, the Head of School (or nominee) will make available an alternative and independent source of advice to the student. In cases where the relationship suffers an irreconcilable breakdown, new supervisory arrangements or further options may be considered.

5.3.5 *Requests to change supervisory arrangements*

Supervisory responsibilities may be changed at the request of a student or a supervisor to the Head of School (or nominee), who must take into account the requirements of any sponsors. Normally, any change of supervisor will be by mutual agreement between the student and the University.

5.3.6 *Supervisors who move to other institutions*

When a supervisor moves to another institution, the Head of School (or nominee) will explore the options available to the student. This will take into account any sponsor requirements. It may be possible for co-supervision to continue at a distance, but the main supervisor must always meet the requirements set out in Section 5.2.2. Allocating a replacement supervisor from within the University may be the most appropriate action in these cases.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School (or nominee) to take all reasonable measures to appoint replacement supervisors or to facilitate supervision at a distance. In some circumstances however it may be more appropriate for the student to transfer to the supervisor's new institution.

5.3.7 *Supervisors who leave*

When a supervisor leaves the University but does not move to another institution (for example, through retirement), the Head of School (or nominee) will explore the options available to the student, including whether there is an appropriate replacement supervisor.

It is possible however for retired members of staff to act as a co-supervisor for continuing students, as per Section 5.2.3.

6 Progress and review arrangements

6.1 Student performance and monitoring of progress

The University expects research postgraduates to make good progress in their studies and to complete their research within the normal study period for the award. The progress of students is monitored to ensure that student completion rates remain high and in order to comply with statutory reporting to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

All doctoral students must be monitored in terms of attendance and performance and if, at any time, a student's progress is identified as being unsatisfactory, or the standard of their work is below that which is expected, the Procedure in Annex 3 for dealing with unsatisfactory academic progress must be implemented. The faculty must provide clear guidance on progress review processes and systems. The main supervisor must make the student aware of these requirements.

6.1.1 *Research degree programmes that contain a taught component*

The assessment, monitoring and progression requirements of any taught components that are part of a research degree programme must be clearly set out. The relevant sections of the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html>, apply to the assessment of any taught components.

6.2 Annual progress review

The annual progress review gives students the opportunity to engage in dialogue about their research and explore ideas with other academics. It should provide useful preparation for oral examinations and excellent training in academic discourse.

Disabled students should be offered reasonable adjustments that take into account their disability for the purpose of assessment. Research students should be signposted to Disability Services for a Disability Support Summary, which will make recommendations for reasonable adjustments appropriate for the student in any assessment, such as progression processes, presentations, or the oral examination. Students and staff should contact Disability Services (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/>) for advice about reasonable adjustments to assessment.

Continued registration for a research degree (doctoral and masters) is conditional upon making satisfactory progress. The purpose of the mandatory annual progress review process is to establish that progress is satisfactory and, if not, to ensure that remedial action is taken promptly. Both full-time and part-time research students must be reviewed annually. The expectations for the annual progress of part-time students should be adjusted appropriately to reflect their part-time status.

Annual progress reviews vary from faculty to faculty, but must always involve:

- a written report or piece of work, and completion of a review form by the student;
- an independent assessment of the submitted work and student's progress during the review period;
- and comments from both the student and the main supervisor.

All comments, feedback and recommendations arising from the annual progress review will be evaluated by the relevant Graduate Education Director.

The student will see and comment on the written report on his or her progress.

The normal outcome of the annual progress review is that the student progresses to the next year, either unconditionally or subject to the completion of specific targets.

In addition to these minimum University requirements, there may be subject-specific or programme requirements for satisfactory progress, especially if the student is funded by an external sponsor. A student and his or her main supervisor must discuss a sponsor's additional progress monitoring requirements at an early stage to ensure that these may be met in good time.

The University expects schools to set up a formal review of progress at least once a year, for three main purposes:

1. to ensure that the student is well supported and able to overcome any practical or academic obstacles to progress;
2. to enable the student or supervisor to communicate and explain any concerns about progress since the previous meeting.
3. to encourage the student to reflect upon, and plan for, academic progress alongside his or her own personal and professional development.

6.3 Interruptions and changes to study

6.3.1 Suspension of study

A suspension of study may be granted to students who need to interrupt their studies. This is often because of circumstances largely beyond their control, for example ill-health, family or financial problems, but may also be agreed if the student wishes to take advantage of a specific career opportunity. Periods of suspension must be as short as is necessary to address, or to take advantage of, the situation. Suspensions will not be backdated for more than one month.

Where a student has suspended on health grounds that are related to an existing disability or a new health condition, which is likely to last 12 months or more, the student should be signposted to Disability Services to discuss appropriate support. More broadly, students who have suspended should be encouraged to check the availability of support with individual services as there may be limited access to some areas of Student Services for suspended students.

Students approaching the end of a period of suspension which has been granted for health reasons may be required to produce a letter from a medical practitioner confirming that the student is fit to return to studies. If towards the end of a period of suspension the student is not fit to return to studies, he or she must apply for a further suspension of study before the first one ends.

A period of suspension does not alter the student's maximum period of study (ref Section 4.3.1) but it will be included in the calculation of the maximum completion period (ref Section 4.3.2).

The University's Fitness to Study policy is a point of reference in this area. Fitness to study relates to an individual's capacity to participate fully and satisfactorily as a student, in relation to academic studies and life generally at the University

(<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/act/protected/disability/fitnesstostudy/index.html>).

6.3.2 *Extension of study*

Permission to extend the period of study may be granted in exceptional circumstances, with compelling reasons and support from the student's supervisor and school, **provided application is made well before the period of study is due to end**. Supervisors should therefore review a student's progress no later than four months before they are due to finish, and request an extension, if required, shortly after this review.

An extension will extend the maximum period of study and therefore increases the time taken by the candidate to complete the degree. It will also be included in the calculation of the maximum completion period (ref Section 4.3.2).

An additional fee may be payable during the period of extension of studies.

The Graduate Education Director of the faculty in which the student is registered may approve periods of suspension or extension of study for a maximum of 12 months in total. Any request that takes the total period of suspension or extension of study over 12 months requires the approval of the Academic Director of Graduate Studies (ADGS).

Requests for suspension or extension, made on the appropriate form, should be accompanied by supporting evidence. Such evidence should include medical reports as appropriate, relevant correspondence and a work plan covering the extra time requested. Medical evidence will be treated in confidence.

In all cases the request for extension or suspension should be sent to the Graduate Education Director for the faculty in the first instance. Requests sent on to the ADGS must include a covering letter from the Graduate Education Director, summarising the main points and confirming faculty support.

Any suspension or extension of the period of study of a visa-holding student must be reported to the relevant Faculty Office as soon as it is known, in order to meet the reporting requirements of the UK Government.

Any funding body rules on extensions and suspensions will be additional to those of the University. The student must ensure that, where relevant, the approval of any relevant funding body has been obtained before a suspension or extension is granted by the University.

6.3.3 *Changes in mode of attendance*

Students may request to change their mode of attendance from full-time to part-time, or vice versa. Possible reasons for such a request could include changes in a student's personal or employment circumstances. Health reasons however should not be considered unless medical evidence indicates that the change would be of assistance to the student. A suspension, as described in Section 6.3.1, would generally be more appropriate for ill-health.

A student undertaking a research degree programme can change his or her mode of attendance a maximum of twice during the programme. The faculty Graduate Education Director will consider requests beyond this maximum if there are exceptional circumstances.

A Research Council or other funding body would need to be informed of, and may need to give approval for, changes in the mode of attendance for a sponsored student. The University's

regulation on changes in mode of attendance is necessarily subordinated to the sponsor's conditions in those cases.

It is not possible for international students who are studying in the UK on a Tier 4 student visa to study part-time and they must therefore be registered on a full-time degree.

7 Development of research and other skills

The University recognises the importance of the development of the research and generic skills of postgraduate research students, both in order to increase their effectiveness as researchers during their studies and to underpin their subsequent careers. Training in research skills is the cornerstone of a research student's development, while transferable skills are widely recognised as essential in most forms of employment, including academia.

Faculties and schools may have different needs and therefore different approaches to analysing the training needs of a research student, but both the student and his or her supervisor(s) will normally be involved. Supervisors have a fundamental role in encouraging their students to take up training and skills development opportunities and to apply the skills they have gained in their research work.

Training needs should be assessed at the beginning of study and reassessed at regular intervals during the research student's programme, including as part of the Annual Progress Review. Research students should consider using the University's Skills Training and Review (STaR) system to map and plan their personal and professional development activities.

Faculties and schools offer appropriate skills development programmes for their disciplines. Research skills and techniques depend on the student's research area, and this training is best delivered at a local level, with the student's supervisor playing a key role.

There are many opportunities for research students to attend skills development training that supports the successful completion of their programme. Details of the central Personal and Professional Development programme can be found at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/doctors-college/ppd/>.

7.1 The University's minimum requirements in respect of skills development are:

All research students will have access to training and development in research skills and techniques, normally provided by schools and faculties, and in generic skills through the University's Personal and Professional Development Programme.

From the start of a research degree programme onwards, the supervisor(s) and student should regularly review the student's training needs to identify relevant and appropriate opportunities, which may be within or external to the University.

Where a funding body has required specific training to be undertaken, the school, supervisor and student have responsibility, in accordance with the terms of the funding agreement, for ensuring that these requirements are met in a timely manner.

8 Feedback mechanisms

Students have a variety of opportunities for giving feedback on their academic programme and any other aspect of their experience.

All schools must have in place student/staff liaison committees or equivalent, on which research students should be represented. There may also be a separate committee for research students or for postgraduates in general.

Students are also invited to provide individual written feedback through questionnaires, as individuals. Collective feedback is often provided, either at school or faculty level, through forums involving research students and staff.

8.1 As a minimum, research postgraduates must be able to provide feedback on their experience through the following mechanisms:

At University level: through student representatives on Senate, Education Committee and University Graduate Studies Committee, and the opportunity to participate in regular surveys of postgraduate research students and student forums.

At faculty level: through student representative membership at appropriate bodies (eg: Faculty Assembly, Faculty Board); through contributing to forums enabling collective feedback about research student experiences; providing feedback on their experiences to members of Faculty Quality Enhancement Teams.

At school level: through representative membership of student/staff liaison committees and the opportunity to express views through questionnaires and discussions with supervisors and other members of academic staff.

9 Assessment

9.1 The assessment process

The purpose of the assessment process is to ascertain that candidates have reached the standard required by the criteria for the award set out in Annex 7 and in the regulations for the specific degree. Assessment must be operated fairly and consistently to ensure that the candidate has optimum opportunities to show his/her knowledge of the research topic and of the wider research field through the dissertation and the individual oral examination.

The assessment process set out here relates to the submission of the dissertation and the subsequent oral examination. Examiners make a preliminary assessment of the dissertation and conduct the oral examination. A recommendation from the examiners is then made to the Research Degrees Examination Board (RDEB), which makes the decisions about the award of research degrees. It is important that students, supervisors and examiners understand that results recommended by examiners are provisional until approved by the RDEB. The RDEB may accept or revise the examiners' recommendation.

The Research Degrees Examination Board (RDEB) makes the decisions about the award of research degrees to assure consistency of academic standards across all faculties. Examiners may inform the candidate of their recommendation after the oral examination but it must be made clear that the final decision rests with the RDEB, which may decide on a different result.

Some research degrees have a taught component which is assessed separately from the dissertation. Further information is available in the regulations for the specific degree (Annexes 1 and 2) and in the programme specifications for the degree (available on the University website at: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/unitprogcat/AboutProgrammes.jsa>).

9.2 Submission of the dissertation

Once a dissertation has been submitted, it is not permissible to make any alterations prior to the oral examination unless this is required under the procedure for dealing with plagiarism as set out in Section 9.2.4 and Annex 8.

9.2.1 Content and format of the dissertation

The dissertation shall be written in English, except for candidates in Modern Languages, who may submit their dissertations in the language of the culture studied. In all other cases, permission to use another language must be granted by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) at the request of the relevant Graduate Education Director. Whenever a dissertation is submitted in a language other than English, it must include an extended summary (approximately 5,000 words for a PhD dissertation) in English.

The dissertation must include a signed declaration stating how far the work contained in the dissertation is the candidate's own work and how far it has been conducted in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others.

Guidance on the format of the dissertation, and an example of the declaration which must be included, are available at Annex 4.

A candidate must not submit as his/her dissertation work which s/he has already been submitted for an academic award of the University of Bristol or of any other degree awarding body.

The dissertation must not exceed the maximum word count stated in the specific regulations for the degree. Unnecessary length of a dissertation may be to a candidate's disadvantage.

9.2.2 *Timing of submission*

The dissertation can be submitted at any time between three months before the end of the minimum period of study and the end of the maximum period of study (unless stated otherwise in the regulations for the specific degree). It must be submitted within the maximum period of study.

A candidate whose period of study has been extended must submit his/her dissertation by the end of the extended maximum period of study.

Dissertations submitted after the end of the maximum period of study (taking into account any approved period of suspension or extension) will not be examined.

The minimum and maximum periods of study for the degree are listed in Section 4.3 (Period of study) of these Regulations and Code. If a suspension or extension is granted this will extend the period of study (see Section 6.3).

The candidate should prepare a detailed timetable for final preparation and submission of the dissertation, in consultation with his or her supervisor(s), at least six months before the end of the period of study.

As set out in Section 5.1.2, responsibility for the content of the dissertation and the decision to submit the work rests with the candidate. Comments from supervisors in this process are advisory.

Any submissions made more than three months before the end of the minimum period of study require prior approval by the relevant Graduate Education Director. Early submission will not affect liability for tuition fees.

