INTRODUCTION

This short Induction Booklet is aimed at School of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience postgraduate students and their supervisors. It includes updated information on contacts and resources and covers material discussed during our induction to new students, including key information on the operation of postgraduate programmes within the School and Faculty, and information on where you can get further information. It is based on the questions we are most commonly asked or issues that most commonly arise. We hope that you will find it useful and if you have any suggestions on how it can be improved, please let us know.

Best wishes,
Ingeborg Hers and James Hodge, Directors of Graduate Studies, PPN

PEOPLE

The following are people directly responsible for overseeing and administrating postgraduate programmes, and other School and Faculty contacts. Some aspects of your programme are dealt with at School level and some at Faculty level. The general rule is that all forms involving postgraduate studies will be handed in to the PPN School Admin Team in Office (D21.b), who will pass it on to the graduate administrator Elaine Sparey. This will ensure that the school is always fully informed. If you are not sure who to contact about an issue, or your form involves sensitive information, feel free to ask Elaine Sparey, James Hodge or Ingeborg Hers for advice.

Direct Oversight/Administration of PPN Postgraduates

Graduate Director  Ingeborg Hers  12191  i.hers@  C4.5
Graduate Director  James Hodge  11416  james.hodge@  F33
Graduate Administrator  Elaine Sparey  11599  elaine.sparey@  65 St Michael’s Hill

Faculty Education Team

Faculty Education Manager  Abi Strickland  11521  Abi.Strickland@  65 St Michael’s Hill
Student Administration Manager  Charlie Gunter  11535  Charles.Gunter@  65 St Michael’s Hill
General Postgraduate enquiries: fls-genquiries@

School Contacts

Head of School  Hugh Piggins  12265  phph-hos@  D13
School Manager  Anne Bedford  12273  anne.bedford@  D21.a
Senior Executive Assistant  Deborah Kay  11437  Deborah.Kay@  D21.b
Executive Assistant  Irene Aguas Ferrero  12265  Irene.aguasferrero@  D21.b
**Faculty Officers**

- **Postgraduate Dean**
  - Harry Mellor
  - 12174
  - Fls-graddean@C49

- **Faculty Dean**
  - Jeremy Tavare
  - 11532
  - J.Tavare@69 St Michael’s Hill

- **Faculty Manager**
  - Stephen Brooke
  - 11538
  - Stephen.Brooke@69 St Michael’s Hill

The Faculty Education Team are based in 65 St Michael’s Hill. Your UCard should open the front door during normal working hours.

Elaine Sparey, the team member who administers PPN PGR programmes, is located on the first floor.

**POSTGRADUATE STUDENT REPS**

As postgraduate student reps (2019/20) we are here to represent you, your needs and any potential concerns. We will do this by relaying the information you provide us with, at various university committee meetings and through discussions with the school’s postgraduate directors – creating a good opportunity for you to make your voices heard. Our contact details are below, so please make use of us, as we can only do our job with your involvement.

Our role also involves organising events, particularly seminars and workshops as will meet your needs. We are keen to organise some useful but also thought-provoking events and would like to think a little outside the box on this one, so please send your suggestions our way. Another important part of the events calendar will also be the socials, these can be a great opportunity to get to know the people in our school that you might not otherwise cross paths with.

We look forward to getting to know you all.

Best wishes,

Zoe Adams, Ben Exley and Beth Moyse.

Contact details are:

**Zoe Adams,**  
zoe.adams@bristol.ac.uk  
Clinical Research & Imaging Centre

**Benjamin Exley, G17**  
ben.exley@bristol.ac.uk  
Biomedical Sciences Building and Dorothy Hodgkin Building (DHB)
QUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The ED&I Steering Group focus on maximising equality, diversity and inclusion within the school. As a PGR ED&I Rep, our role is to be a point of contact for anyone who has issues or suggestions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. We can then relate those back to the wider ED&I faculty steering group. An example of what we do is a workshop currently being put together with the Bristol Doctoral College, with the provisional title "Becoming a self-advocate: dealing with difficult conversations in your PhD". This workshop aims to encourage PGRs to vocalise issues that affect them and highlight who to speak to, if matters escalate. Feel free to contact us if you have any issues and/or suggestions or would like to get involved in ED&I in our school.

Best wishes,
Alex, Ellen and Laura.

Our combined EDI PGR Rep Mailbox is: ppn-edi-postgraduatereps@bristol.ac.uk

INFORMATION

You are a member of the School of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience and the Faculty of Life Sciences. In addition to their public web pages, both have intranet sites that you can access through the single sign-on using your UoB username and password.

