

## Summary of regulatory changes and/or additions for 2012/13

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**REGULATIONS AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMMES**  
**2012-2013**  
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***These Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes 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.bris.ac.uk/esu/pg/>.

<b>Doctorates</b>	<b>in the Faculty/Faculties of</b>
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	All faculties
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Musical Composition	Arts
Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)	Medicine and Dentistry
Doctor of Education (EdD)	Social Sciences and Law
Doctor of Educational Psychology (DEdPsy)	Social Sciences and Law
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	Medicine and Dentistry Medical and Veterinary Sciences
Doctor of Social Science (DSocSci)	Social Sciences and Law
Engineering Doctorate (EngD)	Engineering
<b>Master's degrees (by research)</b>	<b>in the Faculty/Faculties of</b>
Master of Letters (MLitt)	Arts
Master of Music (MMus)	Arts
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	Arts Social Sciences and Law
Master of Science (MSc)	Engineering Medical and Veterinary Sciences Medicine and Dentistry Science

The Regulations and Code are for use by:

- supervisors of research students
- research students
- examiners of research degrees
- University staff with responsibilities relating to postgraduate research programmes and students

All new students registered for research degrees, 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, are encouraged to access the Regulations and Code at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/cop-research-degrees.html>

*The Regulations and Code are updated annually so it is important 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 and Code sets 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 and Code 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 Quality Assurance Agency requirements.

***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 to which the Regulations and Code apply (listed on page 3) are reproduced at **Annex 1** (doctoral degrees) and **Annex 2** (Masters Degrees by Research) for ease of reference.

## **2 Institutional arrangements**

### **2.1 Governance Framework**

#### *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 his/her faculty in managing postgraduate education and research degree programmes.

#### *Faculty Graduate Studies Committees*

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

#### *University Graduate Studies Committee*

The University Graduate Studies Committee (UGSC) is chaired by the Academic Director for Graduate Studies. The UGSC's terms of reference are available at:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/groups/graddeans/>

The UGSC is responsible for the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

#### *Education Committee*

UGSC reports to the University Education Committee which is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students). Details about Education Committee's Terms of Reference and membership can be found at: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/groups/edcmtt.html>

#### *Research Degrees Examination Board*

The University's Research Degrees Examination Board makes the decisions about the award of all research degrees. The Research Degrees Examination Board is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) or his nominee.

### **2.2 Academic standards**

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 in supervision of research students as part of its *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education programme* for new academic staff, coupled with mentoring arranged at school level.

### *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 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 his/her faculty.*

### *External examining*

When approving the appointment of examiners for research degrees, Heads of School 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 9.5.

### *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's procedures for assuring the academic standards of its research degrees are set out in the Handbook for Academic Quality and Standards:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/handbook.html> .

In addition, the Research Degrees Examination Board (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*

Student sabbatical officers and staff employed by the University of Bristol Students' Union who support postgraduate students meet the Academic Director of Graduate Studies informally, and are invited to attend meetings of the UGSC to provide postgraduate student feedback on specific issues.

## **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 volume of the dissertation or equivalent should be
- what the assessment will consist of and any generic assessment criteria that are applicable.

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

## **2.5 Monitoring of research degree programmes against indicators and targets**

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

### *Submission and qualification<sup>1</sup> rates for postgraduate research degrees*

Higher Education Funding Council for England qualification rates data are considered by the UGSC and Education Committee and at faculty level. 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. These statistics are also collated by faculty and submitted to the UGSC. These data include:

- rates of transfer from research Master's to doctoral programmes (if applicable)
- progression rates (by year)
- withdrawal rates (by year)
- qualification rates
- number of, and reasons for, suspensions of study
- number of, and reasons for, extensions of study

Outcomes at faculty level are considered by the Graduate Education Director and then forwarded, with a commentary, to the UGSC for consideration. This process supplements the monitoring of individual students' progress and qualification rates at Faculty level.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Research Assessment Exercises. 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 in each faculty. The way in which research in different subjects in a faculty is conducted therefore influences the organisation of research activities, 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.

***The University's expectations of the ways in which schools provide an appropriate research environment for research degree students to do, and learn about, 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 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 admissions requirements for entry to research degree programmes are contained in the University Postgraduate Prospectus, available at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/postgraduate/> and details relating to specific research degree programmes are described in detail on school web pages.

In some faculties, students aiming for a doctoral degree are in the first instance registered for a Master's 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 (two years for transfer from MLitt to the Doctorate in the Faculty of Arts). 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 Master's degree 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, see:

<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 (if their IELTS score is lower than 6.5 overall), 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\*.

Students studying for joint and dual PhDs<sup>2</sup> are required to be in full-time attendance at the University for a minimum of 12 months out of the normal 36 months duration of a PhD programme.

<sup>2</sup> Joint awards are those where there is an agreement between two institutions for the joint supervision and registration of an individual doctoral candidate and can either lead to one qualification jointly recognised by both partners or dual awards whereby both institutions confer their own award.

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 part way through their studies must be satisfied that they have worked at a level which is comparable to a Bristol PhD student at a comparable stage.

\* This normally only applies to students on professional programmes and joint awards.

### 4.3 Period of study

The minimum and maximum periods of study permitted for the University's research degree programmes (for full-time students) are summarised in the following 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 Master's degree by research and later transfer to a doctoral degree, the period of study begins on the date of registration for the Master's degree.