9.2.3 *Method of submission*

The candidate must submit an electronic copy of his or her dissertation for text checking in accordance with the procedure set out in Section 9.2.4.

The candidate must also submit two hard copies of his or her dissertation, in temporary bindings, to the Examinations Office.

9.2.4 *Checking for plagiarism*

Plagiarism is claiming the work of others, intentionally or by omission, as one's own. If a candidate re-uses his or her own work from an earlier award, assignment or publication without acknowledgement this is classified as self-plagiarism. In order to avoid this issue research students are recommended to follow the guidance below:

- a) It is NOT permitted to submit the same work for two separate awards, whether the awards are both at the University of Bristol and/or elsewhere. If a candidate wishes to include, in whole or in part, work that has previously been submitted at the University of Bristol or elsewhere, for an award for which they are currently registered, then it is essential that this is clearly cited and referenced correctly with the previous award identified. It is important

that candidates realise that Higher Education Institutions cannot award credit multiple times for the same piece of work so it is recommended that the inclusion of previously submitted work is only done sparingly and following discussion and guidance from the supervisory team.

- b) Research students are strongly encouraged to publish their work, including prior to submission and examination. However, it is essential that they include appropriate referencing of such published work in their dissertation. A summary of authors' contributions to any publications resulting from the dissertation should be included within the dissertation to provide clarity on each author's contribution.
- c) Individual faculties and schools may have additional policies and guidelines regarding the inclusion of published work in a thesis. Students should consult their supervisor(s) to determine if there are any additional considerations that pertain to them.

The University reserves the right to use all legitimate means at its disposal to detect instances of plagiarism. Submitted work is therefore checked in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex 8. Plagiarism may also be detected by examiners as part of the examination process.

If plagiarism is detected through electronic text checking or by the examiners, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex 8.

9.2.5 *Deferred access to the dissertation*

At any time before submission, the candidate may request deferred access to his/her dissertation for a period of up to five years. This could be due, for example, to commercial or individual confidentiality, or to prepare the work for publication. All requests to defer access must specify the reason and include a recommendation by the faculty's Graduate Education Director. Details of the procedure to be followed, and the corresponding application form, are available on the University's Examinations Office website, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>

Even if a request for deferment is granted, copies of the final form of the dissertation must still be submitted as described in Section 9.6.2 of these Regulations and Code.

9.3 Examiners

9.3.1 *Role of examiners*

The competence and independence of examiners is of fundamental importance to the integrity of the assessment process and in maintaining the academic standards of the University's research degrees.

In keeping with the importance that the University attaches to oral examinations being conducted fairly and consistently, examiners are invited to comment on the examination process in confidence to the Research Degrees Examination Board. There is also a section on the Examiners' Joint Report Form for the internal examiner to complete on the conduct of the examination unless there is an Independent Chair. If an Independent Chair has been appointed, he or she will complete a separate report on the conduct of the examination.

The examiners are jointly responsible for ensuring that the requirements for the assessment process in these Regulations and Code and in the regulations for the degree are followed.

Examiners should treat the candidate's work with strict confidence.

External examiner

The main function of the external examiner is to assure that the academic standards of the research degrees awarded by the University are comparable with those at similar institutions. The external examiner normally takes the lead in the discussion of the candidate's work during the oral examination.

Internal examiner

The internal examiner participates fully in the examination process. He or she also acts as the examination co-ordinator (unless there is an Independent Chair), including:

- making arrangements for the oral examination in consultation with the Head of School;
- informing the candidate, the supervisor, any other individuals involved in the oral examination, and the Examinations Office of the time and place of the oral examination;
- giving the candidate at least ten days' notice in writing;
- ensuring, as required, that the candidate receives the examiners' list of suggested corrections; and
- ensuring that examiners' reports are submitted to the Head of School in accordance with the University's requirements.

Independent Chair

An Independent Chair, who would also act as the examination co-ordinator, will be appointed:

- a) where there are two external examiners and no internal examiner;
- b) where the internal examiner is inexperienced; or
- c) where the faculty Graduate Education Director considers that the presence of an experienced academic would assist in ensuring that the examination is fair and conducted in accordance with the University's regulations for the award being examined.

The faculty Graduate Education Director will ensure that the candidate is aware that an Independent Chair will be appointed.

To be appointed, the Independent Chair must:

- a) be an academic member of staff at the University of Bristol;
- b) have a good understanding of the University's procedures and regulations for the award being examined; and
- c) have extensive experience of oral examinations as an examiner.

The Independent Chair must not have had any prior involvement with the project or with the candidate.

An Independent Chair is not expected to read the dissertation in preparation for the examination. He or she must however receive copies of the examiners' preliminary reports and must preside

over discussions concerning issues raised in those reports and the plans for conducting the oral examination.

An Independent Chair oversees the oral examination and the deliberations of the examiners in reaching their recommendation. In the case of disagreement between the examiners, the Chair is confined to advising the examiners on their options and should use his or her best endeavours to assist the examiners in reaching agreement. The Chair does not have a casting vote.

The Independent Chair's responsibility normally includes the administrative duties of the internal examiner. In examinations where there is no internal examiner, the candidate may make a request for clarification of corrections to the Independent Chair who is permitted to contact the examiners once for this purpose. The Independent Chair must also ensure that corrections are approved when there is no internal examiner.

The Independent Chair must complete a report after the oral examination to confirm that it was conducted in accordance with the University's regulations for the award being examined.

9.3.2 *Selection of examiners*

Two or more examiners will be appointed, at least one being external to, and independent of, the University, and one normally being a member of the academic staff of the University.

Internal examiners will normally be a non-probationary member of academic staff at the University of Bristol holding an open contract of employment of at least 0.5FTE. Exceptionally, an Honorary or Emeritus member of staff who meets the selection criteria can be an internal examiner, but this would usually be with the appointment of an Independent Chair to ensure that the examination is conducted in accordance with the University's regulations for the award being examined. Honorary and Emeritus staff cannot be external examiners.

Under specific circumstances, e.g. where required by the nature of the research undertaken or the nature of the award, a second external examiner may be appointed.

Where the candidate is a member of staff of the University, two external examiners will be appointed, unless approval has been obtained from the faculty Graduate Education Director to appoint an external and an internal examiner. The Graduate Education Director will determine whether there are any potential conflicts of interest or any other reason that could undermine the impartiality of the internal examiner before granting approval. This consideration will include candidates who may become members of staff prior to the award of the degree.

In the event that there is no internal examiner, a member of the academic staff of the University, independent of the candidate, the supervisor and the project, must be appointed to act as the Independent Chair for the examination. In such cases, the Independent Chair will participate in the oral examination only insofar as is needed to advise the external examiners on the University's regulations for the award being examined.

An Independent Chair would also be appointed if an internal examiner is inexperienced or if the faculty Graduate Education Director considers that the presence of an experienced academic would assist in the examination process.

Examiners for research degree candidates are nominated by the candidate's school and approved by the faculty Graduate Education Director. Both the school and the GED must be assured of the competence and independence of the examiners selected.

During the preparation of the dissertation, the candidate and his or her supervisor(s) should discuss possible external and internal examiners. The main supervisor should suggest names of examiners to the Head of School no later than **four weeks** before the intended submission date, using the form available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>.

The Head of School has overall responsibility for the nomination and appointment of appropriate examiners.

The criteria to be used when selecting external and internal examiners for research degrees are:

- the external examiner has the required expertise in the candidate's subject area;
- the examiners between them (including the Independent Chair if appointed) have adequate experience of examining research degrees for the same type of programme as that leading to the candidate's intended award;
- the internal examiner (or the Independent Chair if appointed) understands the requirements of the University's regulations that apply to this award;
- none of the examiners (or the Independent Chair if appointed) has any connection with the candidate, the research project or the supervisor(s) or, in the case of external examiners, with the University, which might impair their ability to make a fair and impartial assessment of the candidate's work;
- Faculties have discretion in the selection of external examiners from other institutions that are part of collaborative partnerships or centres with the University as long as there are no connections to the student, project, supervisor, University or the collaborative partnership/centre that might impair, or call into question, the fair and impartial assessment of the candidate's work;
- where the proposed internal examiner has participated in an annual progress review for the candidate, the faculty Graduate Education Director must be satisfied that the level of involvement with the research project has not impaired independence of judgement;
- examiners are normally expected to hold a research degree at the level being examined or have other relevant expertise;
- a minimum period of five years must have elapsed before anybody who has held a post at the University may be nominated as an external examiner.

To ensure that familiarity does not prejudice objective judgement, external examiners must not be appointed more than twice a year by the University. Any exceptions to this limit must be agreed by the faculty Graduate Education Director.

It is important to ensure that there are no reciprocal arrangements with other institutions to provide examiners.

9.4 The Oral Examination

9.4.1 *The requirement for an oral examination*

Assessment of all research degrees includes an individual oral examination, unless permission for exemption has been granted by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students).

The oral examination is normally conducted within four months of submission of the dissertation.

9.4.2 *The role of the oral examination*

Examiners should discuss with the candidate the strengths as well as any weaknesses of the candidate's work. The oral examination enables the examiners to:

- question the candidate on the substance of the work submitted;
- assess the ability of the candidate to present and defend intellectual arguments;
- assess the candidate's general knowledge and understanding of the discipline and of the relevant literature; and
- verify that the work submitted is the candidate's own and assess the extent of any collaboration.

9.4.3 *Preparation*

The candidate should be provided with suitable opportunities to practise for the oral examination by his or her school through, for example, presenting and being questioned about his or her research.

Examiners (and the Independent Chair if appointed) will normally meet before the start of the oral examination to discuss the issues identified in their preliminary reports and to plan how they will conduct the oral examination (for further information about examiners' preliminary reports see Section 9.5.1). Examiners may write on the examined work (e.g. to indicate minor errors).

The candidate, the candidate's supervisor(s), the candidate's Head of School and the examiners should avoid any action in the period leading up to the examination which might impair the ability of the examiners to make an impartial assessment of the candidate's work.

None of the examiners should be asked to comment on drafts of the candidate's work prior to the examination.

Candidates must not contact the external examiner for any reason, and may contact the internal examiner (or the Independent Chair if appointed) with regard to their examination only to discuss the practical arrangements.

Examiners should not meet the candidate's supervisor(s) prior to the examination.

The candidate's supervisor(s) must not contact the external examiner on any matter relating to the examination, and may contact the internal examiner (or the Independent Chair if appointed) only in respect of any special arrangements required for the oral examination.

9.4.4 *Observers*

With the agreement of the candidate and the Head of School, the examiners may invite the candidate's supervisor(s), or other persons (such as the candidate's industrial supervisor in the case of a collaborative project), to attend the examination as observers. Any observers would not see the preliminary reports and would withdraw before the examiners begin to consider their recommendations. The candidate may ask the faculty Graduate Education Director for permission, with the external examiner's consent, for the candidate's supervisor and/or any other observer to attend the oral examination. There is a clear distinction between an independent observer, as described in this section, and an Independent Chair as set out in Section 9.3.1.

Supervisors or other observers may not contribute to discussion during the oral examination, and must withdraw before the examiners begin to consider their recommendations.

9.4.5 *Reasonable adjustments to the assessment of research students with disabilities*

Disabled students should be offered reasonable adjustments that take into account their disability for the purpose of assessment. Research students should be signposted to Disability Services for a Disability Support Summary, which will make recommendations for reasonable adjustments appropriate for the student in any assessment, such as progression processes, presentations, or the oral examination. Students and staff should contact Disability Services (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/>) for advice about reasonable adjustments to assessment.

9.4.6 *Extenuating circumstances*

Extenuating circumstances are circumstances external to study within the University that a student believes may affect their performance in assessment.

Candidates, their supervisors and the Head of School share the responsibility for making examiners (and the Independent Chair if appointed) aware of any extenuating circumstances that need to be taken into consideration during the conduct of the oral examination. Where appropriate, a written statement supported by relevant evidence should be provided, via the Examinations Office, before the dissertation is submitted.

Any extenuating circumstances that might affect the candidate's performance in the oral examination should be brought to the attention of the internal examiner (or the Independent Chair if appointed) as early as possible, normally not later than one month before the oral examination. It is however recognised that in some cases extenuating circumstances may emerge closer to the examination. Examiners will make appropriate adjustments to the conduct of the examination, seeking specialist advice where required. Relevant information and guidance is available on the University's Equality and Diversity website, <https://www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/>.

9.4.7 *Special arrangements*

The faculty Graduate Education Director can, with the agreement of the candidate, approve special arrangements for conducting the oral examination, such as recording it. Requests, with appropriate justification, should be addressed to the faculty Graduate Education Director. Schools may seek agreement from the faculty Graduate Education Director for the regular use of such arrangements.

All participants must be informed in advance if the intention is to record an oral examination, and any objections must be considered by the faculty Graduate Education Director. At the oral examination, all participants must be notified that recording will take place prior to the start of the recording. The recording must stop at the formal close of the oral examination.

Files of recordings should be stored on secure University servers with access limited only to those who have a need to access the recordings. The University's Information Handling Policy (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/infosec/documents/isp-07.pdf>) must be complied with at all times. Recordings must be retained for a reasonable period after the oral examination, and must be securely disposed of at the end of the retention period.

9.4.8 Location

The oral examination with the candidate and all of the examiners normally takes place at the University of Bristol, but may take place elsewhere with the agreement of the examiners and the candidate and with permission from the relevant Graduate Education Director. All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that the candidate is not disadvantaged when the oral examination is held away from the University of Bristol. An examination held elsewhere will not be allowed in any cases where the supervisor or the School PGR Director (or equivalent) feels that the candidate may be placed at a disadvantage.