The Faculty postgraduate student intranet site hosts multiple documents packed with useful information. You can access it at the following URL:

https://www.bris.ac.uk/biomedical-sciences/currentstudents/postgraduates

Key documents/links include:

Faculty Postgraduate Handbook
- much longer than this booklet and packed with useful information
Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes
- the rules under which your studentship operates

Progression Monitoring for Research Degree Programmes
- a handbook on how the annual progression monitoring process works

STaR User Guide
- how to access STaR and how it works to support progress monitoring

Faculty Guidelines for Electronic Submission of Postgraduate Dissertations (Turnitin)
- how you submit your thesis and how it is scrutinised for plagiarism

Plagiarism Frequently Asked Questions
- FAQs on plagiarism and self-plagiarism

Research Degrees Frequently Asked Questions
- University web pages on dissertation format, submission, vivas, plagiarism

Appointment of Research Degree Examiners Form
- you have to submit this ARDE form 1 month before you submit your thesis

Health, welfare and student services
- you are a UoB student and you have full access to student support services

There is also stuff on:

All sorts of training (you should be talking to your supervisor about training needs)

Careers (in case you have plans for a life after your PGR programme…)

Financial assistance to attend conferences (goody!)

Forms for all sorts of purposes (there’s always another from to fill in…)

Bristol Doctoral College (you will be getting emails from the BDC…)

You can also find and post useful information on the PPN social media sites:

https://twitter.com/UoBrisPPN

https://www.linkedin.com/company/university-of-bristol-school-of-physiology-pharmacology

https://www.facebook.com/uobppn

SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES

In an EMERGENCY, phone Security Services on:

internal extension 112233 or 0117 3311223
For non-emergency calls, phone Security Services on:

internal extension 87848 or 0117 9287848

If you need an ambulance, phone 999 and then inform Security Services.

CAREERS SERVICES

The Careers Service is here to support all students at Bristol including Postgraduate Researchers. There are tailored talks, workshops, employer events and vacancy listings for PGRs. The Careers Service run regular talks on 'Options with your PhD' and how to compete for roles within and beyond academia. PGRs can meet with careers professionals for 1-to-1 conversations about their career decision making, as well as have their CV reviewed, or to find out more information about their options. Explore the PGR specific career pages on the Careers Service website at: www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/pgr/ and visit mycareer (careers.bristol.ac.uk/) to book onto events, appointments and see vacancy listings. The Careers Service is here throughout your time at Bristol and for three years after you graduate, to help you get to where you want to be both within and beyond academia.

WELLBEING

Your health and wellbeing are very important to the School, Faculty and University. As a postgraduate student you have access to the same support services as those available to undergraduate students. The University has a portal to these services on its wellbeing web page at:

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/

This page has links to a large number of services including:

Emergency help with mental health issues or emotional support

Emergency help for victims of crime

The Student Wellbeing Service (each Faculty and School has a team of Student Wellbeing Advisers)

Report and Support (for issues such as bullying, harassment, assault and discrimination)

The Student Health Service

The Student Counselling Service

The Multifaith Chaplaincy

Disability Services

As a member of the School of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience there are several people you can turn to if you have a problem that you need to discuss. All sensitive matters are dealt with confidentially, with information sharing on a strictly need-to-know basis and anonymised where appropriate. If you have an issue you can turn to:

Your Supervisor
Your School Graduate Directors
Your School Graduate Administrator
Your faculty Student Wellbeing Advisers
Your Faculty Graduate Director
Your Postgraduate Reps
This (not exhaustive) list includes academic and non-academic contacts, fellow students and both females and males. In practice, most issues tend to be dealt with by the first three people on this list but you should feel free to contact the person you are most comfortable talking to.

UNIVERSITY’S DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TEAM AND ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

University’s Diversity and Inclusion team
The ED&I website

The University’s Diversity and Inclusion team has also launched Stand Up, Speak Out, an initiative which provides a range of tools to equip and empower members of the University, to challenge unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. They have also reviewed the Acceptable Behaviour Policy Statement & Guidance and added a flowchart to guide people who may be experiencing unacceptable behaviour to get advice and support.

SUSPENSION OF STUDY

In the case of significant illness, bereavement, family problems or other matters that are impairing your ability to study it may be appropriate to request a suspension of study to “stop the clock” on your programme. If you think this may apply to you, please discuss the matter with the School Graduate Director and the School Graduate Administrator who will supply you with a form. Suspensions usually require supporting documentation and will require approval by the Graduate Dean. Suspensions can only be backdated by up to one month, so if you are in any doubt then please ask in a timely fashion.

HOLIDAYS

Postgraduate students are entitled to twenty-five days holiday a year, in addition to days when the University is closed. You should inform your supervisor if you are taking holiday (or are going to be away for any other reason such as conferences, DTP activities, training courses etc.).