#### 4.3.1 *Minimum and maximum periods of study for students registered full time*

<b>Doctorates</b>	<b>Minimum full time period of study</b>	<b>Maximum period for full time study</b>
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	three years	four years
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Musical Composition	three years	four years
Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)	three years	six years part-time study
Doctor of Education (EdD)	three years	four years
Doctor of Educational Psychology (DEdPsy)	three years	four years
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	two years	five years
Doctor of Social Science (DSocSci)	three years	four years
Engineering Doctorate (EngD)	three years	five years
<b>Master's degrees (by research)</b>		
Master of Letters (MLitt)	two years	three years
Master of Music (MMus)	two years	three years
Master of Philosophy (MPhil) (Faculty of Arts)	one year	one year
Master of Philosophy (MPhil) (Faculty of Social Sciences and Law)	one year	three years
Master of Science (MSc)	one year	three years

The Minimum and maximum periods of study for students registered part time are normally pro rata to the periods of full time study, unless specified otherwise in the individual programme regulations, enclosed at **Annex 1**.

#### 4.3.2. Submission and qualification rates

**Faculties and schools must aim for at least an 80% submission and an 80% qualification rate within the following periods:**

*Full-time doctoral students: submission 4 years, qualification 4.5 years*

*Part-time doctoral students: pro rata, up to 7 years for submission, 7.5 years for qualification*

*Full-time research Master's students: 2 years*

*Part-time research Master's students: up to 4 years*

*Notes:*

*These periods exclude suspension, but not extension, of studies.*

*Sponsored students may also be subject to their sponsors' requirements in respect of either submission or qualification rates.*

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

4.3.3 The University imposes an overall maximum completion periods for students 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 programmes 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 Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation Strategy Group has overall responsibility for postgraduate admissions. It is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students), reports to the University Education Committee 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 schools. It is, therefore, the Head of School's responsibility to appoint school admissions selectors, and to ensure they are given time to undergo training in admissions and sufficient resources to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

**Admissions selectors for research programmes** normally report to their Head of School.

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

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

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

Decisions must be taken by two or more members of University staff (one of whom must be a member of academic staff), all of whom must receive guidance.

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 accreditation of prior learning or achievement, criteria must be in place to enable a potential 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.

## **4.5 Induction**

Prospective research students receive information about the induction procedures for their research degree programme when they are notified that their application has been successful, or as soon as possible thereafter, 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/>

The induction programme for new research degree students at the beginning of the academic year comprises faculty induction events, complemented by induction at school 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 arrange induction events for those students who begin their research programme part way through the year.

*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 and in the wider University.

All research students should normally attend a co-ordinated programme of induction events at faculty and school level that introduces them to the information they will need to begin their programmes. Faculties and schools should determine what is covered respectively at faculty and school level.

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 and the assessment criteria and regulations that apply
- any institutional or faculty codes of practice that apply to the research degree programme

Full information about supervisory arrangements is particularly important, 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 understand their own and their supervisor's role.

Induction programmes should also provide information about:

- the learning infrastructure and how to access it, including arrangements for remote access. This should include 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 they have access to, including their school's arrangements for their 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 letter they receive from the University once they have accepted a place, and subsequently at their initial meeting with their supervisor(s).

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

##### ***Student's Entitlements***

Adequate opportunities to meet their supervisor(s) / supervisory team for informal and formal discussions.

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 towards the award.

Responses to queries they raise with their supervisor within a time scale agreed between them 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, in the University or involving collaborating institutions, within which 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 his/her research work, and access to appropriate training and mentoring arrangements. Students should normally be paid for teaching and related tasks. Details of the University's Policy for Postgraduate Research Students who Teach can be found at: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/pg/>

Twenty-five days holiday a year, in addition to days when the University is closed.

Information about support available at school, faculty and University level.

Details of any relevant practical information, for example, accommodation and financial or travel information.

Where relevant, details of appropriate language courses.

### ***Student's Responsibilities***

To register with the University before beginning their studies and at the start of each academic session, and pay the relevant fees.

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 ensure that other activities do not adversely affect the progress of their studies.

To ensure that they understand the roles and responsibilities of their supervisory team and the support structures operating in their school and faculty.

To maintain effective working relationships with their supervisor(s) and other University staff and students, treating them with due respect and consideration.

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

- relevant legal and ethical requirements, and University rules, including those covering health and safety, data protection, and confidentiality
- the norms of good research practice applicable to their area of research.

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
- 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)
- 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,

<https://www.bris.ac.uk/studentinfo/>

**International students** with student visa or immigration questions must only discuss these with staff in the International Office (based in the University of Bristol Union). 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.

## 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 his/her School and the nature of the research project. Co-supervisors should be appointed if a student is conducting his/her 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 the student within his/her 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/her main supervisor before arriving at the University.

The frequency, duration and format of formal meetings between the student and his/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 on a monthly basis.

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.

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.

It is important for supervisors to 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 s/he should be encouraged to consult staff in the Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies for advice.

Supervisors often 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, etc. Supervisors should also be able to help students 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.

Should the relationship between a student and their supervisor(s) not be working well, alternative, independent sources of advice will be made available to the student by the Head of School or his/her nominee.

Supervisory responsibilities may be changed at the request of a student or a supervisor, taking into account the requirements of sponsors. Normally, any change of supervisor will be by mutual agreement between the student and the University.

If a student's main supervisor leaves the University, or is likely to be absent for an extended period, a replacement supervisor must be appointed in good time. If the main supervisor is expected to return within six months, the replacement appointment may be temporary.

## **5.2 Supervisors' knowledge, skills and responsibilities**

Given their wide-ranging and important responsibilities, it is important that supervisors have the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide effective support for their research students.