In exceptional circumstances, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) may grant permission for either the candidate or an external examiner to participate remotely in the oral examination by video link. Where it is intended for the candidate or an external examiner to participate remotely by video link, the *Guidelines on the Conduct of Remote Oral Examinations by Video Link for Research Degrees* (Annex 5) must be followed.

9.4.9 Conduct of the oral examination

All participants in the oral examination are expected to behave with respect, courtesy and academic integrity towards those present. The oral examination should be conducted in an appropriate and professional manner.

The oral examination must be conducted in English. In the case of a candidate in Modern Languages who has submitted a dissertation in a language other than English, the oral examination must be conducted in English, unless the relevant faculty Graduate Education Director has agreed a request from the candidate and the examiners to conduct the oral examination in the language of the culture studied.

The examiners are jointly responsible for ensuring that the oral examination is performed fairly, taking account of any special circumstances of which they have been made aware.

Examiners should return the examined dissertation or published work to the candidate as soon as possible after the end of the examination.

9.5 Assessment Outcomes

9.5.1 Examiners' reports

Prior to the oral examination, the examiners each complete an independent preliminary report. A joint report is then completed after the oral examination. Examiners' report forms are available from the University's Examinations Office website, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>.

Reports should, where appropriate, include discussion of the:

- (a) purpose of the research and the overall approach taken;
- (b) candidate's application of research methods;
- (c) candidate's review of the literature;
- (d) extent of any collaboration;
- (e) candidate's contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the subject represented;
- (f) suitability for publication of the work reported;
- (g) literary form and quality of presentation of the work submitted, and the inferences that can be drawn about the candidate's ability to present and defend intellectual arguments in writing;
- (h) candidate's general knowledge of the subject;
- (i) candidate's performance in the oral examination, and the inferences that can be drawn about the candidate's ability to present and defend intellectual arguments verbally.

Each examiner must complete an independent preliminary report on the dissertation (or published work) before the oral examination, noting areas that should be explored with the candidate during the examination. Examiners must exchange their preliminary reports in advance of the oral examination.

The examiners' judgement is based both on the work presented by the candidate and on his or her performance in the oral examination. Examiners should refer to the criteria for research degrees set out in Annex 7 of these Regulations and Code and in the regulations for the degree in question to ascertain the standard required.

If an Independent Chair has been appointed, he or she must complete a report on the conduct of the examination. Similar information is collected from the internal examiner on the Examiners' Joint Final Report for examinations where there is no Independent Chair.

9.5.2 *Examiner Recommendations*

If the examiners have agreed on a recommendation they may make this known to the candidate, but they must make it clear that the final decision rests with the RDEB, which may arrive at a different verdict.

After the oral examination, the examiners must complete and sign a joint report which sets out clearly their recommendation with its supporting rationale. Examiners may recommend:

- A that the degree sought be awarded unconditionally
- B that the degree sought be awarded subject to the correction of minor errors to the satisfaction of the internal examiner. In examinations where there is no internal examiner, the Independent Chair must ensure that minor corrections are approved by an external examiner or by a University of Bristol academic nominated by the School.
- C that the degree sought be awarded once errors or omissions of substance have been corrected to the satisfaction of the examiners
- D that the degree sought not be awarded but that the candidate be permitted to re-submit a revised form of the dissertation or published work for examination
- E (*doctoral candidates only*) that the relevant degree of Master by research be awarded unconditionally

- F *(doctoral candidates only)*
that the relevant degree of Master by research be awarded, subject to the correction of minor errors to the satisfaction of the internal examiner. In examinations where there is no internal examiner, the Independent Chair must ensure that minor corrections are approved by an external examiner or by a University of Bristol academic nominated by the School.
- G *(doctoral candidates only)*
that no degree be awarded but that the candidate be permitted to re-submit a revised form of the dissertation or published work for examination for the relevant degree of Master by research
- H that no degree be awarded and permission be not granted to re-submit the dissertation or published work

Award of the degree of Master by research (doctoral candidates only)

A Masters degree is not to be awarded merely because the dissertation has failed to reach the requirements for the award of a doctoral level degree. Examiners should only recommend the award of a Masters degree when the dissertation and oral exam meet the criteria for a Masters degree by research as specified in Annex 7.

If the conclusions of the examiners' joint report differ significantly from those of any of the preliminary reports, the examiners should justify the changes in their joint report.

If, exceptionally, the examiners cannot agree on a joint report after the oral examination, they should submit separate final reports.

9.5.3 Corrections

The candidate should receive written guidance on any corrections as soon as possible after the oral examination. He/she may meet with the internal examiner on one occasion, or may, alternatively, seek one e-mail response from the internal examiner, to clarify the changes required by the examiners. In cases where there is no internal examiner, the candidate may make a request for clarification of corrections to the Independent Chair who is permitted to contact the examiners once for this purpose. Any further clarification and advice should be sought from the candidate's supervisor(s).

The time allowed for correction of errors of substance or for resubmission is irrespective of whether the candidate was previously registered as a full-time or part-time student. If, in exceptional circumstances, a candidate requires an extension of the agreed period, he/she must make an application in writing to the RDEB, via the Examinations Office, indicating his/her reasons and providing supporting evidence if appropriate, and stating a date by which the corrections will be made or the dissertation resubmitted.

Minor errors

Annex 6 sets out guidance on what constitutes minor errors in a dissertation. Examiners should make clear what, if any, corrections are required. Minor corrections should be completed within **28 days** of notification by the Research Degrees Examination Board at which the examiners' reports are considered (RDEB meeting dates can be found at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/rdeb/>). If such corrections are incomplete, the candidate will be entitled to attend a degree congregation, but the degree certificate will be withheld until written confirmation by the internal examiner that the corrections have been made is received by

the Examinations Office. In cases where there is no internal examiner, the Independent Chair must ensure that minor corrections are approved by an external examiner or by a University of Bristol academic nominated by the School.

Where there are numerous instances of errors that are individually minor but when taken together are deemed by the examiners to form a significant undertaking for the candidate to correct, a recommendation of errors of substance may be made.

Errors of substance

If substantial errors or omissions are to be corrected, examiners must provide clear written guidance for the candidate as soon as possible after the oral examination. A copy of the guidance must be attached to the examiners' final report.

Candidates are not permitted to contact the external examiner, but may contact the internal examiner once for clarification of the revisions required. In cases where there is no internal examiner, candidates may make a request for clarification of corrections to the Independent Chair who is permitted to contact the examiners once for this purpose. The time permitted for corrections for all candidates is normally six months from the date of the meeting of the RDEB at which the decision is made. In exceptional circumstances an extension beyond this period may be granted by the RDEB. A dissertation corrected for errors of substance will not be accepted if it is submitted after the time permitted, in which case candidature for the degree will lapse.

The internal examiner should inform the Examinations Office, in writing, of the satisfactory completion of the correction of errors of substance to the satisfaction of both examiners. In cases where there is no internal examiner, the Independent Chair must ensure that corrections are approved by the external examiners.

9.5.4 Resubmission

If a candidate is required to resubmit his/her work for re-examination, examiners must provide clear and comprehensive written guidance for the candidate. Apart from contacting the internal examiner, once only, for clarification of the revisions required, the candidate may not contact the examiners for any reason in connection with the examination. In cases where there is no internal examiner, candidates may make a request for clarification of the revisions required to the Independent Chair who is permitted to contact the examiners once for this purpose.

Supervisors will provide continued guidance to candidates who have to resubmit. The level of support will be determined by the nature and extent of the work required by the examiners.

Resubmission can take place once only. The maximum time permitted for resubmission for all candidates is normally 12 months from the date of the meeting of the RDEB at which the decision is made. An extension beyond this period may be granted by the RDEB only in exceptional circumstances. A revised dissertation will not be accepted if submitted after the time permitted, in which case candidature for the degree will lapse.

To resubmit, the candidate must submit an electronic copy for checking and provide two copies of his/her revised work to the Examinations Office (see Section 9.2.3) within the period specified by the RDEB, and pay the resubmission fee. Unless determined otherwise by the RDEB, the original examiners will be asked to undertake a full re-examination, normally including a further oral examination.

If, once the examiners have read the resubmitted work, they are agreed that no purpose would be served by holding a further oral examination, and that the work is worthy of the award of the degree for which the work has been submitted (with or without correction of minor errors), then they do have the discretion to waive the second oral examination. The examiners' reports should include an explanation of why the examiners felt that a further oral examination was unnecessary.

The examiners should provide a complete new set of examiners' reports to RDEB. This will include a report from the Independent Chair (if appointed). External examiners will be paid a re-examination fee.

9.5.5 *The procedure following the oral examination*

Examiners' preliminary and joint reports are confidential until they have been considered by the RDEB. Reports must not be shared with the candidate or supervisor(s) prior to RDEB.

After consideration by RDEB, the reports are routinely sent to the candidate (and supervisor) where there are errors of substance or a requirement to resubmit, or if the student is to be awarded a lower degree than the one for which he or she was submitted. In other circumstances, the reports are available on request. The report from the Independent Chair (if appointed) on the conduct of the examination is also available on request.

The internal examiner (or the Independent Chair if appointed) should forward all examiners' reports, including the pre-oral examination preliminary reports, to the Head of School (or an alternative senior member of the school's academic staff if the Head of School is the candidate's supervisor or internal examiner) for countersigning. The Head of School (or nominee) should then forward the signed reports to the Examinations Office. The report from the Independent Chair (if appointed) on the conduct of the examination should be included with the reports.

Where the research degree includes a taught element, the Examinations Office attaches the report on this element to the examiners' reports for consideration by the RDEB.

The approval process by RDEB is set out in Section 9.6.

Reports should be sent to the Examinations Office to arrive within **14** days of the date of the oral examination.

9.6 Results

9.6.1 *Approval of recommendations*

The Examiners' recommendation is provisional until approved by the RDEB. The RDEB has the authority to agree, alter or reject the result recommended by the examiners.

The examiners' independent preliminary reports, their joint report and, where relevant, the report on the taught element of the degree must be sufficient to enable the RDEB to assess the scope and significance of the work submitted by the candidate and to determine whether the candidate satisfies the University's criteria for the award of the research degree. The RDEB also receives the report from the Independent Chair (if appointed) on the conduct of the examination.

The examiners' reports will be considered at the next practicable RDEB held after their receipt. Reports received less than two weeks before the date of the Board will not normally be considered

until the following meeting. Dates of meetings of the RDEB and deadlines for receipt of reports are listed on the University's Examinations Office website, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>

The result of their examination will be sent to candidates by email and post normally within two weeks of the RDEB's decision.

9.6.2 *Requirements for submission of the definitive dissertation or published work*

Candidates must submit the final copy of the dissertation in hard-bound printed form. Guidance on the format of the dissertation and on the binding of hard-bound copies is available in Annex 4.

Within 28 days of the date of award of the degree by the Board, a successful candidate should submit to the Examinations Office:

- (a) a complete hard-bound copy of the dissertation or published work and commentary, including all corrections required by the examiners, which will be deposited in the University Library.
- (b) a hard-bound copy of the dissertation or published work and commentary for his/her school (the candidate may arrange to submit this directly to the school office).
- (c) a good quality copy of the title page and abstract.
- (d) completed agreement and declaration forms (available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>).

Degree certificates are made available after degree ceremonies. The degree certificate will be withheld until the candidate has complied with the requirements for submission of the definitive form of the dissertation or published work and commentary as set out above.

It may be possible to make an electronic deposition if a pilot project is run by the University. Further information will be supplied if this is the case.

10 Student appeals and complaints

10.1 Appeals

A postgraduate research student may appeal against the decision of a Dean to terminate or change their registration or a decision of the Research Degrees Examination Board in respect of a decision relating to the award of a research degree.

10.2 Academic appeal procedure for postgraduate research students

The procedure governing appeals against a decision made by a Dean relating to termination or change of registration or of a decision made by the Research Degrees Examination Board relating to the award of a research degree is set out in the Examination Regulations Section 11, which can be found at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html>.

No degree may be conferred while an appeal is outstanding.

10.3 Student Complaints

The student complaints procedure is set out in the University's Rules and Regulations for Students, available on the University's website at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs>.

Schools should ensure that all students are made aware of how they may raise an individual or collective concern and how to make a formal complaint. Students also need to be advised where they may obtain confidential advice on academic and other issues.

As concerns raised at an early stage are more likely to be resolved quickly and effectively students are encouraged to raise any issue that concerns them at the earliest opportunity, initially informally with the appropriate person, who will in many cases be their supervisor(s). If a student is unable to discuss the issue with their supervisor(s), they should approach the school's nominated person in charge of postgraduate research programmes or the Head of School. Problems that cannot be resolved within the school should be referred to the faculty's Graduate Education Director.

Collective issues can be raised via the school and faculty student representative systems.

10.4 Useful sources of information

There is a wide range of sources of help and advice that students can turn to. Detailed information is provided on the Current Student webpages <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/services/>. The Students' Union "Just Ask" team offers a range of welfare advice and support.

10.5 Monitoring of complaints and appeals

The Student Complaints Officer presents an annual report on appeals under these regulations to Senate, and University Council. This report is also considered by the Student Affairs sub-committee of Council. The University Graduate Studies Committee, which is a sub-committee of Education Committee, is also charged with monitoring complaints and appeals made by research students annually and making appropriate recommendations to Education Committee.

The Office of the Independent adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) is an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. The OIA will only consider cases when the University's internal procedures have been exhausted. The OIA will not intervene in matters which turn purely on academic judgement.

Regulations for specific doctoral degrees

Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* ("the Regulations and Code") apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

The relevant sections of the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes*, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html> will apply to the assessment of any taught components of these degrees.

Candidature for the degree of PhD shall either be by dissertation or by published work.