DEMONSTRATING AND OUTREACH

The School relies on postgraduate research students to volunteer to act as demonstrators in practical classes or to help with workshops or tutorials. You will be paid for this, and it is something that is certainly worth including on your CV. Some postgraduate students may also be asked to undertake invigilating, for which they are also paid. If you agree to help you will receive training from the School/Faculty to prepare you. To share opportunities and cash fairly, students are normally allocated to 20 hours per annum demonstrating. The precise amount of demonstrating that you do should be agreed with your supervisor, particularly if you are seeking significantly more than the typical 20 hours. Although, where feasible, you are entitled to be given the opportunity to carry out demonstrating, this must not be to the detriment of your studies.

You may also be asked to undertake other tasks, such as helping at open days, engaging in lab or school outreach activities and so on. Again, whilst a good thing to do it is important that such activities do not have a detrimental effect on your studies. If you have concerns, please talk to your School Graduate Director.

STUDENT UCARD

Your UCard incorporates membership of the Library and the University of Bristol Students’ Union and also gives you access to sports and recreation facilities. For reasons of security you are required to carry your
card whenever you are on University premises. If you have a problem with your UCard or you need your access rights changing contact the PPN School Office.

**PROGRESS MONITORING, STaR, TURNITIN and THESIS SUBMISSION**

Typical structures of the degree programmes our students follow are appended at the end of this booklet. At the start of your programme you will be assigned two members of academic staff as “panel members”. You will meet with them during the one or three years your progress is monitored (see programme structures, below). They will discuss your work with you and assess whether your project is on track and whether, in the later stages, you are ready to submit and defend a thesis. Their role is meant to be supportive but they are not responsible for supervising your project.

Annual progress monitoring (APM) is recorded using the Skills Training and Review (STaR) online platform. STaR has been designed to bring together all aspects of postgraduate research, development, and support. In addition to supporting APM, STaR can be used to:

- Record meetings between you and your supervisor, setting and managing research objectives
- Keep or share documents and notes on any aspect of your research
- Access your own public space on Pure to upload publications and develop an online profile
- Explore skills training and researcher development opportunities
- Planning and tracking your own development needs

Each APM monitoring point requires you to submit documentation on your research plans or progress. At each monitoring point your supervisor comments on your progress and both you and your supervisor respond to the comments of the panel members. All STaR forms are read by the School Graduate Director and then by the Faculty Graduate Dean. **The workflow is linear, so if you are prompted to do something on STaR then please do that thing promptly!**

Your written reports are submitted via Blackboard and checked for plagiarism using Turnitin. You are expected to reflect on the Turnitin report and share it with your supervisor. Your final thesis will also be submitted to Turnitin and the report is scrutinised by the School Graduate Director. It is **YOUR responsibility** to ensure your thesis is free from plagiarism – you have opportunities to receive plagiarism training, discuss strategies for avoiding plagiarism with your supervisor and making practice submissions of your final thesis. It is **YOUR responsibility** to take advantage of these.

At least 4 weeks before the submission of your final thesis, your supervisor will have to fill in an ARDE form Appointment of Research Degree Examiners form (Office document, 45kB) and hand this in to the School Admin Office (D21.b). To ensure this will be done in a timely manner feel free to remind your supervisor.

Further information on submission of your thesis can be found here: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/directory/exams/research-degree/your-dissertation/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/directory/exams/research-degree/your-dissertation/)

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM**

The University, Faculty and School have clear expectations regarding academic integrity as it relates to the way you carry out your research and the way you report its findings. Please see:

- [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/teaching/integrity/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/teaching/integrity/)
- [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/documents/policy/academic-integrity-policy.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/academic-quality/documents/policy/academic-integrity-policy.pdf)
The most commonly-encountered form of academic misconduct among postgraduate students is plagiarism in reports and dissertations. This is rare, but the Faculty has to deal with one or two cases every year, including in final thesis submissions. Investigation of cases of suspected plagiarism is time-consuming, can be distressing for the student involved, and may have serious consequences. In almost all cases the accusation of plagiarism could have been avoided if the student had taken greater responsibility for understanding what plagiarism is and developing ways of working that are free of academic misconduct.

When it comes to plagiarism, ignorance of what is not acceptable is no defence. The following is a quote from the University’s examination regulations that can be found at the URL below. Please note the underlined/bold sentence: “Section 3.2.1. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged inclusion in a student’s work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional.”


The Faculty and University have lots of information on plagiarism, how to avoid it, how it is detected and what happens if you are accused of it. For example, see:

https://www.bristol.ac.uk/library/support/findinginfo/plagiarism/

The most common cause of plagiarism is a student adopting a copy and paste approach to their writing, and it is most commonly found in Introduction or Methods sections of dissertations. The requirement is that you write reports and dissertations IN YOUR OWN WORDS, and not in the words of others that have been copied and pasted, and then tweaked, scrambled or shuffled in an attempt to fool Turnitin (and your examiners). Your thesis is an assessment of YOUR academic ability and has to contain YOUR description of the background to YOUR project (Introduction), how YOU carried it out (Methods), what YOU found out (Results) and what YOU think it means (Discussion).