Awareness of the needs of different types of students and the academic standards and requirements of different research programmes are important for effective supervision.

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

### *5.2.1 Responsibilities of Heads of School*

It is the responsibility of the Head of School or his/her nominee to recommend suitable supervisors for appointment by the faculty. Each supervisory team must satisfy the relevant Quality Assurance Agency requirements.

### *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 0.5FTE<sup>3</sup>;
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 faculty 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.

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.

<sup>3</sup> 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>

### **Replacing a main supervisor**

In the event that a main supervisor is granted extended absence, has extended sick leave or leaves the University, the Head of School is responsible for making alternative supervision arrangements. This may include appointing a new main supervisor, a second local co supervisor or asking a supervisor who has moved to another institution to continue to supervise at a distance.

### **Supervision of joint doctoral awards with staff from elsewhere<sup>4</sup>**

Such arrangements are only permitted in cases where the University has a formal educational partnership with the other institution/organisation or where a joint PhD has been approved by the PVC Education. 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 Advanced 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 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 or where there is a conflict of interest;
- 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 should 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 University, faculty and school policies and procedures concerning research students.

Experience of supervising taught Master's 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.

In some cases a student may also have an industrial or other professional supervisor, with a clearly defined role, as part of their supervisory team.

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<sup>4</sup> See definition on page 7.

## **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 should be monitored in terms of attendance and performance and if, at any time, a student's progress is identified at time as being unsatisfactory, or the standard of their work is below that which is expected, the Procedure for dealing unsatisfactory academic progress should be implemented. The Procedure can be found at: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/pg/>. The main supervisor must make the student aware of this procedure.

**The University is required to report to the UK Border Agency on visa-holding students who fail to make satisfactory progress and/or do not regularly attend or submit work on time. Any changes to a visa holding student's full-time status, e.g. a suspension, withdrawal or move to part-time study, must be reported to the Faculty Office immediately.**

### **6.2 Annual progress review**

Continued registration for a research degree is conditional upon making satisfactory progress. The purpose of the annual progress review process, which is mandatory for all students registered for a research degree (both doctoral awards and Masters degrees by research), is to establish that progress is satisfactory and, if not, to ensure that remedial action is taken promptly. Annual progress review varies from faculty to faculty, but it must always involve a written report by the student and an independent overview, as well as comments from the student and his/her supervisors. 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 additional subject-specific conventions in respect of annual progress review, especially those relating to students funded by research councils or other sponsors. A student and his/her main supervisor should discuss any sponsor's additional progress monitoring requirements at an early stage to ensure that these may be met in good time.

The University expects that an formal review of progress, by an independent panel wherever possible, should occur at least once a year, for two main purposes:

1. to ensure that the student is well supported and to overcome any practical, as well as academic, obstacles to progress;
2. to enable the student or supervisor to communicate and explain any concerns about progress since the previous meeting.

The student should see and comment on the written report on his/her progress

### **6.3 Interruptions to study**

#### *6.3.1 Suspension of study*

A suspension of study may be granted if a student needs to interrupt his/her studies because of circumstances largely beyond his/her control, e.g. because of ill-health, family or financial problems. Periods of suspension must be as short as is necessary to deal with the circumstances.

Suspensions will not be backdated for more than one month. A period of suspension does not count towards the student's total permitted period of study but it will count in calculations of the maximum completion period (see section 4.3.3).

### *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 school as long as application is made well before the period of study has ended. An extension will extend the maximum period of study and therefore increases the time taken by the candidate to complete the degree and also counts in calculations of the maximum completion period (see section 4.3.3).

No later than four months before the end of a student's period of study, there must be a formal review of his/her progress. Any request for an extension to the student's period of study should be made shortly after this review.

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 for a maximum of 12 months in total. For any period that takes the total period of extension over 12 months, requires the approval of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students).

Requests for suspension or extension, made on the appropriate form, should be accompanied by supporting documents, such as medical evidence or relevant correspondence, together with written support from the student's supervisor and school. Medical evidence will be treated in confidence.

In all cases the extension or suspension request should be sent to the Graduate Education Director for the Faculty in the first instance.

**Any suspension or extension to the period of study of a visa-holding student must be reported to the relevant Faculty Office as soon as it is known, for report to the UK Border Agency.**

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.

## 7 Development of research and other skills

The University recognises the importance of the development of the research and generic skills of postgraduate 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.

Some sponsors have formal requirements for skills development programmes, e.g. the Economic and Social Research Council requires all its' full time students to complete research methods training during their first year.

Faculties and schools may differ in the way in which they implement this training needs analysis, but the student's supervisor(s) will normally be involved. The analysis should lead to the identification of appropriate skills development opportunities for the individual student. 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 analysis should be repeated at appropriate intervals during the research student's programme, in order to track progress and identify any new needs that may arise. The frequency of review should be agreed between students and supervisors, but annual review is often sufficient.

By recording their skills development a student will gain an understanding of the level of skills he/she possesses and this will help him/her construct their CV and complete job application forms. Schools should provide appropriate support for students to learn how to record their skills development, using the Personal Development Planning (PDP) tools made available by the University.

Faculties and schools will offer skills development programmes, appropriate to their disciplines that suit the needs of their students, and wherever possible will embed these programmes in the overall research training. Research skills and techniques will 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 events that support successful completion of their programme. Further details about skills training can be found at: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/researcher-skills>

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

All research students will have access to opportunities for training and development in research skills and techniques and in generic skills, at school, faculty and University level.