1. Candidature by dissertation

1.1 Qualification for admission

Candidates should refer to the general statement of admissions requirements contained in Section 4 of the Regulations and Code.

1.2 Qualification for the award

A candidate qualifies for the PhD by:

- (a) pursuing research for a period as specified in 1.3 below;
- (b) submitting a dissertation embodying the results of this research;
- (c) passing an oral examination on the dissertation conducted by examiners appointed by the University;
- (d) satisfying any formal requirements set by the faculty or a sponsor for a curriculum of advanced study, or for satisfactory performance in any other prescribed work, during the period of PhD registration. Such requirements will be specified before admission.

1.3 Period of study

The normal minimum period of study is three years full-time or six years part-time.

The normal maximum period of study is four years full-time or seven years part-time.

Full-time PhD students who are funded by an official sponsor for longer than the normal minimum period may be granted, prior to registration, an extension to their period of study of up to twelve months. Requests for such an extension may only be made by the candidate's Head of School and can only be granted by the Graduate Education Director of the faculty in which the candidate is registered.⁵

All other suspensions of study and extensions of period of study should take place as set out in Section 6.3 of the Regulations and Code.

1.4 Submission of dissertation

A candidate may submit his or her dissertation up to three months before the end of the minimum period of study. Any submission earlier than that requires prior approval by the Graduate Education Director of the faculty in which the candidate is registered.

Early submission will not affect tuition fee liability.

⁵ The offer letter should clearly set out the period of study. Additionally, some funding bodies have rules regarding length of study which may influence decisions.

The dissertation must normally be submitted for examination by the end of the maximum period of study. A candidate whose period of study has been extended must submit his or her dissertation by the end of the extended maximum period of study.

1.5 Length of dissertation

Dissertations should not normally exceed 80,000 words, excluding references, appendices and lists of contents. Faculty-specific guidelines on references are available. Unnecessary length of a dissertation may be to a candidate's disadvantage.

1.6 Transfer of registration

The PhD programme may include opportunities for candidates to transfer registration to an appropriate Masters level award, as permitted by faculty regulations.

1.7 Exit awards from PhDs with a taught component

Where a PhD programme includes an integrated taught component, a candidate may be eligible for a taught exit award if they choose to leave before completing the doctoral programme, fail to satisfy the examiners in the research component, or if a student's registration is changed to that of an alternative degree by a Registration Review Panel (see Annex 3). In such cases, a candidate may be recommended for the award of a Masters, a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate, provided they have satisfied the requirements on total credits and the minimum number of credits required at the highest level, in accordance with the University's Credit Framework.

Candidates must have:

- a) For the award of a taught Masters, 180 credit points with at least 150 credit points at level 7;
- b) For the award of a PG Diploma, 120 credit points with at least 90 credit points at level 7;
- c) For the award of a PG Certificate, 60 credit points with at least 40 credit points at level 7.

2. Candidature by published work

2.1 Criteria for candidature by published work

A PhD by published work must be of an equivalent standard to a PhD by dissertation. A candidate's published work must therefore:

- a) relate in a coherent way to the field of knowledge and represent a significant and original contribution;
- b) show evidence of the candidate's capacity to pursue independently original research based on a good understanding of the relevant techniques and concepts; and
- c) make a contribution to research at a level and scope equivalent to the dissertation route.

The published work submitted may range over a number of different topics, but these must relate in a coherent way to a field of knowledge. The treatment of these topics should be substantial; greater weight will be attached to a few substantial publications than to a larger number of brief notes, and the rate at which the work has been done will be considered in the light of the circumstances under which the research was carried out. It is not normally possible to form an adequate judgement of the candidate's eligibility unless the amount of work submitted is considerable, having due regard to the nature of the discipline.

2.2 Eligibility

Subject always to the criteria set out in 2.1, candidature for the degree of PhD by published work may be granted to:

- a) a graduate of the University of Bristol of not less than 6 years standing,
- b) a graduate of another university of not less than 6 years standing, who is a member of academic staff of the University of Bristol and has spent at least 3 years in the University.

2.3 Application

The final decision on whether or not to permit a candidate to register for a PhD by published work rests with the Graduate Education Director of the relevant faculty, who must ensure that the candidate has published enough appropriate material to have a reasonable chance of being awarded a PhD. The GED will inform the relevant Head of School.

An application must include:

- a) a synopsis of approximately 500 words outlining the extent, range, quality and coherence of the work to be submitted;
- b) a list of the publications the candidate intends to submit; and
- c) a *curriculum vitae*, including details of the candidate's employment at the University of Bristol where relevant.

A candidate should not assume that permission to register for a PhD by published work will automatically result in the award of a PhD, as he or she has to pass the final examination in the same way as any other candidate.

2.4 Registration

If approved, the candidate will be required to pay the relevant registration fee as part of the registration process. The candidate, once registered, will be assigned an advisor to support and guide them during the preparation of the work for submission. The advisor will be a senior member of academic staff at the University who is familiar with both the standard required and with the candidate's field of work.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School (or his or her nominee) to ensure that suitable advisors are appointed, that they have appropriate knowledge and skills, and that they have the time to carry out their advisory duties.

2.5 Submission

Candidates must submit their published work within 12 months of the initial registration, unless an extension has been granted by the Graduate Education Director. The relevant submission fee must be paid by the candidate.

Candidates may include publications beyond those in their application portfolio as long as all publications are at least in press at the point of submission. The submission must be in accordance with Section 9.2.3 of the Regulations and Code and should consist of:

- a) the published work (which may include some papers in press);
- b) a substantial commentary that states the aims and nature of the research, that links the published work and its coherence, and that indicates the significance and the original contribution to the field made by the work in the opinion of the candidate;
- c) a signed statement advising how far the work submitted is based on the candidate's own independent study, making it clear for each publication how far the work was conducted in collaboration with or with the assistance of others and the conditions and circumstances in which the work was carried out;
- d) a CV, focusing on the candidate's research career and on the circumstances under which the research work leading to the publications submitted was carried out.

2.6 Examination

The criteria for the appointment of examiners must be in accordance with Section 9.3.2 of the Regulations and Code, where references to supervisor should be read as advisor.

The oral examination must adhere to Section 9.4 of the Regulations and Code.

Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Musical Composition (PhD in Musical Composition)

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes (referred to throughout this document as "the Regulations and Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

1. Admission to the degree programme

A candidate wishing to pursue a PhD in Musical Composition shall normally be registered in the first instance for the degree of MMus, and shall exceptionally be registered in the first instance for the degree of MPhil. A candidate who enters as an MMus student may, subject to achieving a satisfactory standard after two years of full-time (four years part-time) study, upgrade to the degree of PhD. A candidate who enters as an MPhil student may, subject to achieving a satisfactory standard after one year of full-time (two years part-time) study, upgrade to the degree of MMus and thence, after a further year (two years part-time), upgrade to the degree of PhD.

2. Qualification for the award

The portfolio will comprise compositions for a variety of forces, of which at least one will be substantial in both medium and design. In general, all or most of the pieces will have been performed, and recordings should be included with the submitted scores. Electronic and mixed media submissions of equivalent merit and extent are equally permissible. The commentary will provide an intellectually rigorous account of the composer's creative landmarks and the nature of his/her contribution to the field of contemporary composition. It will elucidate issues of importance to the candidate (e.g. constructional, cross-cultural, technological, sociological or other) and demonstrate awareness of the broader context within which the work is situated.

The qualification for the degree shall be:

- a) submission of a portfolio of compositions (normally between five and seven) totalling c. 75 – 120 minutes of music;
- b) submission of an analytical/contextual commentary on the portfolio (normally totalling c. 15,000 words excluding references, appendices and lists of contents). The commentary will be appropriately referenced and will include a bibliography (including a list of repertoire studied, i.e. scores and other media); and
- c) approval of these submissions by examiners appointed by the University.

3. Submission

The submission must normally be made after three years and within four years (seven years part-time) of the date of initial registration for a research degree in Musical Composition.

Regulations for the Degree of Engineering Doctorate (EngD)

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes ("the Regulations and Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

The relevant sections of the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes*, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html>, will apply to the assessment of the taught component of these degrees.

1. Approved programmes of study

The degree of EngD may be awarded only in subjects approved by Senate. The subjects currently available are:

- Composites Manufacturing
- Non-Destructive Evaluation
- Systems

Each of these has a specified programme of study comprising a taught and research component.

2. Period of study

The normal minimum period of study is four years full-time or six years part-time.

The normal maximum period of study is five years full-time or seven years part-time.

3. Qualification for the award

A candidate will qualify for the EngD by:

- a) passing the specified taught component;
- b) carrying out research at doctoral level and submitting a dissertation by the end of the specified period of study;
- c) passing the final oral examination for the research component (as set out in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code).

4. Exit awards

If a candidate wishes, or is required, to withdraw before completing the research component of an EngD they may qualify for one of the taught exit awards specified in the relevant programme of study.

5. Content and length of dissertation

- (a) In addition to the standard criteria for assessment of a research degree as specified in Annex 7, a candidate for an EngD must also demonstrate a clear appreciation of the industrial context and significance of his or her research.
- (b) A candidate may not submit as his or her dissertation work which has already been submitted for an academic award of any degree awarding body. However, a candidate may incorporate part of such work provided this is clearly stated and the relevant work is clearly referenced in the dissertation.
- (c) Dissertations should not exceed 80,000 words, excluding references, appendices and lists of contents.

6. Candidature by Published Work

It is also possible for the EngD to be undertaken through candidature by published work. The requirements and guidance on candidature by published work are held in the Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Annex 1 above, where references to PhD should be read as EngD.

Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD)⁶

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes ("the Regulations and Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

The degree of Doctor of Medicine shall be either by dissertation or by published work.

1. Candidature by Dissertation

1.1 Qualification for admission

Candidature for the degree of Doctor of Medicine by dissertation shall be open to:

- a) Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery from UK Universities of not less than two years standing.
- b) Holders of equivalent degrees from overseas universities of not less than two years standing.

Individuals who comply with either a) or b) above must also be able to satisfy at least one of the following criteria:

- i) Previous research experience
- ii) Evidence of publication in a related field
- iii) Evidence of contributing to successful research funding proposal(s).

1.2 Qualification for the award

The qualification for the degree by dissertation shall be:

- a) a period of original research on a project that satisfies the appropriate faculty's (Health Sciences *or* Biomedical Sciences) criteria and is no less than two years (full time study) in length.
- b) a dissertation contributing to the advancement of medical knowledge, making a significant original contribution in the field of learning within which the subject falls, showing evidence of originality and independent critical powers, with satisfactory literary form
- c) approval of the dissertation by examiners appointed by the University

1.3 Work previously submitted

A candidate may not submit as his or her dissertation work which has already been submitted for an academic award. However a candidate may incorporate part of such work, provided this is stated in the candidate's application and the work is clearly indicated in the dissertation.

1.4 Length of Dissertation

Unnecessary length in a dissertation may be to the candidate's disadvantage. The dissertation should not exceed 60,000 words, excluding references, appendices and lists of contents.

1.5 Submission

Except as permitted under Section 6 of the Regulations and Code, the dissertation shall be submitted within five years (comprising at least two years full time research) of the date of commencement of the project, for full time candidates. For part time candidates the dissertation shall be submitted within seven years of the date of commencement of the project with a minimum period of study of four years. Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about submission of the dissertation.

2. Candidature by Published Work

The requirements and guidance on candidature by published work are held in the Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Annex 1 above, where references to PhD should be read as MD.

⁶ Some of the generic provisions of these Regulations have been incorporated in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.

Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes ("the Regulations and Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

The relevant sections of the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes*, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html>, will apply to the assessment of the taught component of these degrees.

1. Introduction

The degree of DDS is currently available in the area of Orthodontics.

2. Qualification for admission

Bachelors of Dental Surgery who shall have passed the final examination for such degrees at least two years previously may be candidates for the degree of DDS by Advanced Study and Research.

3. Qualification for the award

3.1 The qualification for the degree shall be:

- (a) pursuance of a curriculum of study;
- (b) submission of a dissertation based on research carried out by the candidate;
- (c) satisfactory performance in all prescribed work and assessments, approved by examiners appointed by the University;
- (d) satisfactory completion of clinical assessments and/or placements.

3.2 The dissertation must represent a contribution to knowledge, showing evidence of originality and independent critical powers; a candidate must also satisfy the examiners through the dissertation, or in the examination, that they are well acquainted with the general field of knowledge to which the subject relates. Dissertations must in all cases contain original work worthy of publication and their literary form must be satisfactory. The examiners, one external and one internal, shall normally require the candidate to present themselves at the University for an oral examination of the dissertation.

3.3 In addition to the submission of the dissertation, candidates are also required to pass a clinically focussed examination in Dental Surgery. Where a candidate possesses a higher clinical dental qualification, or is listed in the General Dental Council's Specialist Register, the examiners may exempt them from a clinical examination in Dental Surgery.

4. Curriculum Content and Structure

4.1 The curriculum will consist of not less than 3 years of full-time study or pro rata part-time.

4.2 Candidates must take not less than 180 credit points of taught modules at levels M and D, followed by not less than 360 credit points of study at level D comprising research and clinical practice.

5. Outcomes of the oral examination of the dissertation

See Section 9.5 of the Regulations and Code.

6. Exit awards and withdrawal from the programme

6.1 A candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners in the research component, who is permitted to transfer to a lower-level award or who would like to leave before completing the DDS may be recommended for the award of a taught Masters or a PG Diploma in Orthodontics in accordance with the University Credit Framework.

6.2 In line with the University's regulations for taught programmes, if a student fails to achieve the required standard in summative written or clinical examinations there will normally only be one opportunity for reassessment. Failure to achieve the required standard after this point will normally result in withdrawal from the programme.

