

# Academic matters

## Faculty and school contacts

### Faculty Offices

Although most of your day-to-day dealings will be with staff in your academic school, you may need to contact your faculty office for certain matters, including:

- registration queries
- requests for letters confirming your student status
- requests for transcripts
- advice on regulations, progress issues, procedures and appeals.

Each faculty office has a Faculty Education Manager who is supported by staff who deal specifically with undergraduate or postgraduate student matters. Opening hours and contact details are in your faculty handbook and/or on the faculty website (see Section 7).

### Faculty staff

Each faculty is led by a Dean, supported by Education Directors (also known as Undergraduate and Graduate Deans), who have oversight of the faculty's undergraduate and postgraduate provision. Undergraduate/ Graduate Deans have to approve all requests for suspensions of study or transfers to a different programme. In addition, each faculty has a Research Director, whose role is to develop and coordinate research activity across the faculty.

### School staff

Staff in your school office will be your first point of contact for most queries. They can provide information and advice on a wide range of topics. Opening hours and contact details are in your school handbook and/or on the school website.

Each taught programme will have a Programme Director, in overall charge of the planning for and delivery of your programme, and there may also be Unit Directors for specific parts of your programme and Year Coordinators or Year Tutors to look after arrangements for each year group.

Most schools have a Postgraduate Tutor and/or a Director of Postgraduate Studies, who deal with postgraduate matters. Schools may also have specialist officers, such as Safety Adviser, Disability Support Officer or International Students Officer.

### Academic Personal Tutors

All undergraduate and taught postgraduate students are assigned an Academic Personal Tutor, a named academic within their school to whom they can turn for help and advice on both academic and personal matters. A designated member of support staff will also be available in each school as an alternative point of contact. Different arrangements apply to students on the MB ChB programme. General guidance on the core features of all Personal Tutoring schemes is available at [www.bristol.ac.uk/ug-support](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/ug-support). Specific details will be provided in your school or programme handbook.

### Senior Tutors

A Senior Tutor is an experienced member of academic staff who leads on and oversees the provision of support and guidance for undergraduate students within each school. A Senior Tutor can offer additional detailed specific advice to that given by Academic Personal Tutors, on both academic and personal matters, providing a link with the professional central support services. In the MB ChB, BDS and BVSc programmes this role may be fulfilled by a member of staff with a different title.

### Supervisors

All research students are assigned one or more supervisors whose role is to provide both academic and pastoral support. Your supervisor(s) will be your key contact, and you should make sure at your initial meeting that you agree the format and frequency of future meetings, and that you keep in regular contact. The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes (see [www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/cop-research-degrees.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/cop-research-degrees.html)) sets out in broad terms the framework for the management of research programmes and what students are entitled to expect in the way of induction, supervision, review of their progress and opportunities to develop their skills.

You are advised to keep your Academic Personal Tutor or Supervisor informed of any personal circumstances that may affect your studies.

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## Attendance

### Attendance

All students are required to maintain a good level of attendance and remain engaged with their programme of study (see Clause 2 of the Student Agreement in Section 7). If you fail to attend classes or supervision sessions regularly, without good cause, your faculty may issue you with a warning and/or terminate your registration. The University is required to report non-EEA international students in this position to the Home Office as being in violation of the terms of their visa.

### Workload

There is an expectation that the weekly workload for students on taught programmes in all faculties should amount to approximately 40 hours per week. The proportions of time devoted to formal teaching and to private study will vary according to the nature of the subject. Further information on the expected workload and the nature of independent learning at the University is available at [bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/learning](http://bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/learning).

### Illness

If you have to miss classes or supervision meetings due to illness, please notify your school as soon as possible, preferably on the day you fall ill. Depending on the length of your absence, you may need to submit to your school as soon as you return a Student Self-Certification form\* and/or a medical certification (ie a 'sick note'), signed by a medical practitioner.

If you are unable to meet a coursework deadline because of illness, make sure that you contact the relevant staff member before the deadline to request an extension, and provide your school with the relevant certificate(s) as outlined above.

If you will be unable to attend a summative examination due to illness you must consult a doctor (within the 24 hours) prior to the examination, inform your school of your non-attendance, and provide relevant certification, whatever the length of your illness. You should consider carefully the implications of attending a summative examination if the illness will significantly affect your performance, taking advice as necessary.

Schools will monitor the frequency of self-certified absences and may, in cases of multiple or sustained instances of self-certified illness, ask such students to provide a doctor's medical certificate as well.

### Suspension of Study

If you experience long-term difficulties which are affecting your studies, you may wish to apply for a suspension of study. You will need to discuss this with relevant staff in your school before formally requesting a Suspension of Study\*\*. All suspensions have to be approved at faculty level, and your faculty will confirm in writing the period of your suspension, the date you are expected to return and any other conditions.

### Transferring to another programme

If you wish to consider transferring to another programme, you should seek advice from your Academic Personal Tutor. Transfers are not automatically approved. You will need to check whether any funding arrangements you have in place are affected by such a change. You will need to complete a Transfer form\*\*, which has to be signed by your current school and by your 'new' school.

### Withdrawing from your programme

If you wish to withdraw from your programme, you are advised to discuss your situation with your Academic Personal Tutor, Supervisor or Head of School. If you decide to proceed, you must complete a Withdrawal form\*\* as soon as possible so that your student support arrangements are not unduly affected. You may also be entitled to a refund of all or part of your tuition fees – see Section 3.

Students in receipt of a student visa should seek advice from International Advice and Support (see Section 4) before making any decision to withdraw, suspend studies, transfer programme or change from full-time to part-time study, as this may affect their visa.