Students will agree with their supervisor(s), as soon after the student's arrival as is possible, what their development needs are and will identify relevant and appropriate opportunities, which may be within or external to the University.

Since students' development needs are likely to change as they progress, they will subsequently have opportunities, with their supervisor(s) to identify further training or development needs.

Students and supervisors will ensure that any sponsors' training and development 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 the opportunity to participate in regular surveys of postgraduate research students and student forums.

at faculty level through student representative membership at Faculty Boards and Graduate Studies Committees; 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 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, the University has developed the following explicit, yet generic criteria for the award of research doctoral and Masters degrees:

#### **For all research degrees**

9.1.1 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.

9.1.2 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**

9.1.3 In addition to the requirements in 9.1.1 and 9.1.2, the dissertation submitted for a Masters degree by research should represent a contribution to knowledge.

#### **Doctoral degrees**

9.1.4 The dissertation submitted for a doctoral degree should, in addition to the requirements in 9.1.1. and 9.1.2, 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.

9.1.5 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.

9.1.6 For candidature by dissertation or by published work, the work submitted and the oral examination together must demonstrate, in addition to the requirements in paragraphs 9.1.1 & 9.1.2 or 9.1.4 & 9.1.5 that the candidate has the capacity to pursue independently original research based on a good understanding of the relevant

techniques and concepts.

#### 9.1.7 Definitions:

##### *Dissertation*

- a) 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.

##### *Research degrees including creative work*

- b) 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.

##### *Originality*

- c) 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.

##### *Professional doctorates*

- d) 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/unitprogcats/AboutProgrammes.jsa>

## 9.2 Submission of the dissertation

The timing of submission of the dissertation is related to the minimum and maximum periods of study for the degree, which 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 6.2).

The candidate should prepare a detailed timetable for final preparation and submission of the dissertation, in consultation with his/her supervisor(s), at least six months before the end of the period of study. Guidance on the format of the dissertation, and an example of the declaration which must be included, are available at **Annex 3**.

### *9.2.1 Timing of submission of the dissertation*

Unless stated otherwise in the regulations for the specific degree, 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.

The dissertation must be submitted within the maximum period of study defined in section 4.3 of these Regulations and Code.

Submission more than three months before the end of the minimum period of study requires prior approval by the relevant Graduate Education Director. Early submission will not affect liability for tuition fees. 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. Dissertations submitted after the end of the period of study (taking into account any approved period of suspension or extension) will not be examined.

### *9.2.2 Copies of dissertation to be submitted*

The candidate shall submit two copies of his/her dissertation, in temporary bindings, to the Examinations Office. The University is piloting the introduction of e-submission for doctoral theses. Further details can be found at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/research-faqs/#submit>

### *9.2.3 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 Dean. 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.

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.

### *9.2.4 Plagiarism procedure*

The University's procedure for dealing with suspected plagiarism in a thesis submitted for examination is outlined in section 5 of the University's Examination Regulations:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html#procedures>

### *9.2.5 Deferred access to the dissertation*

Where there are grounds for restricting access to a dissertation for a fixed period, for reasons of commercial or individual confidentiality, or to enable the author to prepare the work for publication, application must be made to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) as Chair of the Research Degrees Examination Board, via the Examinations Office. 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/>

The candidate may request deferred access to his/her research degree dissertation for a period of up to five years at any time before submitting the dissertation. The candidate and his/her

supervisor need to indicate the reasons why access should be restricted, and the Head of School needs to indicate his/her support.

Even if a request for deferment is granted, copies of the final form of the dissertation must still be submitted as described in Section 9.8 of these Regulations and Code.

### **9.3 Submission of published work**

If the regulations for the specific degree allow for candidature by submission of published work, an eligible candidate should initially contact the head of the school that covers his/her area of research. After registration and payment of the relevant registration fee, he/she will be assigned an adviser to support him/her during the preparation of the work for submission.

The published work submitted may range over a number of different topics, but these must normally 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.

Applicants for registration for a research degree by published work must provide with their application a list of the publications to be considered together with a synopsis of approximately 500 words outlining the extent, range, quality and coherence of the work to be submitted.

Applicants may register for the degree only with the prior permission of the relevant faculty Graduate Education Director and must submit their published work within 12 months of initial registration, unless an extension has been granted by the relevant faculty Graduate Education Director.

A candidate who submits published work for examination for a doctoral degree shall submit two copies of:

- (a) the published work (which may include papers in press);
- (b) a substantial commentary linking the published work and outlining its coherence and significance;
- (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.

### **9.4 Assessment procedures and functions of examiners**

#### *Assessment procedures*

The purpose of assessment procedures for research degrees is to ascertain that candidates have reached the standard required by the criteria for the award which are set out in these Regulations and Code and in the regulations for the specific degree.

Assessment procedures 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.

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/unitproqcat/AboutProgrammes.jsa>).

### *Role of examiners*

#### *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 (or co-ordinator, if two external examiners are appointed)*

The internal examiner participates fully in the examination process and also acts as the examination co-ordinator, including:

- in consultation with the head of school, making arrangements for the oral examination
- 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 that the candidate receives the examiners' list of suggested corrections, where appropriate
- ensuring that examiners' reports are submitted to the head of school in accordance with the University's requirements

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).

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 regarding the examination only to discuss the practical arrangements.

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

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

## **9.5 Selection of examiners**

The judgement of the examiners carries considerable weight in the assessment of research degrees, and the competence and independence of examiners is of fundamental importance to the

integrity of the assessment process and maintaining the academic standards of the University's research degrees.