6.3 Failure to achieve satisfactory performance in the assessment of clinical skills will normally result in withdrawal from the programme.

Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Educational Psychology (DEdPsy)

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes ("the Regulations and Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

The relevant sections of the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes*, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html>, will apply to the assessment of the taught component of these degrees.

1. Qualification for admission

Candidature for the degree of Doctor of Educational Psychology shall be subject to Section 4.1 of the Regulations and Code and the relevant admissions statement at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/admissions-statements/>. This includes the requirement to undergo a DBS disclosure.

2. Qualification for the award

2.1 The qualification for the degree shall be:

- a) pursuance of a curriculum of advanced study;
- b) satisfactory completion of fieldwork placements;
- c) submission of a dissertation, representing a contribution to knowledge;
- d) approval of such dissertation by examiners appointed by the University.

3. Period of study

The normal minimum period of study is three years full-time or six years part-time.

The normal maximum period of study is four years full-time or seven years part-time.

For regulations concerning suspension of study or extension of the period of study, see Section 6 of the Regulations & Code.

4. Taught Stage

4.1 Students shall take taught units as prescribed in the programme structure, which can be found at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/unitproqcat/>

4.2 Units will be marked on a 5 point scale, A – E, where the pass mark is C.

4.3 Students must achieve the pass mark for the unit and meet any additional criteria, if applicable, to be awarded the associated credit. Additional criteria will be described in the unit description and School or Programme handbooks.

4.4 A student who is not awarded the credit for a unit may be permitted a second attempt to achieve a satisfactory standard to progress. Resubmission of essays and coursework should normally be within 8-12 weeks of confirmation of the grade by the external examiner.

4.5 If any student fails to achieve the unit pass mark following a re-sit of the unit, they will be required to withdraw from the programme with an exit award (if appropriate) unless there are validated extenuating circumstances. Refer to Section 17 in the *Regulations & Code of Practice for Taught Programmes* for full details of extenuating circumstances processes.

4.6 For any unit which is passed by re-assessment, the recorded unit mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark, even if the student achieves a higher mark in the re-assessment.

4.7 During the taught stage, students are subject to Section 4 of the Exam Regulations covering plagiarism and cheating, available at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html#plagiarism>

5. Placement

5.1 Students **must** successfully complete the required fieldwork placements. In year 1 there are three placements, totalling 94 days. In Year 2 and 3 students will undertake their required

placement learning at their workplace for 3 days a week. Full details of the placement requirements can be found in the Programme Handbook.

5.2 The placements will be assessed via the following:

5.2.1 Professional Practice Portfolio

5.2.2 Self-assessment profiles

5.2.3 Summary reports provided by fieldwork supervisors

5.2.4 Completion of a 4,000 word assignment or equivalent for each practice-based unit.

6. Progression to Dissertation

6.1 In order to be permitted to progress to the dissertation, students must meet the following criteria:

- a) Pass all taught units and fieldwork placements as prescribed in the programme of study;
- b) Successfully complete any pre-requisites designated by the programme as preparation for dissertation;
- c) Submit a research proposal, which must be approved by the School. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of the study and ability to complete the dissertation within the time limit;
- d) Obtain any ethical approval as required for the dissertation.

6.2 Once a student has progressed to the dissertation stage, they will be subject to progress monitoring arrangements as described in Section 6 of this Code

7. Submission of dissertation

7.1 A candidate may not submit as his or her dissertation work which has already been submitted for an academic award of any degree awarding body. However a candidate may incorporate part of such work, provided this is stated in the candidate's application and the work is clearly indicated in the dissertation.

7.2 Dissertations should not exceed 45,000 words, excluding references, appendices and lists of contents. Unnecessary length in a dissertation may be to the candidate's disadvantage.

8. Oral Examination of the dissertation

Refer to Section 9.4 of the Regulations and Code.

9. Outcomes of the oral examination of the dissertation

See Section 9.5 of the Regulations and Code for the possible outcomes of this examination.

10. Other professional requirements

Successful trainees must also be deemed to have achieved competence in the areas of personal, academic and professional competence as specified in the BPS core curriculum and HPC Standards of Proficiency.

11. Exit awards

A candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners in the research component of this degree (ie, fails the oral examination), or who is permitted to transfer programme, or who would like to leave before completing the DEdPsy may be recommended for the award of a taught Masters, a PG Diploma or a PG Certificate in Research and Professional Studies in Educational Psychology, subject to the following conditions and in accordance with the University Credit Framework:

- a) in the case of the Masters, candidates must obtain at least 180 credit points;
- b) in the case of the PG Diploma, candidates must obtain at least 120 credit points;
- c) in the case of the PG Certificate, candidates must obtain at least 60 credit points.

Regulations for the **Degree of Doctor of Social Science (DSocSci)** **Degree of Doctor of Education (EdD)**

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes ("the Regulations and Code") will apply to these degrees, except where separate provision is made below.

The relevant sections of the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes*, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html> will apply to the assessment of the taught component of these degrees.

1. **Qualification for admission**

- 1.1 Candidature for the degree shall be subject to Section 4.1 of the Regulations and Code and the relevant admissions statement, which can be found at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/admissions-statements/>.
- 1.2 A candidate who has obtained a Master of Science degree, or such other degree or award as may be deemed equivalent, may apply for recognition of Accredited Prior Learning and may be granted remission of part of the taught component up to a maximum of 90 credit points (DSocSci) or 100 credit points (EdD) of the 540 credit points required for award of the degree. Such an exemption will **only** be granted **if the candidate successfully completes the doctoral programme**, ie submits a dissertation which is approved by the examiners appointed by the University.

2. **Qualification for the degree**

- 2.1 The qualification for the degree shall be:
 - a) pursuance of a curriculum of advanced study
 - b) satisfactory performance in prescribed work
 - c) submission of a dissertation, representing a contribution to knowledge.
 - d) approval of such dissertation by examiners appointed by the University

3. **Period of study**

The normal minimum period of study is three years full-time or six years part-time.

The normal maximum period of study is four years full-time or seven years part-time.

For regulations concerning suspension of study or extension of the period of study, see Section 6 of the Regulations & Code.

4. **Taught Stage**

- 4.1 Students shall take taught units as prescribed in the programme structure, which can be found at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/unitprogcats/>
- 4.2 Units will be marked on a 5 point scale, A – E, where the pass mark is C, or a 100 point scale where the pass mark is 50.
- 4.3 Students must achieve the pass mark for the unit and meet any additional criteria, if applicable, to be awarded the associated credit. Additional criteria will be described in the unit description and School or Programme handbooks.
- 4.4 A student who is not awarded the credit for a unit may be permitted a second attempt to achieve a satisfactory standard to progress. Resubmission of essays and coursework should normally be within 8-12 weeks of confirmation of the grade by the external examiner.
- 4.5 If any student fails to achieve the unit pass mark following a re-sit of the unit, they will be required to withdraw from the programme with an exit award (if appropriate) unless there are validated extenuating circumstances. Refer the *Regulations & Code of Practice for Taught Programmes* for full details of extenuating circumstances processes.
- 4.6 For any unit which is passed by re-assessment, the recorded unit mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark, even if the student achieves a higher mark in the re-assessment.
- 4.7 Students are subject to the University regulations on plagiarism and cheating which are at <http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html#plagiarism>

- 4.8 The taught stage shall normally be completed within 2 years for full time students and 4 years for part-time students, subject to unit availability. Students who do not meet this time frame will be encouraged to exit with a lower award.

5. Progression to Dissertation

- 5.1 In order to be permitted to progress to the dissertation, students must meet the following criteria:
- a) Pass all taught units as prescribed in the programme of study.
 - b) Gain at least 100 credit points in the taught component by achieving the pass mark at the first attempt.
 - c) Successfully complete any pre-requisites designated by the School as preparation for dissertation.
 - d) Submit a research proposal, which must be approved by the School. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of the study and ability to complete the dissertation within the time limit.
 - e) Obtain any ethical approval as required for the dissertation.
- 5.2 Once a student has progressed to the dissertation stage, they will be subject to progress monitoring arrangements as described in Section 6.2 of the Regulations and Code.

6. Submission of the dissertation

- 6.1 The dissertation shall normally be submitted not earlier than one year and not later than four years after completion of the course work. The only permitted exceptions to this are covered by the rules on suspension of study or extension of the period of study in Section 6 of the Regulations and Code.
- 6.2 Submissions must comply with Section 9 of the Regulations and Code. Candidates should also be aware of the procedures for cases of plagiarism detected in a dissertation submitted for a research degree in Annex 8.
- 6.3 A candidate may not submit as his or her dissertation work which has already been submitted for an academic award of any degree awarding body. However, a candidate may incorporate part of such work, provided this is stated in the candidate's application and the work is clearly indicated in the dissertation.
- 6.4 Dissertations should not exceed 45,000 words, excluding references, appendices and lists of contents. Unnecessary length in a dissertation may be to the candidate's disadvantage.

7. Oral Examination of the dissertation

See Section 9.4 of the Regulations and Code for details of this examination, and Section 9.5 for the possible outcomes of this examination.

8. Exit awards**

- 8.1 Candidates on either the DSocSci or the EdD who fail to satisfy the examiners of the dissertation, or who are permitted to transfer programme, or who wish to leave before completing their award, may be recommended for the award of a taught Masters, PG Diploma or a PG Certificate subject to the following conditions and in accordance with the University Credit Framework:
- a) in the case of the Masters, candidates must obtain at least 180 credit points;
 - b) in the case of the PG Diploma, candidates must obtain at least 120 credit points;
 - c) in the case of the PG Certificate, candidates must obtain at least 60 credit points.

The exit awards are:

from the DSoc Sci, a Masters/PG Diploma/PG Cert in Social Sciences (Policy Studies)
from the EdD, a Masters/PG Diploma/PG Cert in Research & Professional Studies

****Note:** In accordance with Section 1.2 of these Regulations for the DSocSci and EdD, an exemption for Accredited Prior Learning **is not permitted for exit awards**. Students must reach the minimum amount of credit points to be considered for the exit award by taking and passing modules as part of their current programme of study.

Regulations for Masters Degrees by Research

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes (“the Regulations and Code”) will apply to the following degrees: Master of Music, Master of Philosophy and Master of Science. Candidates should refer to the general statement of admissions requirements contained in Section 4.1 of the Regulations and Code.

1. Qualification for the degree

1.1. General statement

A candidate qualifies for the degree by:

- a) pursuing research for a period as specified in Section 4.3 of the Regulations and Code;
- b) submitting a dissertation⁷ embodying the results of this research;
- c) an oral examination⁸ and approval of the dissertation by examiners⁹ appointed by the University; and
- d) satisfying any formal requirements set by the faculty or a sponsor for a curriculum of advanced study, or for satisfactory performance in prescribed work, during the period of Masters Degree by Research registration. Such contractual requirements will be clearly stated before admission.

1.2. Specific regulations for MPhil in Musical Composition and Master of Music (MMus)

Candidates for the degrees of MPhil in Musical Composition and MMus will submit a portfolio of compositions for a variety of forces. A proportion of the portfolio will have been performed, and recordings should be included with the submitted scores. Electronic and mixed media submissions of equivalent merit and extent are equally permissible. The commentary will provide an intellectually rigorous account of the composer’s creative landmarks and the nature of his/her contribution to the field of contemporary composition. It will elucidate issues of importance to the candidate (e.g. constructional, cross-cultural, technological, sociological or other) and demonstrate awareness of the broader context within which the work is situated.

1.2.1 The degree of MPhil in Musical Composition requires:

- a) A portfolio of compositions (normally two or three) totalling c. 25 – 35 minutes of music.
- b) An analytical/contextual commentary on the portfolio (normally totalling 4,000 - 5,000 words excluding references, appendices and lists of contents). The commentary will be appropriately referenced and will include a bibliography (including a list of repertoire studied, i.e. scores and other media).
- c) Approval of these submissions by examiners appointed by the University.

1.2.2 The degree of MMus requires:

- a) A portfolio of compositions (normally four or five) totalling c. 50 – 70 minutes of music.
- b) An analytical/contextual commentary on the portfolio (normally totalling 8,000 - 10,000 words excluding references, appendices and lists of contents). The commentary will be appropriately referenced and will include a bibliography (including a list of repertoire studied, i.e. scores and other media).

⁷ Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance on content and submission of dissertations.

⁸ The procedure that applies is covered in Section 9.4 of the Regulations and Code.

⁹ The criteria for award of a Masters degree by research are in Annex 7 and the assessment process is in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.

- c) Approval of these submissions by examiners appointed by the University.

2. Submission of dissertation

Submission before the end of the minimum period is only possible with the approval of the relevant Graduate Education Director. Early submission will not affect tuition fee liability.

Except where an extension of the period of study has been granted, the dissertation must be submitted for examination by the end of the period of study. A candidate whose period of study has been extended must submit his/her dissertation no later than the end of the extended maximum period of study.

3. Length of dissertation

Dissertations should not exceed 30,000 words, excluding references, appendices and list of contents. Unnecessary length in a dissertation may be to the candidate's disadvantage.

Dissertations for the MPhil degree in the Faculty of Arts should not exceed 25,000 words, excluding references, appendices and lists of contents. The MPhil in Musical Composition and the Master of Music have different requirements as set out in 1.2 above.

4. Transfer of registration

The Masters Degree by Research programme may include opportunities for candidates to transfer registration to a doctoral award, subject to satisfactory progress and the overall maximum study period for the doctorate.

Procedure for dealing with unsatisfactory academic progress

Introduction

When a postgraduate research (PGR) student's academic performance is unsatisfactory, or there are other concerns about a student's academic progress, this procedure must be followed. The procedure is summarised in the flow chart in fig A3.1.

