

Postgraduate Admissions Statement

PhD Great Western Four+ Doctoral Training Partnership (NERC)

Programmes Covered

This admissions statement applies to the following programme(s):

PhD Great Western Four+ Doctoral Training Partnership (NERC)

Applicants should also refer to the relevant prospectus entry for further programme details.

This admissions statement should be read in association with the [University Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Research Programmes](#).

Faculty

Faculty of Science

Admissions team and contact details

Frances Robertson

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School of Earth Sciences

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Telephone: +44 (0)117 331 5426

Or please contact the postgraduate admissions office within the school where the main project supervisor is based:

- **School of Biological Sciences:** biol-postgrad@bristol.ac.uk
- **School of Chemistry:** chem-pg-office@bristol.ac.uk
- **School of Earth Sciences:** earth-postgrad@bristol.ac.uk
- **School of Geographical Sciences:** geog-pgadm@bristol.ac.uk
- **School of Physics:** physics-pg@bristol.ac.uk

Website: www.bristol.ac.uk/chemistry/courses/postgraduate/cdt.html

Admissions cycle

This Admissions Statement applies to applications submitted for entry to the programme between 1st October 2019 and 30th September 2020.

Application deadline

Details of application deadlines for this programme are displayed on the individual programme page within the [University course finder](#).

Application deadline: 16:00 hours GMT Monday 7 January 2019

Admissions criteria

Academic requirements

Applicants must hold/achieve a minimum of an upper second-class honours degree (or international equivalent) in a discipline related to the potential PhD project, such as geology, biological sciences, environmental sciences, chemistry or geography.

For information on international equivalent qualifications, please refer to our [International Office website](#).

English language requirements for non-native English speakers

For applicants whose first language is not English, and whose full undergraduate degree was not taught in an English-speaking country, it is necessary to hold/achieve a minimum score in an approved English language test as specified in Profile E of the [University's English Language Requirements Policy](#).

Applicants do not need to have reached the required level of English language before applying. If necessary, English language will be included as a condition of offer.

Applicants have the option to undertake one of the University's Pre-sessional English courses. You can find information about the University of Bristol's Pre-Sessional English courses at the [Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies website](#).

Additional requirements

There are no additional requirements for this programme.

Application process

Online application form

Applicants should complete the online application form, uploading all required documents directly.

Please make sure you complete the relevant online application form through the school where the main supervisor is based, applying to the Faculty of Science and to the NERC Great Western Four+ Doctoral Training Partnership (PhD) programme, and indicating in the funding section that you will be funded by the GW4+ DTP.

If you wish to apply to multiple projects across different schools, please submit a separate application for each project (you do not need to do this if you are applying to multiple projects within the same school). You will need to change your username for each application, but you can maintain the same email address and password.

Guidance on uploading documents can be found in the [guidance for online applications](#). Paper documents received by post, or electronic documents received by email, are only considered in exceptional circumstances.

Before applying, make sure you choose the right programme by reading the prospectus entry and Admissions Statement fully. If you need clarification, please [contact the relevant admissions team](#).

Applications may not be considered until all required documents have been uploaded. If you have already submitted an application, you can upload additional documents into the 'Post-submission uploads' section of the application form.

Documents required

Required documents for this programme are:

- **Two academic references (minimum):** References should be submitted electronically by the referee, using the online reference form. Alternatively, scanned copies of the original reference document(s) can be uploaded by the applicant.

If you graduated more than two years ago, or if professional experience is relevant to the application, professional references will be accepted in lieu of one academic reference. At least one referee should be familiar with the applicant's academic work. References must be written, signed and dated on official letter headed paper from the referee's organisation. They must include the referee's full contact details, i.e. postal address, telephone number and organisation email address. A [reference template](#) is available to show the required format.

References supplied with a personal contact email address will not be accepted unless under exceptional circumstances, which must be explained within the reference. All references must be dated within the last two years.

- **Degree certificate(s)** from first and subsequent degrees. We require colour scans of original documents and certified translations of documents issued in any language other than English.
- **Academic transcripts** from first and subsequent degrees. We require colour scans of original documents and certified translations of documents issued in any language other than English. Transcripts must list all subjects taken and grades achieved to date, with the grade scale clearly displayed in the transcript. Applicants must clearly state their current average grade in the online application form.
- **Personal statement.** Personal statements should highlight the motivation for applying for the course, and any relevant experience and/or skills. You should also clarify the project to which you are applying.
- **Curriculum Vitae (CV):** CVs might include details of other relevant work experience and qualifications to support an application. Please do not include any school (pre-university) certificates, unless otherwise specified above.
- **English language certificates** are required from applicants for whom English is not the native language and whose full undergraduate degree was not taught in an English-speaking country (please see the English Language Requirements for a list of English-speaking countries).