Examiners for research degree candidate are nominated by the candidate's school and approved by the faculty's Graduate Education Director, who needs to be assured of the competence and independence of the examiners selected.

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.

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.

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 examination co-ordinator. In the oral examination, the co-ordinator will participate only to advise the examiners on the University's regulations for the award being examined.

During the preparation of the dissertation, the candidate and his/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 on the University's website at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>.

*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 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 coordinator) understands the requirements of the University's regulations that apply to this award
- none of the examiners 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.
- examiners are normally expected to hold a research degree at the level being examined or have other relevant expertise.
- a period of three years should have elapsed between a proposed External Examiner holding a post at the University and their nomination as an External Examiner.

## 9.6 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
- verify that the work submitted is the candidate's own and assess the extent of any collaboration.

If requested by the candidate, the candidate's school should provide him/her with suitable opportunities to practise for the oral examination, for example, presenting and being questioned about his/her research.

The candidate, the candidate's supervisor(s), the head of the candidate's 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.

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

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. 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.

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

Candidates, their supervisors and head of school share the responsibility for making examiners aware of any special 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.

If there are any medical or other extenuating circumstances that might affect the candidate's performance in the oral examination, the candidate should bring these to the attention of the internal examiner, normally at least 1 month before the oral 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/>.

Where circumstances make this advisable, the faculty Graduate Education Director may, with the agreement of the candidate, appoint an independent chair of the oral examination or approve special arrangements for conducting the oral examination such as recording it. Requests for such action, 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.

Examiners 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 9.7). Examiners may write on the examined work (e.g. to indicate minor errors).

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 University Research Degrees Examination Board.

The oral examination 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. In exceptional circumstances, the Pro Vice-Chancellor

(Education and Students) may grant permission for the oral examination to be conducted remotely using technology appropriate to the subject as specified in the *Guidelines on the Conduct of Remote Oral Examinations for Research Degrees* (see **Annex 4**).

The oral examination is normally conducted within 4 months of the submission of the dissertation.

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.

Where it is intended to hold an oral examination remotely, the *Guidelines on the Conduct of Remote Oral Examinations for Research Degrees* must be followed.

### **9.7 Examiners' reports and outcomes of the examination**

The examiners' independent preliminary reports together with their joint report after the oral examination (and, where relevant, the report on the taught element of the degree) must be sufficient to enable the University's Research Degrees Examination Board (the Board) 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. 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

Examiners' report forms are available from the University's Examinations Office website, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>.

The internal examiner should forward all the 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.

Examiners' preliminary and joint reports are confidential until they have been considered by the Research Degrees Examination Board.

Where the research degree includes a taught element, the Examinations Office attaches the report on the taught element to the examiners' reports for consideration by the Research Degrees Examination Board.

The candidate should receive written guidance on 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. 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 re-submission 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 Research Degrees Examination Board, 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.

The examiners' judgement is based both on the work presented by the candidate and on his/her performance in the oral examination. Examiners should refer to the criteria for research degrees set out in these Regulations and Code (Section 9.1) and in the regulations for the degree in question to ascertain the standard required.

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.

After the oral examination, the examiners must complete and sign a joint report, clearly indicating their recommendations. 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
- 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 be not 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

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

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

Reports should be received by the Examinations Office within **14** days of the date of the oral examination.

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 Board, which may arrive at a different verdict.

*Minor errors*

**Annex 5** 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. 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.

*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. The time permitted for corrections for all candidates is normally 6 months from the date of the meeting of the Research Degrees Examination Board at which the decision is made. In exceptional circumstances an extension beyond this period may be granted by the Board. 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.

*Re-submission*

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.

Re-submission can take place once only. The maximum time permitted for re-submission for all candidates is normally 12 months from the date of the meeting of the Research Degrees

Examination Board at which the decision is made. An extension beyond this period may be granted by the Board 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 provide three copies of his/her revised work to the Examinations Office (as specified under 9.2.2 within the period specified by the Board, and pay the resubmission fee. Unless determined otherwise by the Board, the original examiners will be asked to undertake a full re-examination, including a further oral examination, and provide a complete new set of examiners' reports to the Board. External examiners will be paid a re-examination fee.

### **9.8 Notification of result and submission of permanent copies of submitted work**

The examiners' reports will be considered at the next practicable Research Degrees Examination Board held after their receipt. As paperwork needs to be sent out ahead of the meeting, reports received less than 2 weeks before the date of the Board will not be considered until the following Board meeting. Dates of meetings of the Board and deadlines for receipt of reports are listed on the University's Examinations Office website, <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>

Candidates are notified of the result of their examination by post.

#### ***Requirements for Submission of the definitive form of the dissertation or published work and commentary***

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 from the University website at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/research/>.

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.

## **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>.

Candidates should note that there is a **15** day time limit for the submission of an appeal, which runs from the date of notification of the result. 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 Student Support website: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/student-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 (referred to throughout these Regulations as "the Regulations and Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

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

#### **1. Candidature by dissertation**

##### **1.1 Qualification for registration**

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

##### **1.2 Qualification for the degree**

A candidate qualifies for the degree by:

- (a) pursuing research for a period as specified in 1.3 below,
- (b) submitting a dissertation<sup>5</sup> embodying the results of this research,
- (c) approval of the dissertation by examiners<sup>6</sup> 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 prescribed work, during the period of PhD registration. Such requirements will be clarified before admission.