Research students whose academic performance is below the standard required should be advised at every stage of the options available to them, including voluntary withdrawal and requesting to change their registration to another degree.

Written records shall be kept of all informal and formal meetings at which a student's academic progress is considered and shall be copied to all participants and filed securely in the school. Students will be invited to sign off action plans so as to indicate that they have seen and understood the plans. Where feasible, students should be informed of progress decisions in person, otherwise via their University email address. Failure by the student to agree records, to acknowledge progress decisions or to sign off an action plan will not delay the operation of the procedure outlined here.

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, students can request access to any progress information held by the University during their studies e.g. progress reports and annual progress review reports.

Unless the context indicates otherwise, references within this procedure to an office holder shall refer to that office holder or to a person nominated to act on his or her behalf. References to the supervisor shall be taken to mean the student's main supervisor or supervisory team, as appropriate. Where the student's main supervisor is the School Postgraduate Research (PGR) Director¹⁰ or Faculty Graduate Education Director, a nominee will be appointed.

1. Progress concern stage

The purpose of this stage is to give support within a school to a research student who is not making satisfactory or sufficient academic progress, in order to give them an opportunity to recover their position.

A supervisor, a reviewer, a PGR Programme Director or a school's PGR Director (or, exceptionally, another academic) may raise concerns about the academic progress of a research student, at any stage in the programme of study. (If there is any disagreement between the supervisor and others about these concerns, the matter should be referred to the School's PGR Director or, exceptionally, to the Head of School for a decision.) As soon as the concern is confirmed, the supervisor must immediately make the student aware of the situation and notify the student and the School's PGR Director in writing that the progress concern stage has commenced. The student should be invited to say if there are any extenuating circumstances. The supervisor and research student will meet as soon as possible to draw up a plan of activities ("Plan 1") to be completed within the following 3 months (or 6 months for a part-time student). Plan 1 will include the activities and expected outputs, the likely frequency and duration of supervisory meetings, any other support that will be made available, and finally how progress will be assessed at the end of the progress concern stage. The supervisor will then provide the student and the School's PGR Director with a copy of Plan 1.

If at the end of the period specified in Plan 1 the supervisor and the School's PGR Director agree that progress is now satisfactory, the supervisor will confirm this in writing to the student and the school and this procedure will immediately come to an end.

¹⁰ References to the School PGR Director shall mean the holder of the equivalent office in schools or faculties where this title is not used.

If at the end of the period specified in Plan 1 the supervisor and the School's PGR Director agree that progress is still not satisfactory, the supervisor will notify the student and the Faculty Graduate Education Director (GED) in writing, copied to the School's PGR Director. The GED will then set up a formal progress meeting as soon as possible.

If the supervisor and the School's PGR Director are unable to agree on whether or not progress is satisfactory, they must refer the case to the Head of School for a decision.

2 Formal progress meeting

The purpose of this meeting, chaired by the GED and attended by the student, the supervisor and the School PGR Director, is to consider the causes of the continuing unsatisfactory progress and any extenuating circumstances. At this meeting both the student and the supervisor may raise, in writing or in person, any issues which they consider to be impeding the student's satisfactory progress. The student may bring a friend or supporter with them to the meeting, although that person will not normally take part in the discussion. Formal notes will be taken and copied to all parties. The GED will consider whether any action can be taken to resolve any issues raised. If so, he or she may direct that the progress concern stage be extended for a single further period, normally not exceeding two months (or four months for a part-time student), with appropriate measures in place to address the issues, for example in relation to supervision or additional support for the student. The purpose of this extended period is to allow the student additional time to complete Plan 1.

If the GED concludes that there are no external causes for the unsatisfactory progress, he or she will direct that the student should move immediately to the "at risk" stage of this procedure.

In either case, the GED must notify the student and the school of the outcome of the formal progress meeting in writing within one week of the meeting.

If the progress concern stage has been extended and the supervisor considers that progress is satisfactory by the end of the extended period they will advise the GED accordingly. The GED will then write to the student and the school to confirm this and this procedure will immediately come to an end.

If the progress concern stage has been extended and the supervisor considers that progress is still not satisfactory by the end of the extended period, they will advise the GED accordingly. The GED will then direct that the student should move immediately to the "at risk" stage of this procedure and will notify the student and the school in writing of this decision.

When notifying the student that the "at risk" stage has been initiated, the GED should also inform the student of the potential consequences if a Registration Review Panel recommends termination or a change of registration.

3. "At risk" stage

At this stage, the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory progress for several months and is at risk of being required to transfer to a different programme of study or, in the worst case, to withdraw.

If the GED has directed that the "at risk" stage should be initiated, the supervisor, in consultation with the School PGR Director, must draw up an action plan ("Plan 2"), normally within two weeks of the student being notified they are "at risk". Plan 2 must specify clearly what needs to be done, who is responsible for each action and the deadline for completion of the work (not exceeding three months or six months for a part-time student). Plan 2 should also include information about relevant support and training.

The School PGR Director will write to the student with a copy of Plan 2, setting out exactly what the student has to do by the specified deadline to recover from being "at risk". The letter and the plan

will be copied to the GED. The PGR Director will monitor progress against Plan 2 and will report to the GED at the end of the “at risk” period. On receipt of the School PGR Director’s report, the GED will decide either to remove or to extend the “at risk” designation, or to refer the student to a Registration Review Panel.

Where the actions in Plan 2 are satisfactorily completed within the agreed timescale and the School PGR Director reports to the GED that they are satisfied with the progress of the student, the GED will inform the student in writing, copied to the supervisor, that he or she is no longer “at risk” and this procedure will immediately come to an end.

Where the student has not completed Plan 2, but where the PGR Director reports that there are extenuating circumstances, the GED may choose to extend the period during which the student is deemed to be “at risk”, once only, by no more than two months (or four months for a part-time student). In this case, a further meeting of the student, the supervisor and the School PGR Director may then take place to agree the outstanding actions with appropriate timescales and to update Plan 2 if necessary. The GED will write to the student, copied to the supervisor and the school, with the updated plan. The School PGR Director will continue to monitor progress against the updated plan and will report again to the GED at the end of the extended period.

Where the actions are not satisfactorily completed within the agreed timescale, the School PGR Director reports continuing serious concerns about the student's progress and there are no extenuating circumstances, the GED will inform the student in writing, copied to the supervisor and the school, that the case is being referred to a Registration Review Panel.

The GED will refer the case to a Registration Review Panel by notifying the Academic Director of Graduate Studies in writing.

4. Registration Review Panel

4.1 Composition of the Registration Review Panel

The Academic Director of Graduate Studies (ADGS) will appoint a Registration Review Panel consisting of the ADGS as Chair and two senior academic members of staff (normally including at least one from the same school as the student) who must have had no previous involvement in the matter and who are independent of the student and the supervisor. The relevant Faculty Education Manager is responsible for the administration of the Registration Review Panel, and the Faculty Education Manager (or a nominee) will normally attend the panel.

The University Secretary’s Office will provide a clerk to the Registration Review Panel, to make a formal record of the proceedings and to advise on procedural matters. Meetings of a Registration Review Panel may be recorded at the discretion of the Chair.

4.2 Initial steps

The school should provide the following documentation for the Panel:

- A covering paper which provides basic information on the case (name of school, student’s name, supervisors’ names, start date and expected end date, project title and details of any suspensions of study etc)
- All documentation relating to the application and appointment of the student, including any contract or agreement between the University and any funding body or sponsor
- All minutes of meetings and letters associated with the student’s progress, including annual progress report forms
- A summary from the school of the main points of the case, to include main concerns, events and actions taken in the light of meetings held and evidence of any mitigating circumstances

This documentation should be sent to the student and to the members of the Registration Review Panel at least 14 days before the hearing. The student should be invited to respond in writing and

to submit any supporting documentation at least seven days before the hearing, for circulation to the members of the Registration Review Panel and the school. The main supervisor should be invited to provide a brief statement in writing, if desired.

4.3 Remit of the Registration Review Panel

The Registration Review Panel will hold a hearing at which both the student and representatives from the school, normally including the main supervisor, are entitled to be present. The student may be accompanied at the hearing by an adviser, friend or representative.

The Registration Review Panel will consider:

- whether or not the student is capable of attaining the required academic standard within the timescale prescribed by regulation for the award
- the amount of work already completed to a satisfactory standard (especially where the student's registration is to be changed)
- any extenuating circumstances

4.4 Procedure of the Registration Review Panel

The order of the hearing will be at the discretion of the Registration Review Panel, but will normally be conducted as follows:

- a. the representatives from the school will present their submissions;
- b. the student will present his or her response;
- c. the Panel may ask questions of the school and the student;
- d. the parties may ask questions of each other;
- e. each party will be offered the opportunity in turn to sum up or make closing remarks, with the student being given the final word.

4.5 Decision of the Registration Review Panel

The decision of the Panel will be that of the majority of its members.

The Registration Review Panel may recommend any of the following courses of action:

- that the student's registration be terminated;
- that the student's registration be changed to that for an alternative degree;
- that the student's registration remain unchanged, but that the student remains "at risk" for a further period;
- that the student's registration remain unchanged and the student no longer remains "at risk".

The Panel may also make other recommendations on any matter it considers relevant.

The Registration Review Panel will report its recommendations within two weeks of the hearing to the Dean and the GED of the relevant faculty. The Dean will make the decision on the case on the basis of the Panel's recommendations within a week of receiving the recommendations and will inform the student, the supervisor, and the school, attaching a copy of the Panel's report. A copy of the decision will be kept in the student's file.

Appeals against a decision to terminate or change the registration of a postgraduate research student may be made under the Examination Regulations, Section 11, at

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html#appeal>

5 Termination of the academic progress procedure

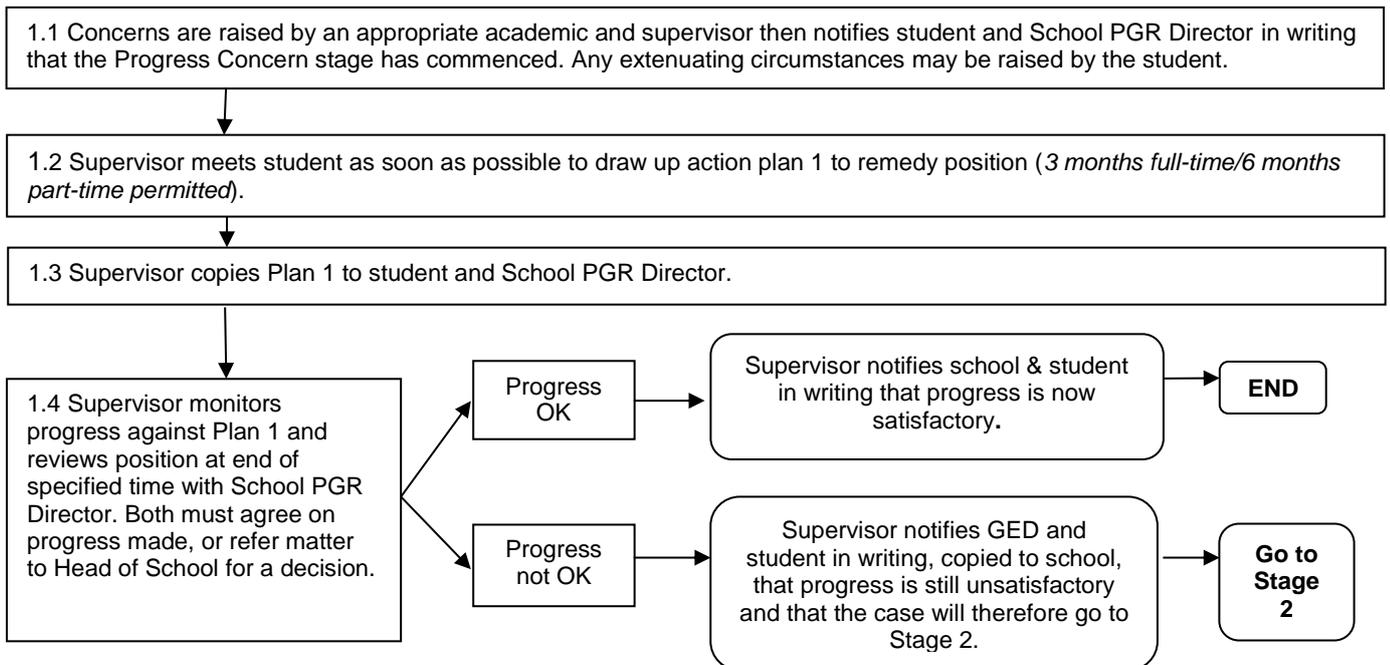
If a decision has been taken at any stage to bring the procedure to an end and there are subsequent concerns about the student's academic progress and performance, this procedure should be recommenced from the progress concern stage and not at any later point in the procedure, unless the Graduate Education Director decides otherwise.