\* Form available from the Academic Registry website

\*\* Form available from your school office

# Academic matters

## Examinations and assessment

### Assessment and progress

Your school will provide you with full details of how and when your work will be assessed. For most undergraduate students this will be on the basis of a combination of coursework assignments and examination. Your progress to the next year of an undergraduate programme or to the dissertation/project stage of a taught Master's programme will depend on whether you have achieved the minimum prescribed marks and the necessary number of credit points. The University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes are available at [www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/assessment](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/assessment).

### Submission of coursework assignments

You will be given clear deadlines for the submission of all coursework assignments. Please make sure you observe these, as marks may be deducted for late submission. If you are experiencing difficulties in meeting a deadline, follow school procedures, either contacting the relevant staff member before, not after, the deadline to request an extension, or completing the relevant form to explain your reasons for late submission.

### Examinations

The January examination period starts after the Christmas vacation and the summer examination period starts in mid-May. Some schools may arrange examinations at other times of year as well. You will be notified by email when details of your examination timetable are available. It is your responsibility to check on Student Info (see Section 2) that you are entered for the correct examinations. You will be issued with a candidate number (displayed in Student Info) which you should use on all your examination scripts.

Students who do not meet the required standard may be offered the opportunity to re-sit the papers they failed. (For undergraduates this will be in late August/early September.) In such cases, the mark is normally 'capped' at the relevant pass mark, for the purposes of determining progression or degree classification. Students who miss some or all of their examinations due to illness or some other good reason may be offered the opportunity to

re-sit the examinations during late August/early September. In this instance these are regarded as 'supplementary' rather than 're-sit' examinations. Students are deemed to be sitting the examinations for the first time and their marks are not capped.

### Examination Regulations

It is important that you read through the Examination Regulations beforehand (see Section 7) to make sure that you are fully aware of the rules relating to examinations and of the penalties for failing to observe them. You are advised to check your faculty/school documentation carefully regarding any books or equipment that may be permitted in the examination room.

### Extenuating circumstances\*

If you were unable to attend an assessment/examination owing to significant ill health or other problems, or if the extenuating circumstance had a negative effect on your performance in assessment, you should notify your school, providing appropriate evidence, within two days of your final assessment/examination. Please see your faculty/school handbook for advice.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged inclusion in a piece of work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another, whether this is intentional or unintentional. This includes material obtained from the internet. When submitting work for assessment you are required to confirm that the work is yours alone, and you should take extreme care to acknowledge all your sources correctly. Your school will provide you with further advice. Cases of plagiarism attract a range of penalties. Some schools use electronic detection tools such as the TurnitinUK Plagiarism Detection Service – see [www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/jisc.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/jisc.html).

### Certificates and transcripts

When you complete your studies you will be issued with a certificate confirming your award. Transcripts setting out details of your programme and the marks/grades achieved are obtainable from your faculty office.

\* See the glossary in Section 7 for a definition of 'extenuating circumstances'.

# Academic matters

## Development opportunities

### Skills training

Opportunities for developing study-related and transferable skills are provided by several parts of the organisation including the Careers Service (see Section 4) and IT Services (see Section 2).

### Bristol PLS Awards

The Bristol PLS Awards recognise skills and achievements developed through extra-curricular activity. Students can build an online portfolio of the skills they've gained through volunteering, work experience, membership of societies, sporting achievements, and anything else they have been involved in outside of their studies. Students who have demonstrated exceptional skills development can upgrade to the Outstanding Award and present in front of a panel of employers and University staff. An award tailored specifically for postgraduate researchers will be launched in 2013.

The Awards are endorsed by many leading graduate recruiters including Airbus, Cancer Research UK, Lloyds Banking Group, the NHS and Unilever. For further information about the scheme, including how to register, visit [www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/plusaward](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/plusaward).

If you wish to record and reflect on your skills development, you can also work through information on Personal Development Planning available at [www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/pdp](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/pdp).

### Studying and working abroad

In addition to the four-year undergraduate degree programmes which incorporate a year abroad, there are opportunities to study abroad in some degree subjects. Depending on your degree and your academic progress, you may be able to study at one of Bristol's 150 exchange partner universities around the world and earn 'transfer credits' which count towards your final degree. You should first talk to your school to gain their approval to study abroad and then contact the Study & Work Abroad team about potential destinations. Both the Study & Work Abroad team and your academic school at Bristol will help you organise your study abroad and will give you support before, during and after your study period.

The University has drawn up guidelines covering student placements on taught programmes – see [www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/placements/guideplacements.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/placements/guideplacements.pdf).

### Contact

#### Study & Work Abroad Team

International Office  
Richmond Building  
105 Queen's Road  
Tel: (0117) 33 18503  
Email: [swap-out@bris.ac.uk](mailto:swap-out@bris.ac.uk)  
Web: [www.bristol.ac.uk/international/yearabroad](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/yearabroad)  
Open throughout the year during normal office hours

### Paid employment

The University recognises that many students have to take paid employment to fund their studies. Achieving a sensible balance between work and study is essential. Full-time taught students are advised not to work for more than 15 hours per week in term time. Certain international students may be subject to restrictions on the number of hours they may legally work, under the terms of their student visa.

#### For part-time work and internships within the University why not consider:

- doing casual clerical work or helping out at events, generally advertised via JobShop – see [www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/jobshop](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/jobshop)
- Student Ambassador, Mentor or Tutor positions – see [www.bristol.ac.uk/sraa/wpur-office](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sraa/wpur-office) and [www.bristol.ac.uk/international/living](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/living)
- participating in experiments at the School of Experimental Psychology – email [www.psychology-experiments@bris.ac.uk](mailto:www.psychology-experiments@bris.ac.uk)
- a University of Bristol Internship – see [www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/uobinterns](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/uobinterns).