Doctoral programmes with an integrated taught research skills element may recommend an award when a student leaves early from the doctoral element of the programme, or fails to satisfy the examiners in the research component. In which case, candidates may be recommended for the award of Master, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate subject to the following requirements (and in accordance with the University Credit Framework).

- a) Master of Research candidates must obtain 180 credit points
- b) Master of Science candidates must obtain 180 credit points
- c) Postgraduate Diploma candidates must obtain 120 credit points
- d) Postgraduate Certificate candidates must obtain 60 credit points

##### **1.3 Period of study**

The normal minimum period of study is three years full-time, or the part-time equivalent. The normal maximum full-time period of study is four years; the part-time maximum period is seven years.

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.

All other suspensions of study and extensions of period of study should take place as set out in Section 6.2 of the Regulations and Code.

<sup>5</sup> Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance on content and submission of dissertations.

<sup>6</sup> The criteria for award of a PhD, and the assessment process, are covered in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.

#### **1.4 Submission of dissertation**

A candidate may submit his/her dissertation up to three months before the end of the minimum period of study, but any earlier submission requires approval by the Graduate Education Director of the faculty in which the candidate is registered. 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.

#### **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.

### **2. Candidature by published work**

#### **2.1 Qualification for registration**

Candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by published work shall be open 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 the academic or academic-related staff of the University of Bristol and has spent at least 3 years in the University.

Candidates should refer to the requirements and guidance about submission of published work for a research degree contained in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.

#### **2.2 Qualification for the degree**

The qualification for the degree by published work shall be:

- (a) submission of published work and accompanying documents as set out in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.  
Candidates must submit their published work within 12 months of commencement of registration, unless an extension has been granted by the relevant Graduate Education Director.
- (b) approval of such work by examiners appointed by the University.<sup>6</sup>

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### **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 these Regulations as "the Regulations and Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

#### **1. Qualification for entry**

Candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Musical Composition shall be open to:

- a) a graduate of a UK University or, subject to Senate's approval, a graduate of another university, who has satisfied Senate of his or her fitness to enter on the course
- b) in exceptional cases, other persons with qualifications approved by Senate

## **2. Prior registration**

A candidate shall normally be registered in the first instance for the degree of Master of Music. Subject to achieving a satisfactory standard in the first year of full-time study, or the first two years of part-time study, a candidate may be permitted to transfer candidature to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

## **3. Qualification for the degree**

The qualification for the degree shall be:

- a) the pursuance in the University of a curriculum of advanced study in the techniques of composition, orchestration and the analysis of 20th and 21st century music for one year of full-time study or two years of part-time study
- b) satisfactory performance at the end of that period in an examination based on that curriculum
- c) a further period of advanced study in the University of not less than two years
- d) followed by submission of two copies of a folio of compositions, together with an analytical and critical commentary (normally 15,000 words plus musical examples)
- e) the approval of these submissions by examiners appointed by the University

## **4. Time for Submission**

Except as permitted under Section 6 of the Regulations and Code the submission must be made:

- a) for full-time candidates, within 4 years of the start of study for the degree
- b) for part-time candidates, within 8 years of the start of study for the degree

## **5. Compositions and commentary**

The compositions in the folio will normally comprise between five and seven compositions for a variety of forces, of which at least one should be substantial in both medium and design (for example a symphonic work). In general all or most of the pieces will have been performed and recordings (on cassette or CD) should be included with the submitted scores. Electronic and mixed media submissions of equivalent merit and extent are equally permissible. The commentary should 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 should elucidate issues of importance to the candidate (for example constructional, cross-cultural, technological, sociological or other) and demonstrate awareness of the broader context within which the work is situated. Because of its intellectual tangibility, the Commentary will generally serve as the implicit agenda for viva voce examination of the music.

## **6. Examinations**

Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about oral examinations for research degrees.

## **7. Outcomes**

Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for specification of the possible outcomes of the examination.

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## **Regulations for the Degree of Engineering Doctorate (EngD)**

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

### **1. Curriculum**

The degree of EngD may be awarded in subjects approved from time to time by Senate. The subjects available at present are:

Aerospace Design, Manufacture and Management

Non-Destructive Evaluation  
Systems

**2. Qualification for Entry**

Candidature for the degree of Engineering Doctorate in Engineering Management shall be open to:

- a) a graduate of a UK university, or, subject to Senate's approval, a graduate of another university, who has satisfied Senate of his or her fitness to enter on the course
- b) in exceptional circumstances, other persons with qualifications approved by Senate
- c) persons with appropriate professional experience

**3. Qualification for the Degree**

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 to the University

**4. Period of Study**

The period of study shall normally be not less than three years of full-time study or an equivalent period of part-time study.

**5. Submission of Dissertation**

Except as permitted under Section 6 of the Regulations and Code, the dissertation shall be submitted not earlier than one year and not later than three years following the completion of course work. Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about submission of the dissertation.

**6. Work Previously Submitted**

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. Length of Dissertation**

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

**8. Examinations**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about oral examinations for research degrees.

**9. Outcomes**

Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for specification of the possible outcomes of the examination.

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**Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD)<sup>7</sup>**

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes (referred to throughout these Regulations as "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**

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<sup>7</sup> Some of the generic provisions of these Regulations have been incorporated into Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.