Fig A3.1
Flow chart of the procedure for dealing with unsatisfactory progress

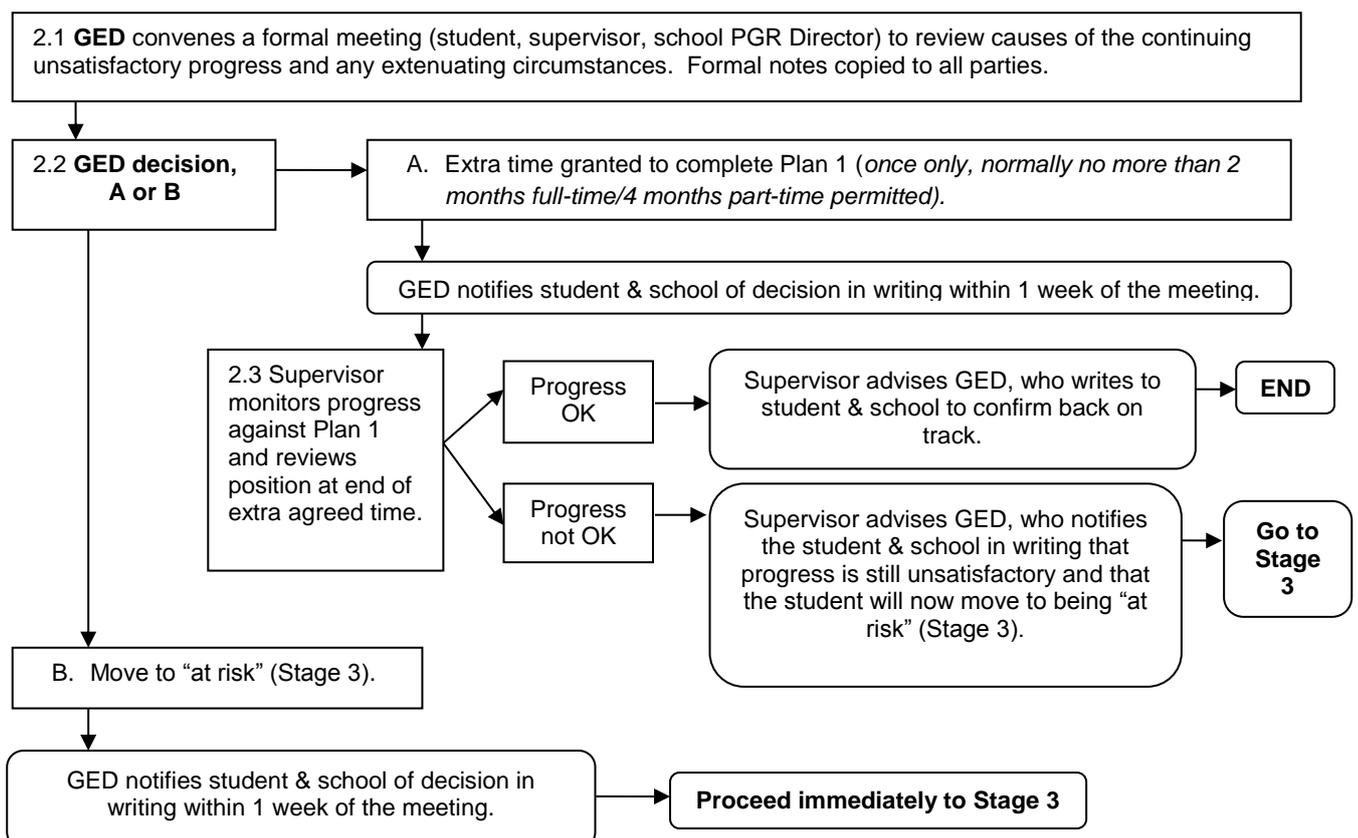
Unless the context indicates otherwise, references to an office holder shall refer to that office holder or to a person nominated to act on their behalf. References to the supervisor shall mean the student's main supervisor or supervisory team, as appropriate. If the student's main supervisor is also the School PGR Director (or equivalent) or the Faculty Graduate Education Director (GED), somebody else will be appointed to take on the role of PGR Director or GED.

The numbering of steps in this flowchart does not necessarily correspond to the numbering of sections in the text in the regulations.

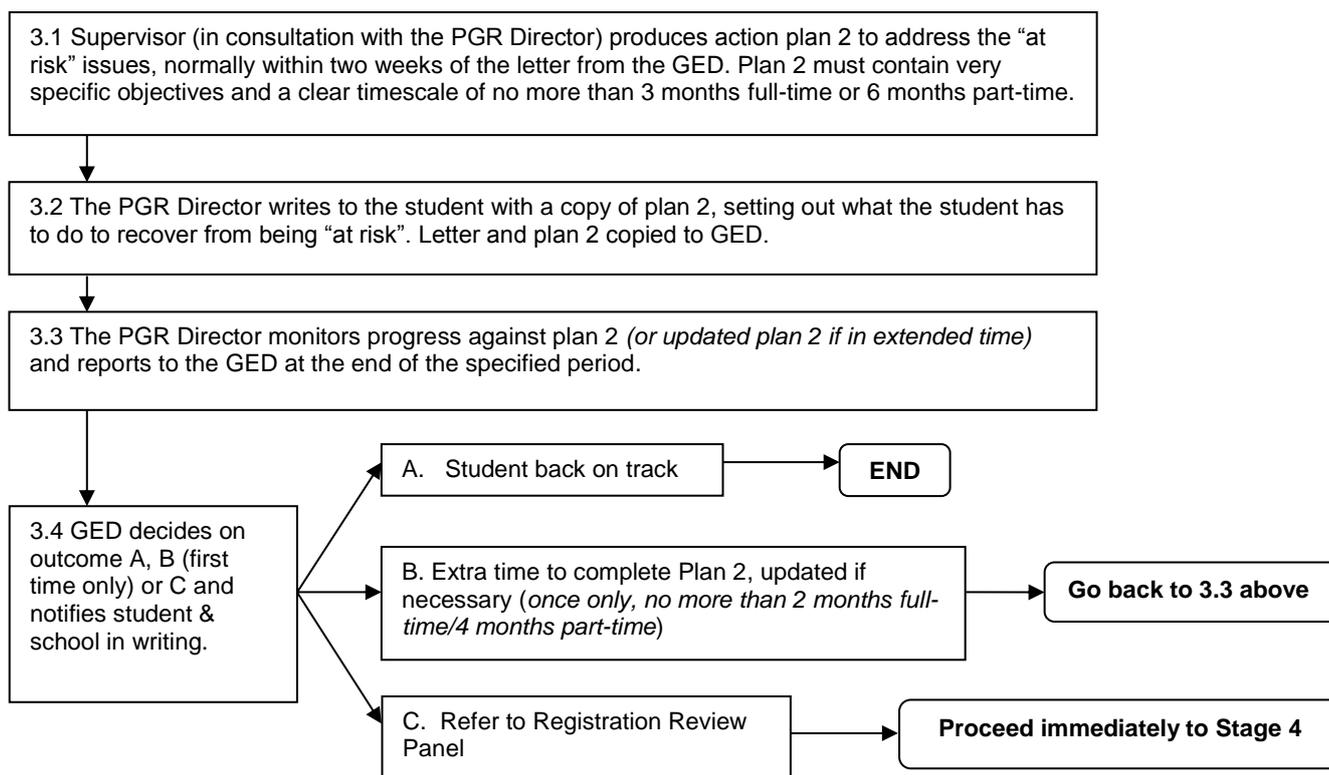
Stage 1 - Progress Concern



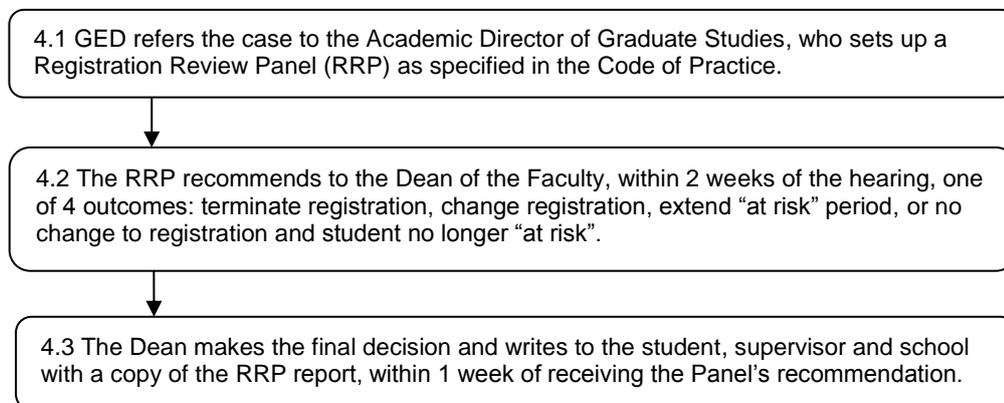
Stage 2 - Formal Progress Review Meeting



Stage 3 – At risk



Stage 4 – Registration Review Panel



Notes

1. It is the responsibility of students to inform their sponsor that this procedure has been initiated and to update the sponsor on progress thereafter.
2. Where academic reports to sponsors are requested, supervisors must provide honest assessments of progress.

Format of the dissertation for research degrees and of the final copies of the dissertation or published work and commentary

Supervisors should advise their students on the norms and practices of their discipline in terms of the dissertation.

Format of dissertations for research degrees

Preliminary pages

The five preliminary pages must be the Title Page, Abstract, Dedication and Acknowledgements, Author's Declaration and Table of Contents. These should be single-sided.

Title page

At the top of the title page, within the margins, the dissertation should give the title and, if necessary, sub-title and volume number. If the dissertation is in a language other than English, the title must be given in that language and in English. The full name of the author should be in the centre of the page. At the bottom centre should be the words "A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements for award of the degree of ... in the Faculty of ..." with the name of the school and month and year of submission. The word count of the dissertation (text only) should be entered at the bottom right-hand side of the page.

Abstract

Each copy must include an abstract or summary of the dissertation in not more than 300 words, on one side of A4, which should be single-spaced in a font size in the range 10 to 12. If the dissertation is in a language other than English, an abstract in that language and an abstract in English must be included.

Author's declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: DATE:.....

Table of contents, list of tables and illustrative material

The table of contents must list, with page numbers, all chapters, sections and subsections, the list of references, bibliography, list of abbreviations and appendices. The list of tables and illustrations should follow the table of contents, listing with page numbers the tables, photographs, diagrams, etc., in the order in which they appear in the text.

Paper

The dissertation must be printed on A4 white paper. Paper up to A3 may be used for maps, plans, diagrams and illustrative material. Pages (apart from the preliminary pages) should normally be double-sided.

Page numbering

The pages should be numbered consecutively at the bottom centre of the page.

Text

Text should be in double or 1.5 line spacing, and font size should be chosen to ensure clarity and legibility for the main text and for any quotations and footnotes. Margins should allow for eventual hard binding.

Digital recording media, photocopies and photographs

Appended digital recording media should be in a standard format and there should be a declaration in the dissertation of the programs used and the size of the files. Good quality photocopies and photographs can be used.

Temporary binding

The initial two copies of the dissertation should be presented in a secure, temporary binding, with a glued or spiral spine and not in a ring or spring binder.

Format of final copies of dissertation or published work and commentary

Binding of final copies for Library and school use

The final copy or copies should be hard-bound in stiff board, in a washable plain black buckram or buckram equivalent. Where the dissertation is in a language other than English, the bound copy must include the extended summary in English and the abstracts in both languages. Spine width should not exceed 50 mm. Larger sheets or printed matter should be placed in a pocket inside the back cover or in a separately bound volume. The title of the dissertation or published work and commentary, in both English and the language of the dissertation if that is not English, should appear on the outside front cover in embossed 18 point gold lettering. The spine must be lettered in embossed 18 point gold lettering, with the successful candidate's initials and surname, degree, volume number (if necessary), and year of submission. This should run from the top of the spine to the bottom, so as to be readable when the volume lies flat with the top cover uppermost.

**Guidelines on the Conduct of Remote Oral Examinations
by Video Link for Research Degrees**

1. Normally, the oral examination for a research degree will take place at the University of Bristol. An oral examination may only be conducted remotely by video link in exceptional circumstances, when the candidate or an external examiner is at a distance from the University (normally outside the UK) and is unable, for reasons that should be detailed, to travel to Bristol at the appropriate time. It is only permissible for one participant of the oral examination to be remote.
2. **In all cases, the decision to allow an oral examination to be conducted remotely by video link rests with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) and he or she must see and approve the detailed arrangements for running the examination. Any request to conduct an oral examination remotely by video link must have the written agreement of the candidate, all of the examiners and the Head of School, and the approval of the relevant Graduate Education Director before it is submitted as an attachment to the 'Appointment of Research Degree Examiners Form' to the Examinations Office. The request will then be forwarded to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) for approval.**
3. All parties should have the benefits and difficulties of the technology to be used explained prior to requesting a remote oral examination. No pressure should be put on any party to assent to the oral examination being carried out remotely. All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that the candidate is not disadvantaged compared with the standard oral examination. A remote examination should not be used in any cases where the supervisor or the School PGR Director (or equivalent) feels that a candidate may be placed at a disadvantage.
4. As with other examination costs associated with research degrees, any expenses of remote oral examinations will normally be met by the school. However, if the remote link is to be used because of the candidate's inability to return to Bristol, the school will normally require the candidate to contribute all or part of any additional costs. These costs may be payable in advance of the examination taking place.
5. If exceptional circumstances make it necessary for the examination to be conducted remotely the following points should be observed:
 - The technology used must accommodate the anticipated needs of the examination.
 - The quality of the equipment to be used (and particularly that to be used by the remote party) must be taken into account when agreeing and arranging the remote examination.
 - Oral examinations by video link may take place over a secure link supported by the central or local IT team as an alternative to the central facilities, although the latter is recommended as more secure.
 - The video link facilities should be available for sufficient time for the examination to take place. If there is doubt about the length of time required, every effort should be made to ensure that possible overrunning can be accommodated. It is suggested that the facilities are booked for at least one hour beyond the anticipated length of the examination.
 - Time should be allowed in advance of the examination for all parties to undertake a short training session and become familiar with the use of the technology. It is recommended that a trial run is undertaken prior to the oral examination to ensure that the technology used meets requirements.