Regarding data, if others have contributed results or analysis to work that you are including in your thesis then you should acknowledge this and explain the extent of their contribution. Such people could include undergraduate project students, summer students, fellow lab members or collaborators. You of course can’t fill your thesis with other people’s data, but collaborative work is common and encouraged, and you need to explain what you did and what others did so that your academic achievements can be judged fairly.

SELF-PLAGIARISM

There is often confusion over what is permitted if you are copying your own work, and supervisors often fail to give the correct guidance over this. Again, both the University and Faculty have information on self-plagiarism that you can take advantage of. For a postgraduate student, the most obvious sources are previous dissertations, reports and published papers. The Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes has some clear guidance on this issue, on which the following is based:

Previous dissertations written by you. It is NOT permitted to submit the same work for two separate awards, whether the awards are both at the University of Bristol and/or elsewhere. In practical terms, what this means is you cannot re-use data or text from a previous dissertation such as an undergraduate final year project or a Masters’ thesis. If extensive reproduction of text is unavoidable, such as in a technical description of a protocol for example, it is essential that you provide a citation that makes clear that the description has been taken from a previous dissertation. Turnitin will detect this as a text match, and the Graduate Director scrutinizing your thesis will check on the source of the text match.
Rotation reports and APM reports. Provided the material is original, it is permissible to re-use text from rotation reports and APM reports that have been generated as part of your current programme. This material may produce a text match as some documents, such as rotation reports written in some Doctoral Training Programmes, are retained in the Turnitin database. In such cases the Graduate Director will check that you are the author of the source text, and that you are not copying from someone else.

Published manuscripts. The regulations on this topic state: “Research students are strongly encouraged to publish their work, including prior to submission and examination. However, it is essential that they include appropriate referencing of such published work in their dissertation. A summary of authors’ contributions to any publications resulting from the dissertation should be included within the dissertation to provide clarity on each author’s contribution.”

The extent to which you can reuse text from a paper on which you are an author depends upon your role in that paper.

If you and your supervisor are primary authors, for example first and last authors, then it is permissible to re-use text on the basis that the paper is primarily describing your work. However, it is important that you make it clear that you are basing the content of your thesis on the content of the paper, for example by declaring at the start of each relevant Results chapter “Work presented in this chapter has been published in: (and give the full reference)”.

If you are not a primary author, for example you are a middle author in a joint paper submitted by collaborators or a minor author in a multi-author paper from your lab, then you must be careful about re-using text because you must be able to make the case that the material you are using is attributable to your intellectual input. If in doubt you should err on the side of caution and consult your supervisor or the Graduate Director.

For more information on do’s and don’ts concerning plagiarism and self-plagiarism, see the document “Plagiarism Frequently Asked Questions” on the Faculty Postgraduate intranet at:

https://www.bris.ac.uk/biomedical-sciences/currentstudents/postgraduates

BEING A “GOOD CITIZEN”

To finish on a positive note, these are some of the things you can do to be a “good citizen” and not end up on anyone’s naughty list.

Read your email regularly and react when you are asked to do something.
Support your fellow students by attending the PPN postgraduate away day.
Join in with postgraduate social activities/workshops
Support your postdoc colleagues by attending their seminars.
Broaden your scientific horizons by attending School seminars and colloquia.
Help out with demonstrating duties and activities such as lab outreach.
Meet deadlines set for progress monitoring and report submission.
Meet your deadline for thesis submission and follow the submission process correctly.
Be proactive in letting us know if you have a problem we can help with.
To uphold the reputation of your lab, bake cakes!
PROGRAMME STRUCTURES

PGR timelines: A typical MSc(Research)

Year 1: Main Lab / Writing
Skills training
Year 2
8 week presentation
6 month report
Submission / viva

PGR timelines: A three year funded PhD

Year 1: Lab
Skills training
Year 2: 4.5 month Proposal
8.5 month Report
1st Year Talk
Year 3: 2nd Year Report
3rd Year Talk
3rd yr report
Year 4: Submission / viva
PGR timelines: A four year funded PhD

Year 1: Lab
Year 2: Skills training
Year 3: 2nd Year Report
Year 4: 3rd Year Report

4.5 month Proposal
8.5 month Report

1st Year Talk
3rd Year Talk

thesis outline
submission / viva

PGR timelines: A rotation-type four year PhD

Year 0: Rotation and Taught Units
Year 1: Main Lab
Year 2: Internships
Year 3: Writing

Programme-specific progress monitoring
4.5 month Proposal
8.5 month Report
2nd Year Report
thesis outline

1st Year Talk
3rd Year Talk

Year 0 administered by the Doctoral Training Programme

submission / viva