### **1.1 Qualification for entry**

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

- a) Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Bristol of not less than two years standing
- b) subject to the approval of Senate, Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery of other universities and holders of equivalent degrees from overseas universities of not less than two years standing

### **1.2 Qualification for the degree**

The qualification for the degree by dissertation shall be:

- a) a period of original research on a project approved by the Board of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry or the Board of the Faculty of Medical and Veterinary Sciences, which in the case of graduates of universities other than the University of Bristol must be carried out within the University of Bristol for a period to be determined by the Board of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry or the Board of Medical and Veterinary Sciences but in no case less than two years
- 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 of the date of commencement of the project. 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**

### **2.1 Qualification for entry**

Candidature for the degrees by published work shall be open to:

- a) a graduate of the University of Bristol
- b) a member of the academic or academic-related staff of the University of Bristol who has spent at least three years in the University

Candidates should refer to the requirements and guidance about submission of published work for a research degree contained in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.

### **2.2 Qualification for the degree**

The qualification for the degree by published work shall be:

- a) submission of substantial published work embodying research on any aspect of medicine
- b) approval of such work by examiners appointed by the University

### **2.3 Submission**

Published work can be submitted at any time, subject to any deadline imposed by the faculty or a funding body. Prospective candidates are required to consult the head of school before submitting their publications.

### **2.4 Nature of the work submitted**

- a) Published work must represent a contribution to knowledge, showing evidence of originality,

independent critical powers and clarity of thought, and applying research methods appropriate to the particular field of study.

b) Work will normally be regarded as published only if it is listed in ordinary catalogues of published works and was obtainable, at or before the submission, by members of the general public through normal channels.

c) The published work submitted by a candidate may range over a number of different topics, but these should normally relate in a coherent way to a field of knowledge within the faculty. The treatment of these topics should be substantial.

d) Greater weight will be attached to a few substantial publications than to a larger number of brief notes. It will not normally be 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.

e) The rate at which the work has been done will be considered.

### **2.5 Documents to be submitted**

Candidates should submit four copies of the following:

a) the published work

b) a commentary linking the published work, outlining the coherence in terms of the subject matter being submitted

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

Candidates may submit four copies of the following:

a) a statement explaining the significance of the publications

b) manuscripts already accepted for publication, on A4 paper and securely bound (not in a ring binder)

c) supplementary data such as questionnaires or reviews of literature

### **2.6 Work submitted for a degree**

Published work may include papers for which a degree has already been conferred, provided that they are not predominant and that the accompanying declaration states the degree awarded, the papers so included and the reason for their inclusion.

### **2.7 Copy in the University Library**

A copy of each set of publications successfully presented for the degree shall be deposited in the University Library and shall normally become available for consultation within three months of the date of publication of the pass list.

## **3. Examinations**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about oral examinations for research degrees.

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

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The degree of DDS may be awarded in subjects approved from time to time by Senate. The subjects available at present are: Orthodontics

1.2 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.

## **2. Eligibility**

2.1 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 Doctor of Dental Surgery. Application may be made to the Registrar at any time.

## **3. Qualification**

3.1 The qualification for the degree shall be:

- (a) pursuance of a curriculum of study
- (b) the presentation of a dissertation
- (c) satisfactory performance in all prescribed work, approved by examiners appointed by the University.

3.2 A candidate's dissertation must represent a contribution to knowledge, showing evidence of originality and independent critical powers; a candidate must also satisfy the Examiners by the dissertation, or in the examination, that he or she is 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.

## **4. Curriculum Content and Structure**

4.1 The curriculum will consist of not less than 3 years of full-time study or up to a maximum of 6 years part-time study.

4.2 Candidates will be required to undertake not less than 180 credit points of taught modules at levels M and D.

4.3 This will be followed by not less than 360 credit points of study at level D which will be made up of full-time research and clinical practice.

4.4 The programme is structure to enable a candidate to be awarded a masters degree, a postgraduate diploma, or a postgraduate certificate at various stages of successful completion as outlined in the programme specification.

## **5. Examinations**

A candidate who has failed to satisfy the examiners, who is permitted to transfer programme or who would like to leave before completing the D.D.S. may be recommended for the award of Master, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate in Orthodontics in accordance with the University Credit Framework.

## **6. Outcomes**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for specification of the possible outcomes of the examination.

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## **Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Education (EdD)**

### **1. Qualification for entry**

Candidature for the degree of Doctor of Education shall be open to:

- a) a graduate of a UK university or, subject to Senate's approval, a graduate of another university, who has satisfied Senate of his or her fitness to enter on the course
- b) in exceptional cases, other persons with qualifications approved by Senate
- c) normally with an advanced qualification in education
- d) normally with at least three years' appropriate professional experience

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

## **2. Qualification for the degree**

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 minimum period of study shall normally be not less than three years of full-time study or an equivalent period of part-time study. The maximum period of study shall normally be four years full-time or eight years part-time.

## **4. Submission of dissertation**

Except as permitted under Section 6 of the Regulations and Code, the dissertation shall be submitted not earlier than one year and not later than three years following the completion of course work. Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about submission of the dissertation.

## **5. Work previously submitted**

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. Length of dissertation**

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. Examinations**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about oral examinations.

A candidate who had failed to satisfy the examiners, who is permitted to transfer programme or who would like to leave before completing the Ed.D. may be recommended for the award of Master, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate in Research and Professional Studies subject to the following conditions (and in accordance with the University Credit Framework):

- a) in the case of the Masters candidates must obtain 180 credit points
- b) in the case of the Postgraduate Diploma candidates must obtain 120 credit points
- c) in the case of the Postgraduate Certificate candidates must obtain 60 credit points

A candidate who has presented a dissertation by *viva voce* and failed to satisfy the examiners that it has passed for the award of Ed.D. may be considered for the award of M.Phil.