- If the examiners are at different sites, they must take account of their need to share their preliminary reports and consult privately with each other on the conduct of the examination.
 - If the candidate is the remote party, s/he must be accompanied by an approved independent person, such as a member of academic staff at another academic institution. Any materials brought by the candidate into the room should be identified at the start of the examination.
6. Oral examinations carried out by remote link will not be routinely recorded.
 7. Appeals will be conducted under the University's standard procedures.

ANNEX 6

Guidance for research degree examiners on what constitutes minor errors in a dissertation

The following are allowable as minor errors under examiners' recommendation B (*award subject to the correction of minor errors*):

- Typographical errors; but if the errors, though trivial individually, are so numerous as to suggest carelessness on the part of the candidate, or so intrusive as to distract the reader's attention from the argument of the dissertation, the examiners would be fully justified in making recommendation C (*award subject to correction of errors or omissions of substance*) instead of B;
- Minor amendments and/or replacement of, or additions to, the text, references or diagrams;
- Other, more extensive, corrections **as long as they do not require major re-working or re-interpretation of the intellectual content of the dissertation.**

It should be possible to list the individual corrections required, and, once carried out, for the internal examiner to verify easily that the corrections have been made. In cases where there is no internal examiner, the Independent Chair must ensure that minor corrections are approved by an external examiner or by a University of Bristol academic nominated by the school.

The time needed to make minor corrections must be **no more than 28 days** after notification has been given by the Research Degrees Examination Board at which the examiners' reports are considered (RDEB meeting dates can be found at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/rdeb/>).

The University requires the internal examiner to confirm to the Research Degrees Examination Board, via the Examinations Office, that the corrections have been made before the degree certificate can be issued. Degree certificates will not be issued unless the Examinations Office has received this confirmation. In examinations where there is no internal examiner, the Independent Chair must ensure that minor corrections are approved by an external examiner or by a University of Bristol academic nominated by the School

If the corrections required are more substantial than those indicated here, the examiners should tick one of the alternative recommendations (e.g. C, degree to be awarded once errors or omissions of substance have been corrected to the satisfaction of the examiner). Where there are numerous instances of errors that are individually minor but when taken together are deemed by the examiners to form a significant undertaking for the candidate to correct, a recommendation of errors of substance may be made.

Criteria for award of research degrees

Using the descriptors for qualifications at doctoral and Masters level developed by the QAA as part of the framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf>), the University has developed the following explicit, yet generic criteria for the award of research doctoral and Masters degrees:

For all research degrees

- 1) The dissertation should:
 - (a) embody the results of research, carried out by the candidate, which may reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student in the period of study specified in the Regulations for the degree;
 - (b) consist of the candidate's own account of his/her investigations;
 - (c) make clear the sources from which information has been derived, the extent to which the work of others has been used, and the areas which are claimed as original;
 - (d) show the exercise of critical judgment with regard to both the candidate's own work and that of other scholars in the field;
 - (e) be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument.

- 2) The dissertation and the oral examination together must demonstrate that the candidate has:
 - (a) an adequate knowledge and understanding of the discipline and the context within which the research is grounded and of the literature relevant to the research;
 - (b) the ability to put forward arguments in an appropriate form, both orally and in writing.

Masters degrees by research

- 3) In addition to the requirements in 1) and 2), the dissertation submitted for a Masters degree by research should represent a contribution to knowledge.

Doctoral degrees

- 4) The dissertation submitted for a doctoral degree should, in addition to the requirements in 1) and 2), represent a significant and original contribution to knowledge, worthy of publication or dissemination in whole, or in part, in a form appropriate to the discipline.

- 5) For candidature by published work, the work submitted should in addition:
 - (a) relate in a coherent way to the field of knowledge and represent a significant and original contribution;
 - (b) be accompanied by a substantial commentary in the candidate's own words linking the published work and outlining its coherence and

significance, and making clear the extent of the contribution of others to the work submitted.

- 6) For candidature by dissertation or by published work, the work submitted and the oral examination together must, in addition to the requirements in 4), demonstrate that the candidate has the capacity to pursue independently original research based on a good understanding of the relevant techniques and concepts.

7) Definitions:

(a) *Dissertation*

A dissertation may, with the approval of the faculty, take the form of work relevant to the professional practice in which the degree is embedded, such as portfolios of work and project reports. In all cases these shall be accompanied by a commentary providing a critical evaluation of the candidate's work in relation to the academic and research context. The commentary will generally serve as the implicit agenda for the oral examination. The term "dissertation" should be interpreted accordingly.

(b) *Research degrees including creative work*

Where a candidate submits work which includes images, artefacts or other creative work, the dissertation comprises the creative element and a written commentary together. The creative work should be clearly presented, in an appropriate form and accompanied by a commentary that provides a discursive treatment of the creative work and sets it in its research context. The commentary is normally not less than 30,000 words and generally serves as the implicit agenda for the oral examination. The final submission should include some permanent record of the creative element, combined in an appropriate way with the commentary.

(c) *Originality*

Originality, in the context of the research described in a dissertation or work submitted, means making a contribution to learning, for example through the discovery of new knowledge or the application of existing knowledge in new situations, the connection of previously unrelated facts, the development of new theory or the revision of previously held views, or the development of new research methods.

(d) *Professional doctorates*

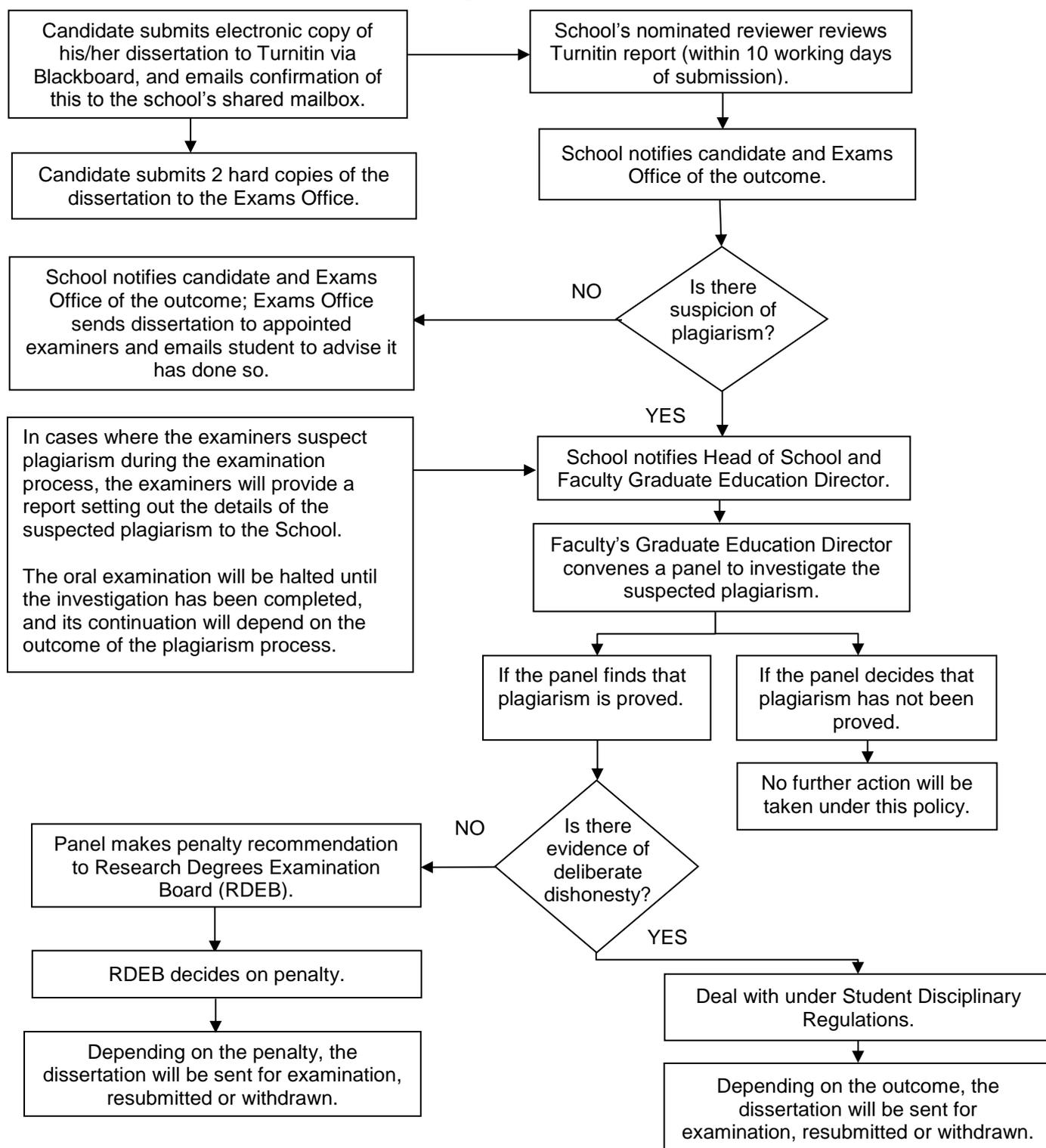
Professional doctorates are research degrees based on research embedded in professional practice. They may include taught components at level M/7 or above, which are assessed separately from the dissertation. Further information is available in the regulations for the specific degree (Annexes 1 and 2) and in the programme specifications for the degree available on the University website at:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/unitprogcat/AboutProgrammes.isa>.

Checking for plagiarism in a research degree dissertation and dealing with plagiarism if detected.

1. As set out in Section 9.2.4 of this Code, all dissertations submitted for a research degree are subject to checking for plagiarism. The procedure to be followed is set out in fig 8.1 and the subsequent text.

Fig 8.1



2. Submission to Turnitin

Details of how to submit dissertations to Turnitin will be provided in faculty guidelines which will be made available to students at least twelve months before their final submission date.

3. No plagiarism

If the check confirms no plagiarism, the dissertation will be sent for examination.

4. Suspected plagiarism

If the check reveals suspected plagiarism, then

- 4.1. The School will notify the Head of School and the Faculty Graduate Education Director as soon as possible, in writing, with the relevant evidence.
- 4.2. The Graduate Education Director will convene a Faculty panel to investigate the suspected plagiarism, and the panel will interview the student. The panel will consist of at least three academic members of staff without previous direct involvement with the student, including:
 - i. A member of the student's home school, and
 - ii. A member of a school other than the student's.
- 4.3. The Faculty Graduate Education Director must appoint a nominee with appropriate experience to chair the panel. To maintain impartiality, the Faculty Graduate Education Director must not chair or be a member of the panel.
- 4.4. The Faculty Education Manager (or nominee) will attend to provide advice on regulations.
- 4.5. The student may be accompanied at the interview by an adviser, friend or other representative. This could be from the Just Ask team at Bristol SU (<https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/justask/>)
- 4.6. Notes will be taken of the interview, which will subsequently be agreed with all parties.
- 4.7. Information and evidence circulated to the panel will also be made available to the student in advance of the panel interview.
- 4.8. The purpose of the interview shall be to determine whether or not plagiarism has occurred and to allow the student to make representations and to present mitigating factors.

5. Preliminary decisions

The panel will first decide whether the student has committed the offence of plagiarism. If the panel decides that the offence has not been proved, no further action will be taken under this procedure.

Where the panel finds that the offence of plagiarism has been proved, the panel will decide whether or not there is evidence of dishonesty, defined as a deliberate attempt by the student to obtain an unfair advantage.

6. Procedure if there is no dishonesty

If the panel is satisfied that there is no evidence of dishonesty, it will write to the Research Degrees Examination Board (RDEB) to recommend a penalty taken from the list below. The report to RDEB will set out the finding of plagiarism, a brief summary of the evidence considered, the factors which the panel took into account in reaching its conclusion and the penalty it recommends. A copy of the recommendation will be sent to the student.

The final decision as to the penalty will be reached at a full meeting of RDEB. After consideration of the report from the plagiarism panel, RDEB may:

- i. Impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's school file for future reference, either permanently or for a specified period;
- ii. Require resubmission of all or part of the dissertation;
- iii. Exclude the student from the award of the degree, which may be either permanent or for a stated period, and may be absolute or subject to compliance with stipulated requirements;
- iv. Award a lower qualification than that for which the student was registered where regulations permit this.

The penalty will depend on the seriousness of the offence. It will normally be assumed that mitigating circumstances will have been raised by the student in advance of the submission. However, any exceptional mitigating circumstances will be taken into account when determining the penalty.

If the penalty imposed is resubmission of all or part of the dissertation the student will be given a deadline for the resubmission, not exceeding four weeks from the date of notification by RDEB of the decision.

Details of the allegation and penalty will be recorded in the RDEB minutes, with a copy on the student's school file. The Examinations Office will keep a central record of such plagiarism cases and report them to Education Committee annually. Cases of plagiarism in a dissertation submitted for a research degree should normally be mentioned in student references, but only if a record of plagiarism remains on the school file at the time when the reference is requested.

7. Procedure if there is dishonesty

If the panel considers that there is evidence of deliberate dishonesty, or if the candidate and the panel are not able to agree, the matter should be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Regulations, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/disciplinary.html>. In place of a report to RDEB, the panel will make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor, through the University Secretary, to this effect.

Where an offence of plagiarism is dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Regulations, RDEB may impose only the penalty or penalties that it is directed to implement under the Disciplinary Regulations in respect of that offence.

8. Where plagiarism is suspected by examiners

In cases where examiners suspect plagiarism during the examination process, the procedure set out in Sections 4 to 7 above will be followed. The examiners will provide a report setting out the details of the suspected plagiarism to the School as evidence to inform the deliberations of the panel convened under Section 4 above.

The oral examination will be halted until the investigation has been completed, and its continuation will depend on the outcome of the plagiarism process.