Correspondence with applicants

Applicants will normally receive communication via email to the email address used to set up the application form account. Applicants should ensure the profile email address is kept up-to-date.

Selection process

Assessment of applications

All applicants are considered on an equal basis in line with the [University's Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

Once a complete application has been submitted with all required supporting documents, it is considered by the main supervisor(s) of the relevant PhD project(s), who may contact applicants for an informal visit to discuss their application further. The supervisor then recommends the best candidates for interview.

Meeting the minimum academic entry criteria will not automatically mean an applicant will receive an offer. Admissions decisions will consider the academic history of the applicant alongside relevance of degree, and, if required, degree content, and performance in key modules. Each applicant is considered both holistically on their own merit and in competition with the rest of the applicant cohort during the academic cycle.

Interviews

Interviews form part of the selection process. Selected applicants are invited to attend a formal DTP interview at the University of Bristol, where they will be asked present a piece of research they have undertaken.

Interviews are used to assess whether the applicant has the necessary skills and capabilities to pursue their chosen programme, and whether the programme is appropriate to their interests and aspirations. Candidates are evaluated on the basis of their academic achievement, understanding of research and self-motivation.

Interviewees based overseas are normally interviewed by telephone or Skype.

Interviews are conducted by a panel of staff, at least one of whom is trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques. All interviews are undertaken in accordance with the [University's Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

Following interview, studentships may be offered immediately to successful candidates. Candidates may also be put forward for a DTP-wide competition (usually held about two weeks after interviews) following which further studentships may be offered. All studentship offers will be made by mid-March.

Please note that although you may be successful in being nominated by a supervisor for a particular project, you are not guaranteed a studentship until you have been made an offer following the interview.

Non-standard applications

We welcome applications from those with non-standard qualifications who can demonstrate knowledge, experience and skills developed in the workplace, or elsewhere, relevant to the programme of study. Please use your personal statement to provide further details.

Non-standard applications will be considered by the Admissions Tutor(s) for the programme on a case by case basis.

Decisions

Notification of decisions

Applicants will be notified by email when a decision has been made and decision letters will be available to view and print by logging into the application. If there is a deadline by which applicants must accept an offer of admission, this will be stated in the offer letter.

Offers

Offers will typically be made in line with the academic requirements set out above. Offers may be set above or below this level in recognition of an applicant's relevant qualifications and experience. Offer levels may also be adjusted in response to the level of competition for places in that application cycle.

Offers made may be conditional or unconditional. An unconditional offer will be made to successful applicants who have already met the conditions and provided evidence that conditions have been met. Where academic or language requirements have not yet been fulfilled, successful applicants will receive a conditional offer outlining the requirements that must be met.

If an applicant is not selected to receive an offer for the course to which they have originally applied, we may offer the opportunity to be considered for an alternative programme in a related subject area. In such cases applicants will receive an email notification providing any alternative course options and asking whether they wish to be considered for these. It may be necessary for applicants to submit additional documentation in order for the application to be fully considered for an alternative programme. Details of the documentation required can be found in the [admissions statement](#) for the relevant programme.

Deferrals

This programme only allows deferrals in exceptional circumstances. Please [contact the admissions team](#) if you would like to discuss the possibility of deferring your start date.

Alternatively, please contact the postgraduate admissions office within the school where the main project supervisor is based:

School of Biological Sciences: biol-postgrad@bristol.ac.uk

School of Chemistry: chem-pg-office@bristol.ac.uk

School of Earth Sciences: earth-postgrad@bristol.ac.uk

School of Geographical Sciences: geog-pgadm@bristol.ac.uk

School of Physics: physics-pg@bristol.ac.uk

Additional information

Extenuating Circumstances

If your education has been significantly disrupted through health or personal problems, disability or specific difficulties within your studies, you can submit an [extenuating circumstances](#) form to the [Bristol NERC GW4+ DTP Administrator](#).

The information provided will be treated confidentially, and will help us to assess your academic performance fairly in light of your circumstances.

ATAS

An ATAS certificate is not required.

Deposits

There is no deposit required for this programme.