## **8. Outcomes**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for specification of the possible outcomes of the examination

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

### **1. Qualification for entry**

Candidature for the degree of Doctor of Educational Psychology shall be open to:

- a) a graduate of a UK university or, subject to Senate's approval, a graduate of another university, who has satisfied Senate of his or her fitness to enter on the course
- b) in exceptional cases, other persons with qualifications approved by Senate
- c) graduates who have gained eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR) from the British Psychological Society
- d) normally with at least two years' relevant experience of working with children within educational, childcare or community settings.

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

### **2. Qualification for the degree**

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 minimum period of study shall normally be not less than three years of full-time study or an equivalent period of part-time study. The maximum period of study shall normally be four years full-time or eight years part-time.

### **4. Submission of dissertation**

Except as permitted under Section 6 of the Regulations and Code, the dissertation shall be submitted not earlier than one year and not later than three years following the completion of course work. Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about submission of the dissertation.

### **5. Work previously submitted**

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. Length of dissertation**

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. Examinations**

The Regulations for Examinations shall apply.

A candidate who had failed to satisfy the examiners, who is permitted to transfer programme or who would like to leave before completing the DEdPsy may be recommended for the award of Master, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate 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 180 credit points
- b) in the case of the Postgraduate Diploma candidates must obtain 120 credit points
- c) in the case of the Postgraduate Certificate candidates must obtain 60 credit points.

### **8. Outcomes**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for specification of the possible outcomes of the examination.

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

### **1. Qualification for entry**

Candidature for the degree of Doctor of Social Science shall be open to:

- a) a graduate of a UK university or, subject to Senate's approval, a graduate of another university, who has satisfied Senate of his or her fitness to enter on the course
- b) in exceptional cases, other persons with qualifications approved by Senate

The curriculum shall consist of policy studies selected from a list of subjects within social sciences approved from time to time by Senate together with the preparation of a dissertation. The subject at present available is: Policy Studies

The closing date for applications shall be as published in the D.Soc.Sci. prospectus.

### **2. Qualification for the degree**

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. A candidate who has obtained a Master of Science degree at the University or such other degree or award as may be deemed equivalent thereto by Senate may be granted remission of part of the taught component up to a maximum of 90 of the 540 credit points required for award of the degree and of part of the minimum period of study provided that the candidate shall complete a dissertation and that the dissertation shall be approved by the examiners appointed by the University.
- d) approval of such dissertation by examiners appointed by the University

### **3. Period of study**

The minimum period of study for the degree shall normally be not less than three years by full-time study or the equivalent period of part-time study. The maximum period of study shall normally be four years full-time or eight years part-time.

### **4. Submission of dissertation**

Except as permitted under the Regulations for Extensions, the dissertation shall normally be submitted not earlier than one year and not later than five years after completion of the course work. Submissions shall comply with Regulations for Dissertations.

### **5. Work previously submitted**

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. Length of dissertation**

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. Examinations**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance about oral examinations for research degrees.

A candidate who had failed to satisfy the examiners, who is permitted to transfer programme or who would like to leave before completing the DSocSci may be recommended for the award of Master, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate in Social Sciences (Policy Studies)

subject to the following conditions (and in accordance with the University Credit Framework):

- a) in the case of the Masters, candidates must obtain 180 points
- b) in the case of the Postgraduate Diploma, candidates must obtain 120 credit points
- c) in the case of the Postgraduate Certificate, candidates must obtain 60 points

A candidate who has presented a dissertation by viva voce and failed to satisfy the examiners that it has passed for the award of DSocSci may be considered for the award of MPhil.

#### **8. Outcomes**

See Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for specification of the possible outcomes of the examination.

## 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 Letters, 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 dissertation<sup>8</sup> embodying the results of this research.
- c. an oral examination<sup>9</sup> and approval of the dissertation by examiners<sup>10</sup> 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 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 MMus

A full-time candidate for the degree of MMus must pursue research into the techniques of composition for one year of study, followed by a satisfactory performance at the end of that period in submissions in Music Analysis, Advanced Orchestration and Composition.

The candidate then studies Musical Composition for a further one year, followed by the presentation of musical compositions in forms and styles prescribed.

### 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 MLitt degree should not exceed 60,000 words, excluding references, appendices and lists of contents.

### 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.

<sup>8</sup> Candidates should refer to Section 9 of the Regulations and Code for requirements and guidance on content and submission of dissertations.

<sup>9</sup> The procedure that applies is covered in Section 9.6 of the Regulations and Code.

<sup>10</sup> The criteria for award of a Masters degree by research, and the assessment process, are covered in Section 9 of the Regulations and Code.

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

**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 for Research Degrees**

1. The normal expectation is that the oral examination for a research degree will take place at the University of Bristol. An oral examination may only be conducted remotely (e.g. using videoconferencing facilities) in exceptional circumstances, when the candidate or 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 the University at the appropriate time.
2. The decision to allow an oral examination to be conducted remotely rests with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students). Any request to conduct an oral examination remotely 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.
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.
4. As with other examination costs associated with research degrees, the 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 the 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 (e.g. video must be available where the examiners may need to see a written response by the candidate).
  - 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 will be conducted using the Videoconferencing Service run by the Estates IT support office (e-mail: [video-conferencing@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:video-conferencing@bristol.ac.uk)).
  - The videoconferencing facilities (or other technology) 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.
  - 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, for example, a British Council representative or 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 5

### 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 to the satisfaction of the internal examiner*):

- 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, or to 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.

The time needed to make minor corrections must be **no more than 28 days** from the date the candidate receives the list of corrections required.

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.

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)